

BACKGROUND CENTRING SCHOOLS AS PART OF OUR COMMUNITIES



When communities thrive, the public education system thrives. While supporting a well-funded public education system is essential to the rebuilding of Ontario after the pandemic, it is equally important to provide the supports that families and communities need to foster a strong recovery in the short term and beyond. When we make public investments in all aspects of education, we see the social and economic benefits to Ontario. By extension, investments in public programs benefit families lead to be better societal outcomes for all.

Investing in Public Services and Programs

- **Investing in public services means investing in programs that are important to Ontario families.**
 - With the support of the federal government, implement an affordable childcare program, improve the work, and pay for early childhood educators, and create enough quality public and non-profit spaces (Reference: [Roadmap to Universal Child Care in Ontario](#)—Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care and Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario).
 - Establish a universal basic income program to help families, support Ontario's economic recovery, end poverty and grow the middle class (Reference: [UBI Works—Report: Basic Income can kickstart Ontario's economic recovery, while ending poverty](#)).
- **Access to post-secondary education for all creates a better economy for Ontario.**
 - Reduce and regulate tuition fees, and provide funding supports for students from low-income families in order to reduce student debt.
 - Create an interest-free tuition loan program for students.
 - Implement predictable and consistent annual funding to post-secondary institutions (Reference: [Stable funding, strong universities—OCUFA's 2020 pre-budget submission—January 2020](#)—Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations).
- **Support communities and newcomers with programs to complement their needs while taking different cultural considerations into account.**
 - Encourage higher levels of immigration to Ontario by offering incentives.
 - Implement skills retraining programs to assist newcomers to enter the job market with greater ease.
 - Expand supports for newcomers and their families.

Paid Sick Days for All Workers

- Establish a permanent paid sick leave plan for all workers in Ontario, regardless of employment status, immigration status, or workplace size (Reference: [Before It's Too Late: How to close the paid sick days gap during COVID-19 and beyond](#)—Decent Work and Health Network).
- Paid sick days reduce the spread of illness in workplaces and communities without putting a financial burden on workers and their families.
- Allow parents to care for ill children with paid sick days reduces illness in schools and improves learning outcomes.