



**Submission to
Manitoba School Boards
Association**

April 18th, 2016

Funding

- The 2016 Provincial education funding announcement indicated a funding increase of 2.55%. However, several school divisions received 0% in 2016 and have received 0% for many years in succession. The School Division Special Levy was intended to fund local programs valued by the community, but it is now being used to fund a substantial portion of operational costs for basic education programs. If your party was elected, what will be done to ensure that the provincial funding support for education is increased to fund a greater percentage of school division operating costs for basic education programs?
- If elected, will your party continue with implementation of the class size initiative for kindergarten through grade 3 classrooms and, if so, will you commit to funding 100% of the cost of teachers required to fully implement the initiative?

A new PC government is committed to working in partnership with frontline educators, school boards and school divisions to ensure we are delivering quality education for all our children as part of our better plan for a better Manitoba. We look forward to working with all our stakeholders to ensure effective provincial funding support for education.

The Progressive Conservative Party believes that small class sizes are one factor in improving educational opportunities, especially for young students. Class composition is a fundamental factor in determining the workload and challenges of each unique classroom. Students with additional needs – including learning disabilities, behavioural challenges, or language barriers – often require more attention and time from their teachers, and as such can't simply be tallied into class size counts without special consideration.

A new PC government has committed to streamlining the application process for special needs students. This will assist in ensuring that existing resources can be used more effectively and provide some relief and classroom support.

Role of school boards, autonomy and authority

- If elected as government, would your party maintain, change or eliminate model of governance that maintains elected school boards and the local taxation authority of school boards?

A new PC government has indicated a strong willingness to work in partnership with Manitobans in order to provide our better plan for a better Manitoba. We will work alongside the people – not above them. We look forward to working together in collaboration to ensure we are providing quality education for our children.

Aboriginal and Indigenous students and programming

- How would a government under your leadership address the funding inequities that exist between urban, rural, northern, Federal First Nation and Independent First Nation educational jurisdictions in our province?

A new PC government is committed to working in true partnerships to ensure that all children in our province are provided with the same opportunities to find success in our great province. We will encourage more financial support from the federal government.

Student supports and services

- Many rural and northern school divisions are experiencing a serious lack of treatment services for students who are suffering from addictions and other mental health issues. There have been cases of students with no supports in rural and northern communities who, once transferred to Winnipeg, have been immediately referred to the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre. In essence, rural and northern schools are expected to deal with children in crisis in the classroom while these same children are immediately referred and accepted for treatment in Winnipeg. What will your party do to address the serious lack of treatment services, (not advisory or consulting services), for young people in rural and northern Manitoba who are experiencing serious mental health issues, including severe anxiety disorders and addictions?

A new PC government has outlined their plan for a mental health strategy as part of our better plan for a better Manitoba. We believe in a comprehensive mental health strategy combining mental health and addictions programs and services. This will provide help to identify issues and solutions early so we can provide timely and adequate services.

Curriculum and educational outcomes/transitions

- If your party was elected, what will be done to ensure that Literacy and Numeracy is a priority in education? How will you determine that Literacy and Numeracy initiatives are resulting in improvements in learning?

A new PC government believes education investment is key to the future success our province. Education is the key to realizing our potential. The Selinger NDP government spends more on education than ever before, yet Manitoba ranks last in the country for results in reading, math, and science. This is unacceptable to students, parents, teachers, and families.

A new PC government has committed additional resources of \$7 million to deliver the Read to Succeed program, to ensure children graduating grade 3 are reading at appropriate levels.

We must provide a stronger way up for Manitoba's children by improving our education results, focusing on reading at the critical early ages, empowering teachers to grade and guide students, and empowering parents to engage with schools by ensuring they know more about what is occurring in those schools.

Continuity

- Over the course of the last few years, the current provincial Government has implemented a number of new initiatives and areas of focus, such as 20K3 class size initiative, new Student Achievement Support Unit with a focus on numeracy and literacy, youth mental health, Anti-Racism Action Plan, Children in Care Task Force Report, Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Commission, and provincial report cards. If elected, what areas would your party continue to support and how?

A new PC government believes in true partnerships and working in collaboration with those people who are working on the frontlines of education. We will undertake a value for money review of all government spending to ensure we are spending taxpayers' money as effectively as possible. We believe that working together we can ensure we are using best practices and spending our limited resources effectively to provide a stronger way up for Manitoba's children.