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MEDIA RELEASE

ST. PAUL'S CANDIDATES' DEBATE WITH A FOCUS ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

TORONTO, August 2011 – There will be a provincial election held in Ontario on October 6, 2011. As you know, public education is the second largest line item in the provincial budget and education issues had a profound effect on the outcome of the last two provincial elections.

Last month, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) issued a media release declaring **Tuesday, September 20th, 2011 Education Day in Ontario**. In each provincial riding, public school boards are encouraged to host open forums at their local schools inviting citizens to engage local provincial election candidates on matters focused exclusively on public education (K-12).

I am happy to let you know that the Toronto District School Board has accepted the challenge, and there will be a Provincial Candidates Meeting in St. Paul's.

WHAT: Provincial Candidates' Meeting focused on Public Education
WHEN: September 20 beginning at 7:00pm
WHERE: Northern Secondary School, 851 Mount Pleasant Rd

The following nominated candidates for St. Paul's Riding have been invited to participate – Eric Hoskins, MPP (Liberal), David Hynes (NDP), Christine McGirr (Progressive Conservative) and Judith Van Veldhuysen (Green).

Candidates will be invited to share their views and answer questions from students, parents and the community. This allows voters to understand where the candidates stand on important issues in public education and to make informed decisions when it comes to electing the representatives who will shape public policy that profoundly impacts our lives now and in the future.

School boards are required by law to submit a balanced budget plan to the Ministry of Education. To balance the budget this year, TDSB is depending heavily on unsustainable measures to bridge significant funding gaps. The bulk of this money comes from the continued deferral of maintenance projects and program upgrades which adds to the Board's growing renewal backlog. Expressing concern about the negative impact of continuing to rely on unsustainable solutions for ongoing funding shortfalls, the Board has set in motion the process of developing a three-year operating budget recovery plan to reduce TDSB's structural deficit and reliance on renewal funds to balance the budget.

TDSB budget challenges impact the kind of future we want for the children of this city. On September 20th, we urge candidates to tell Toronto voters what they plan to do to renew and support our programs in our aging schools and make every day "education day" for Toronto's children.

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For more information, please contact
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