

First Name of Candidate: Joe
Last Name of Candidate: Whitfeld
Riding: Oak Ridges-Markham
Campaign Email Address: joewhitfeld@ontariondp.ca

Campaign Telephone Number: 416-648-7565

Party Affiliation (if applicable): NDP

1. As Ontarians continue to recover from the economic recession, public libraries offer easy and free access to essential information and services (e.g. computers, the Internet, training workshops) to those searching for employment or wanting to upgrade their skills.: Strongly Agree

2. Public libraries provide a vast array of valuable materials and programs for young children, which encourage an interest in literacy and learning. As such, public libraries should be considered as major players and resource centres in program delivery for early literacy and family literacy development.: Strongly Agree

3. Public libraries serve as important service providers and referral centres for Agree

newcomers to Canada, through settlement support, language acquisition including ESL programs, accreditation and employment support and maintaining cultural connections.:

4. Public libraries' business services help Ontario's entrepreneurs and small business owners create jobs and build strong local economies.:

Agree

5. Provincial government ministries such as Education, Children & Youth Services, Citizenship & Immigration, Training Colleges & Universities, Community & Social Services, Research & Innovation, Health Promotion & Support, and Municipal Affairs & Housing should pursue stronger partnerships with the public library sector in order for those ministries to more effectively meet their goals and avoid the creation of parallel structures.:

Agree

6. To support a knowledge based economy and the new generation of library users who require the latest communication technology so they can connect virtually to the library, each other, their community and a world of databases and cultural resources, the

Agree

provincial government's strategies for infrastructure enhancement must take into account the significant ongoing need to upgrade public library facilities.:

7. The Public Libraries Act is important because it ensures equal access to all Ontarians regardless of where they reside.:

Agree

8. Are you aware that the provincial government's contribution to the operating budgets of public libraries represents, on average, only 5% of the total and is now among the lowest of all provinces on a per capita basis?:

Yes

9. Are you aware that provincial operating grants to Ontario public libraries have been static for the past 13 years when they were cut by 40%, with no adjustments since for even inflation or population growth?:

Yes

10. If elected, will you work actively to increase the provincial funding of public libraries, thereby strengthening the effectiveness of the Public Libraries Act?:

Yes

11. Are you aware that the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries has

Yes

submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Tourism & Culture to increase the funding envelope for provincial operating grants to public libraries from its current \$18.7 million to \$43.9 million by 2013?:

12. If elected, will you actively work to support the Federation's proposal?:

Yes

13. Do you have a public library card?:

Yes

14. How often in the past year have you visited your local public library?:

16+ times

15. What was the last thing you borrowed from an Ontario public library?:

I am a school teacher and an avid reader of history and politics. I have recently taken out roughly 20 books and 6 videos regarding the Human Body as I am preparing a unit for my grade 5 students. I also visit the library frequently, particularly the Angus Glen Community Center, as I bring my three young children to play with the toys, the other children, and to also read new books. They also bring home children's dvd's from time to time. I have two kids who are both 4 years old and a baby boy who is 3 months. I believe that it is essential that our provincial government maintains and supports our public libraries.

16. Have you ever been a member of a public library board or a Friends of the Library group? If so, which one(s):

No.

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