



Press Release

For Immediate Release

April 14, 2009 - The Ontario Student Trustees' Association has written Minister Wynne and Premier McGuinty over the "School Information Finder" website.

"This website teaches students to judge based on income level. But as kids we don't care to pick our friends based on their parents' income. Whether they make twenty thousand dollars or two hundred thousand dollars, does not judge character or quality, of the individual or of the neighbourhood," says association president Cody Welton of Trillium Lakelands.

The site, which allows users to "shop" for schools based on social demographics, percentage of university educated parents, number of students in special education and the percentage of newcomers to Canada, creates a harmful judgement system. Rather than encouraging the benefits of mixing kids together and forming a reflection of society, this website is encouraging social fragmentation.

The last election campaign turned on the question of truly public education; it is counterproductive for this government to change their position and support allowing public schools to be divided by economic class, intellectual ability or immigration status.

The idea, Welton argues, that "a neighbour with a Cadillac and a PhD is better than one with a Ford who works in the trades, or a neighbour who is new to Canada, is not a vision to reach every student but is a vision to segregate every student. The quality of a school is not based on random stats and a public school isn't something to be purchased at WalMart."

Instead of an Ontario where we encourage parents to segregate their kids based on random stats, the McGuinty government should work to create an equitable education for all Ontario students.

To stand up for an inclusive education, the association has also signed People for Education's letter to the Minister of Education. In addition, the association has addressed a letter to the government on behalf of the students of this province.

As the largest student stakeholder in Ontario's education system OSTA-AECO represents the 1.9 million students in the province. The association promotes the unity without conformity of all affiliated student trustees in order to advance the student vision in Ontario.

Student trustees are elected by their peers to bring the student voice to district school board tables. Through a non-binding vote, they present their peers' perspective to improve the quality of education in schools across the province.

-30-

For more information, please contact Lauren Millar at director.communications@osta-aeco.org or at (905)515-2466