



TO: Olivia Chow, Doug Ford, John Tory

CC: Irene Atkinson, Gordon Foster, Jeffrey Freeman, Noel Kent, Marcela Saitua, Robin Pilkey, Linda Torry, Sarah Doucette, Cheri DiNovo, Amelia Dennis, Jane Phillips-Long, Donna Quan, Carla Kisko, Angelos Bacopoulos

SUBJECT: Your Commitment to Public Education in Toronto

October 14, 2014

On behalf of Runnymede Public School Council, Ward 7, TDSB and the broader “Fix Our Schools Campaign”, we seek your commitment to quality public education in Toronto.

Marcus Gee’s editorial in the Globe & Mail from June 2014:
<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/toronto-is-ignoring-the-public-school-system-at-its-own-peril/article19271342/> highlights the following:

- The public education system is as critical to the City of Toronto’s future success as public transportation, yet rarely is discussed in city politics.
- Since the province funds public education, schools are a non-issue in municipal elections except for the trustee elections, which do not receive much attention. –
- The TDSB, which has close to 250,000 students, 600 schools and a \$3-Billion budget, is a huge bureaucracy that deserves more attention from City leaders, even if the jurisdiction is not strictly theirs.

We agree with Marcus Gee’s sentiments and want a Mayor elected who will pay attention to public education in Toronto and will help better public education in this City.

The TDSB currently has a backlog of \$3.5 Billion of repairs and maintenance in its 600 schools. Approximately 100 of these schools currently operate at below 60% utilization. Creative partnerships between the TDSB and the City of Toronto are needed to address these issues. ***How would you facilitate the building of an effective working relationship and creative partnerships with the TDSB?***

The TDSB provides green space for Torontonians to use as public parks during non-school hours. As has been seen when Central T.I closed its green space in November 2013, Toronto residents value these outdoor parks and want access to them. However, the TDSB receives no money from the City for maintaining these green spaces. ***How would you propose that the City share in the costs of providing these valuable green spaces to Torontonians?***



The City of Toronto recently approved the building of 7,000 condo units. Due to Provincial regulations, the TDSB will receive \$0 in Education Development Charges from these new developments. There is currently a disconnection between the approval of new developments and the availability of space in local public schools. Indeed, City Planners do not currently need to take into consideration local public school space in their assessments of development proposals and there seems to be no mechanism in place to bring the TDSB into the decision-making process. ***What would you do as Mayor to align the City approval process for new developments with the availability of local space in public schools?***

As a candidate to become Mayor of Toronto, please provide us with answers to the three questions outlined above.

Kind regards -

Jennifer McLean & Krista Wylie, Ward 7 Reps

- on behalf of Runnymede Public School Council and the "Fix Our Schools" Campaign