

Brothers and Sisters,

This is the reason why CUPE supports the NDP - because they understand the issues! The Tories created this mess and the Liberals refuse to review it even though they promised to do so before the election and even though they've been in office for 4 years. The NDP under Howard Hampton are clearly going to fix the mess created by the other two parties and they will do it before thousands of CUPE members are laid off not as promised by McGuinty who said he'd review it in 2010!

Please read the media release below.

In Solidarity,

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**Toronto - NDP Leader Howard Hampton today announced he will put students first by investing in public education to make it better and more affordable for today's working families.**

"Public education is one of the most important investments we can make. Unfortunately, Dalton McGuinty broke his promise to fix the education funding formula. That's depriving students of programs they need and it's forcing families to pay for school essentials out of their own pockets," Hampton said.

Hampton made the comments during a news conference with NDP Davenport candidate Peter Ferreira. Dalton McGuinty undemocratically removed Ferreira as chair of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board after Ferreira and fellow school board trustees refused government orders to cut classroom programs. Those included the Reading Recovery program for kids who need help learning to read.

Hampton told the press conference the NDP would fix the flawed education funding formula and keep it up to date. The first review would be completed by March Break, 2008, and be reviewed by an all-party legislative committee every year. That will mean giving local school boards the fairness and flexibility they need to address local concerns and priorities like English-as-a-Second Language instruction, special education waiting lists, repairs for rundown and unsafe schools, community schools at risk of closing and specialty teacher shortages.

"The status quo isn't good enough. In the face of a global economy, where too many kids start behind and stay behind, we need to fix the years of neglect of our students and our classrooms. That starts with fixing the funding formula and making sure students go to excellent, properly-staffed schools that provide the programs students need," Hampton said.

Hampton said his plan would put an end to the unfair pressure on parents to fundraise for school essentials. Parents raised \$500 million last year to plug the gaps created by the flawed funding formula. The NDP will restore the Local Priorities Grant, at a rate of \$200 a student, to give schools the funding they need for school essentials.

"There is a time and a place for school fundraising for extras. But Moms and Dads shouldn't be forced to fundraise for school essentials. That's not fair. Necessary school programs should not depend on the size of a parent's wallet and their children's ability to sell chocolate bars. The province should pay for the essentials, not parents," Hampton said. Hampton invited parents and students to compare his plan with McGuinty's record of letdowns, disappointments and broken promises.

"My proposal is a real concrete plan that recognizes the need to fix the funding formula, to invest in education, to invest in students and to invest in the supports and programs the McGuinty government is denying them," Hampton said. "Mr. McGuinty forgot working families the day he was elected. He found time to give himself a \$40,000 pay raise and \$1 million to a cricket club that asked for \$150,000 but broke his promises to parents and students," the NDP Leader said.

Hampton said a vote for the NDP in the upcoming election is a vote for better and more affordable public education for today's working families.

"On October 10th, I'm asking people here in Toronto and across Ontario to vote for better public education by voting NDP," Hampton said.

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Media Inquiries: Jon Weier (416) 591-5455 x290