

French-language education

French-language education is the fastest growing segment of Manitoba's K-12 public education system and the new government must resource and support these students, teachers, and schools accordingly.

Equally important, the curricula for the immersion and francophone programs must be created in French in order to integrate linguistic and cultural differences and to respond to the needs of the community.

Questions for candidates

1. What are your two priorities for improving public education?
2. What is your opinion of current spending on public education?
3. How will you address the high rates of poverty in Manitoba that inhibit children from succeeding in school, and subsequently in life?
4. What will your party do to improve teachers' working conditions?



The
Manitoba
Teachers'
Society

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 Election 2019 My classroom.
Our future.

EDUCATION ISSUES FOR ELECTION 2019



A CENTURY OF SOLIDARITY



The
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Society

The Manitoba Teachers' Society is committed to helping you make an informed voting choice about issues that touch on education directly and indirectly. In this pamphlet you will find introductory information and questions to ask candidates in order to determine their views on education. For more detailed content about a wide range of education, policy, legislative, and fiscal topics, please visit our 2019 election coverage at www.mbteach.org.

State of education

Education funding has failed to keep pace with the rate of inflation for three consecutive years. At the same time, enrolment has increased by about 5,000 students.

That's more kids, but less money per student.

We know that public education spending has a direct impact on the economic performance of a province including social benefits, such as a healthier population, a higher standard of living, and a reduction in crime. That lessens demand for social assistance, public health care, and criminal justice services. Manitoba's new government must fund public education to meet the needs of a growing and diversifying province with unique needs. Underfunding education hurts everyone.

Financial crisis?

In 2016, the Tories claimed a \$1 billion deficit, calling it a financial crisis. Over the next two years, thanks to generous increases in federal transfers, the provincial deficit now sits at \$360 million.

The province has also reduced the provincial sales tax, losing out on \$325 million in revenue.

This raises questions about Manitoba's actual financial situation. Why lower taxes when a deficit still exists, unless the situation is not as dire as reported?

Hunger in the classroom

Manitoba has the second highest child poverty rate in Canada, and every day many children go to school hungry.

Research shows that hungry children have lower math scores, are more likely to repeat a grade, come to school late, or miss it entirely due to illness. Some schools have implemented breakfast programs, but have trouble meeting demand.

The new government must establish a universal meal program for all school-age children.

Class size and composition

The cap on class size for K-3 was removed before its impact could be formally evaluated. Eighty-four per cent of K-3 teachers say that the removal of the class size cap has negatively impacted their ability to provide individualized attention to students.

Smaller classes have the greatest positive impact on students with the greatest educational needs. Inclusive classrooms benefit all students. The cap on K-3 class size must be reinstated.

Improved access to clinicians and student support services

Early assessment of learning disabilities improves performance and education outcomes, but in Manitoba assessments can take up to a year. There are not enough school-based resources to address the diverse needs of students.

In some areas students in need see a psychologist once every three months or sometimes just once a year. Wait time for assessing students with learning disabilities must be reduced and students requiring clinician resources must have timely access.

Commitment to Indigenous education issues

The Treaty Education Initiative is a great first step to help educate students and teachers about treaties and the treaty relationship. Any new government must make a commitment to implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 62 and 63.

Withdraw Bill 28 – restore collective bargaining rights

The government's unilateral decision to freeze the wages of teachers and other public sector employees is unconstitutional because it violates workers' collective bargaining rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. While the bill has not yet been proclaimed, it is having a chilling effect on bargaining in the public sector. Yet, according to the Manitoba government, average weekly earnings for Manitobans has increased by 3.2 per cent. Why are public sector workers expected to receive zero per cent despite the rising cost of living? The effects of Bill 28 on teachers is startling: Every full time teacher will lose an average of \$15,000 in future earnings. Bill 28 must be withdrawn.