

Post Debate Tory Tumble Gives McGuinty Liberals Ten Point Lead

*With Ten Days to go Until Election Day,
Grits Have Solid Majority in Sight;
Opposition to Faith-Based School Funding Grows*

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*With Ten Days to go Until Election Day,
Grits Have Solid Majority in Sight;
Opposition to Faith-Based School Funding Grows*

Toronto, ON – As the fallout from last week's leaders debate settles in the minds of Ontarians, and amid growing opposition to the faith-based school funding issue, a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted exclusively on behalf of CanWest News Service reveals that the lead that the Liberals have enjoyed over their chief rival Progressive Conservatives has risen now to a ten-point gap.

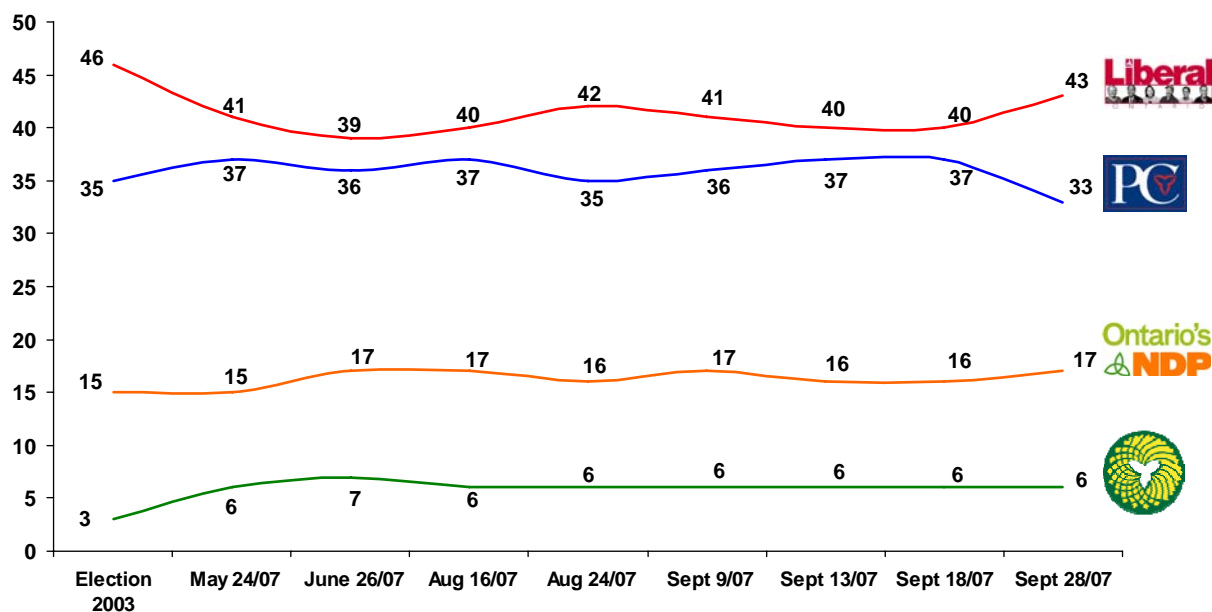
With a majority government in sight, Dalton McGuinty's Liberals have the support of 43% of Ontario's decided voters, while John Tory's Progressive Conservatives have dipped to 33%. The NDP (17% support) and Green Party (6% support) are holding steady. Five percent (5%) of all Ontarians are still undecided.

With 107 seats in the Legislature, the seat model done exclusively by DemocraticSPACE for Ipsos Reid is currently projecting a Liberal majority, with the Liberals winning 60 seats (54 needed for a majority) if the polling numbers were an actual vote percentage on Election Day, October 10, 2007. Using an aggregate of five recently publicly released polls, including today's result, the model shows the McGuinty Liberals with a potential majority government with 60 seats (47 solid and 13 leaning), Tory's Progressive Conservatives with 35 seats (26

solid and 9 leaning) and Hampton's NDP with 12 seats (8 solid and 4 leaning). For complete details, please visit <http://democraticSPACE.com/ontario2007>.

Party Support in Ontario (Tracking)

Q: I would like you to focus on the Ontario provincial government, not the federal government. As you may know, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty and his Provincial Liberal Party formed a majority government in the last provincial election. Thinking of how you feel right now, if a PROVINCIAL election were held tomorrow, which of the following parties' candidates would you, yourself, be most likely to support?



5% of all Ontario adults (n=800) are undecided

CanWest News Service/Global News Ipsos Reid Survey, September 25-27, 2007. Decided voters including leaners (n=718).

The findings also indicate that Liberal and Progressive Conservative voters are now locking in how certain their choice is among the parties. Among voters who intend to vote for the Progressive Conservative party, six in ten (58%) are 'absolutely certain' of this choice, while one quarter (26%) are 'somewhat certain' that this is the party they will end up supporting on election day. Among voters who intend to vote Liberal, a comparable amount (55%) are 'absolutely certain' of their decision to vote Liberal, while three in ten (30%) are 'somewhat

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certain' of their decision to vote Liberal. Among NDP voters, slightly less are either 'very' (54%) or 'somewhat' (27%) certain that they will end up supporting the NDP, while even fewer Green Party supporters are either 'very' (40%) or 'somewhat' (30%) certain that the Green party is the one that they would support on election day.

But intention to support a party is no solace if that voter doesn't actually go out to cast their ballot. In fact, some party's supporters are more likely than others to say that they will actually go out and vote.

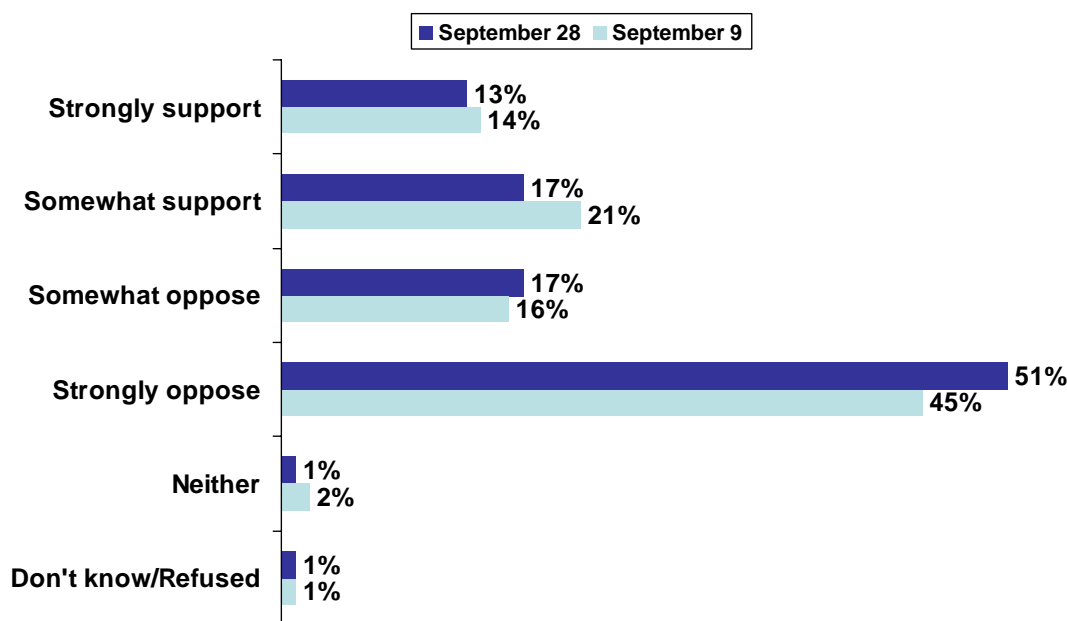
To this effect, only 74% of intended Progressive Conservative voters say that they are 'absolutely certain' to go out and vote on election day, whereas only 68% of intended Liberal voters believe that they are 'absolutely certain' to go out and vote on election day. Seven in ten (70%) NDP supporters say that they are 'absolutely certain' to go and vote on election day, while two thirds (65%) of Green party supporters are 'absolutely certain' to go vote on election day.

In this regard, even when vote intentions of those who are absolutely certain to turn out and vote on election day are compared, it still reveals a potential Liberal majority: Liberal 42% support, Progressive Conservative 35% support, NDP 17% support, and Green 6% support.

It appears that the faith-based school funding issue continues to hurt Tory's support. While at the beginning of the campaign 35% of Ontarians either 'strongly' (14%) or 'somewhat' (21%) supported the Progressive Conservative plan to extend funding to faith-based schools throughout Ontario, just three in ten (30%) Ontarians currently either 'strongly' (13%) or 'somewhat support' (17%) this idea. What is profound is the intensity with which Ontarians overwhelmingly oppose (68%) this plan, with a majority (51%) indicating that they 'strongly

oppose' and two in ten (17%) saying that they 'somewhat oppose' the Ontario Government in extending full funding to faith-based schools and others of a similar nature.

Faith Based Funding



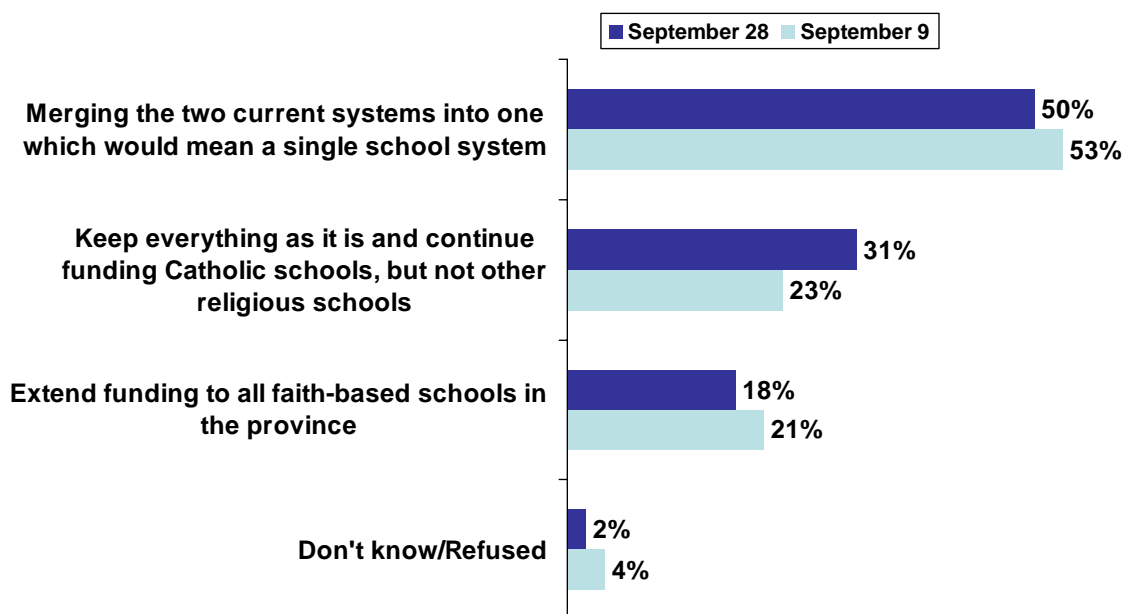
Q1. Overall, do you support or oppose Ontario Government extending full funding to these faith-based schools and others of a similar nature? Base: Ontario respondents (September 25-27, 2007) n=802; August 28-30 & September 6-8, 2007 n=801

CanWest News Service/Global News Ipsos Reid Survey, September 25-27, 2007.

In fact, fully one half (50%) of Ontarians believe that the best option for Ontario to deal with the school funding issue would be to 'merge the two current systems into one, which would mean a single school system'. Three in ten (31%) are of the opinion that Ontario should 'keep everything as is and continue funding Catholic schools, but not other religious schools'.

Finally, two in ten (18%) believe that the government should 'extend funding to all faith-based schools in the province'.

Faith Based Funding



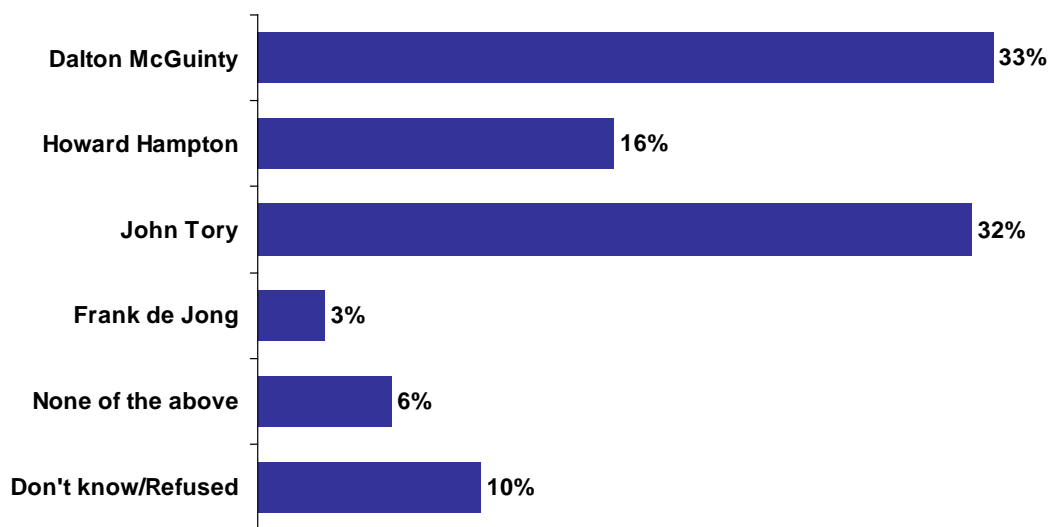
Q2. Now, there are three options that could deal with school funding in Ontario. Which one would you choose?
Base: Ontario respondents (September 25-27, 2007) n=802; August 28-30 & September 6-8, 2007 n=801

CanWest News Service/Global News Ipsos Reid Survey, September 25-27, 2007.

Despite the gap in support between the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives, Ontarians are split on who they believe would make the best Premier of Ontario. One in three (33%) Ontarians believe that Dalton McGuinty would make the best Premier of Ontario, while a similar proportion (32%) believe that John Tory would make the best Premier of Ontario. Further, 16% of Ontarians believe that Howard Hampton would make the best Premier of

Ontario, while just 3% indicate that they believe Frank de Jong would be the best man for the role. One in ten (10%) are undecided on this matter.

Best Premier of Ontario



Q2. Forgetting for a minute about which party you may be supporting, based on what you have seen, read or heard, which of the four main party leaders do you think would make the best Premier of Ontario? Base: Ontario respondents n=802

CanWest News Service/Global News Ipsos Reid Survey, September 25-27, 2007.

Ontarians appear to give all three party leaders a similar assessment in terms of whether or not they believe each would do a good job at running Ontario. More specifically, six in ten (59%) Canadians believe that McGuinty would do a 'very good' (13%) or 'good' (46%) job as Ontario Premier if his party were to win the election, while a similar proportion (59%) believes that Tory would do a 'very good' (17%) or 'good' (42%) job as Premier of Ontario, or that Hampton (58%) would do a 'very good' (10%) or 'good' (48%) job as Premier of Ontario.

Just four in ten (38%) Ontarians, however, believe that Green Party leader Frank de Jong would do a 'very good' (5%) or 'good job' (33%) if he were elected to be Premier of Ontario.

Supposing that voters were not able to vote for their first-choice party, the New Democratic Party would be second choice of 26% of Ontarians, while the Green Party (20%), Liberals (16%), Progressive Conservatives (15%) and are the second choice of slightly fewer Ontarians.

However, when asked to consider the possibility for change at Queens Park, one half (52%) of Ontarians more closely associate with the sentiment that it is 'time for another provincial party to take over', while 40% believe that the 'McGuinty government has done a good job and deserves re-election'. One in ten (8%) Ontarians do not know with which statement they more closely identify.

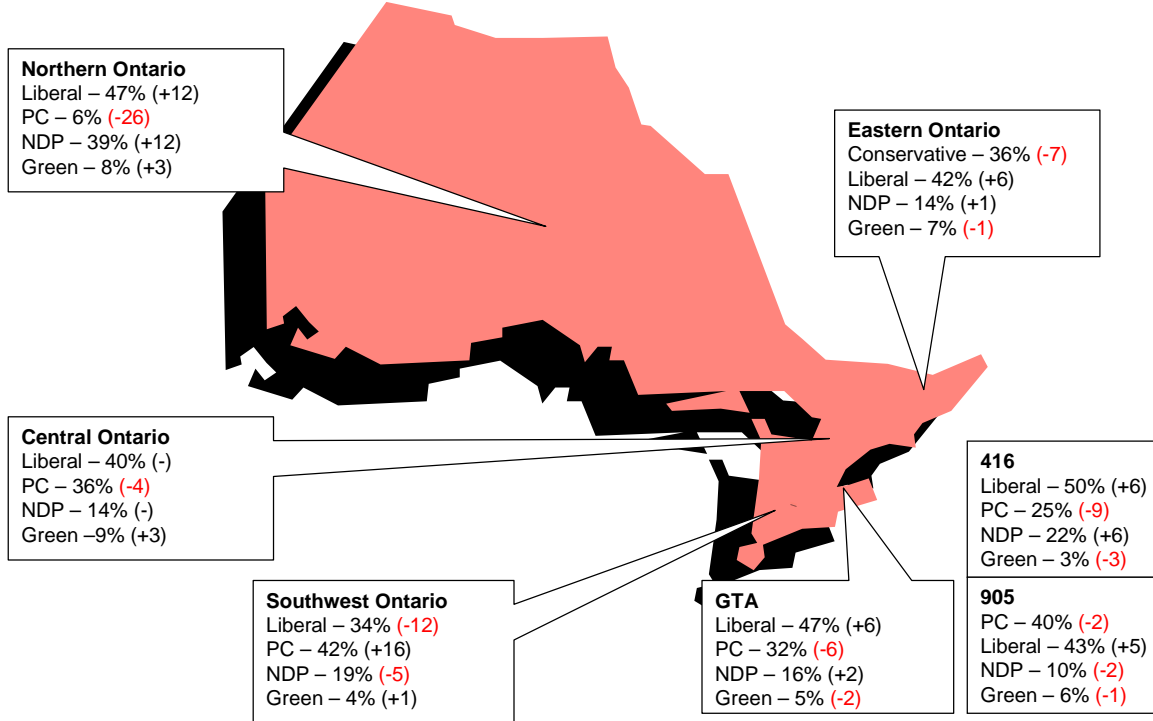
These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted exclusively for CanWest News Service and Global Television from September 25 to September 27, 2007. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 800 adults living in Ontario was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population living in Ontario been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure that the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Ontarian population according to Census data.

In Vote-rich GTA...

In the Greater Toronto Area, Liberal support has surged by 6 points to 47% support, while support for the Tories has dipped 6 points to 32% support. The NDP has gained 2 points and now sits at 16% support, while the Green party has dipped 2 points and now receives the support of 5% of decided voters in the GTA.

Regional Party Support in Ontario

September 28, 2007 (Percentage point movement since September 18 in parenthesis.)



CanWest News Service/Global News Ipsos Reid Survey, September 25-27, 2007. Decided voters including leaners (n=718).

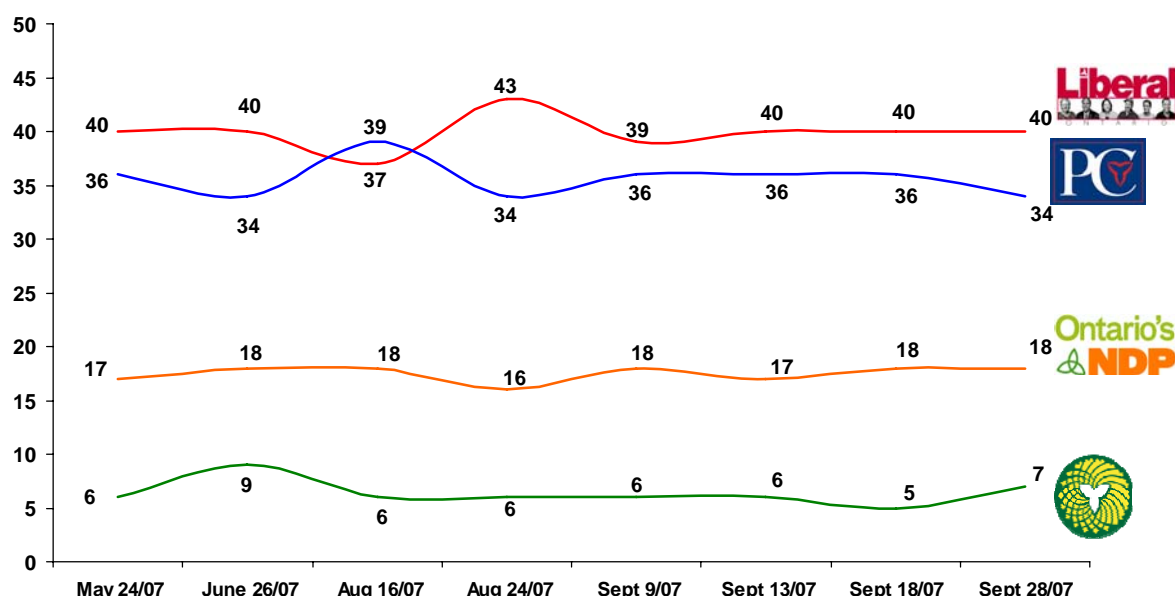
- **Examining the 416 area code** (Toronto proper) shows that that the Liberals now have a '2 votes to 1 lead' over the Progressive Conservatives, with Liberals receiving the support of 50% of Torontonians (up 6 points since last week) and the Tories receiving support from 25% of Torontonians (down 9 points since last week). The NDP have surged to 22% support (up 6 points since last week), while the Green party has dipped to 3% support (down 3 points since last week).
- **In the 905** the race between the two front runners is tighter: the Tories have dipped slightly to 40% support (down two points since last week), while the Grits have

rebounded to 43% support (up five points since last week). The NDP have declined by 2 points to 10% support, while the Green party has declined by only 1 point since last week and now stands at 6% support.

Outside of the GTA...

Party Support Outside the GTA (Tracking)

Q: I would like you to focus on the Ontario provincial government, not the federal government. As you may know, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty and his Provincial Liberal Party formed a majority government in the last provincial election. Thinking of how you feel right now, if a PROVINCIAL election were held tomorrow, which of the following parties' candidates would you, yourself, be most likely to support?



CanWest News Service/Global News Ipsos Reid Survey, September 25-27, 2007. Decided voters outside GTA including leaners (n=379).

- **Outside of the GTA** the Liberal lead (40%) over the Conservatives (34%) has risen by two points since last week. The NDP have the support of 18% of Ontarians outside of the GTA (unchanged) while the Green Party has the support of 7% of Ontarians (a rise of two points).

- **In Central Ontario** the Liberals (40%) are ahead of the Progressive Conservatives (36%) by four points. This represents a decline of 4 points for the PCs, while the Liberals have held steady. The NDP are at 14% support (no change), and the Greens are at 9% support (an increase of 3 points).
- **In Eastern Ontario** the Liberals have pulled ahead of the Tories, gaining six points (42% support), while the Tories have slipped 7 points (36% support). The NDP have gained 1 point at 14% support, and the Green party has dropped 1 point and now sits at 7% support.
- **In South-western Ontario** the Tories have rebounded 16 points to 42% support, while the Grits have dipped 12 points to 34% support. The NDP have dropped 5 points to 19% support, while the Green Party has the support of only 4% of south-western Ontarians, an increase of one point.
- **In Northern Ontario** the Tories have plunged 26 points and are now at just 6% support, while the Liberals at 47% support (a gain of 12 points) have surged ahead. The NDP are at 39% support (a surge of 12 points), while the Green Party is at 8% support (an increase of 3 points).

Examining Intention to Actually go and Vote...

Seventy-Four (74%) of intended Progressive Conservative voters say that they are 'absolutely certain' to go out and vote on election day, whereas only 68% of intended Liberal voters believe that they are 'absolutely certain' to go out and vote on election day. Seven in ten (70%) NDP supporters say that they are 'absolutely certain' to go and vote on election day, while two thirds (65%) of Green party porters are 'absolutely certain' to go vote on election day.

Only examining the vote intentions of those who are absolutely certain to vote on election day reveals the following levels of support for each party: Liberal 42% support, Progressive Conservative 35% support, NDP 17% support, and Green 6% support.

Not only are there differences among the parties in terms of intentions to actually go out and vote, it appears that GTAers are slightly less likely (65%) than those living in the rest of the province (68%) to say that they are 'absolutely certain' to go out and vote on election day. Voter turnout and how it pans out across the province could play a role in the composition of the legislature. The following are some other demographic differences:

- Residents of central Ontario are the most likely to say that they are 'absolutely certain' to go out and vote (73%), followed by eastern Ontarians (69%), south-western Ontarians (67%), residents of the 416 (66%), the 905 (64%), and finally northern Ontarians (56%).
- Older Canadians, aged 55 and up, (78%) are much more likely than middle-aged (65%), aged 35 to 54, or younger Canadians (56%), aged 18 to 34, to indicate that they are 'absolutely certain' to actually go out and vote.
- Women (68%) are slightly more likely than men (65%) to indicate that they are 'absolutely certain' to go out and vote on election day.
- Individuals whose families earn at least \$60,000 a year are more likely (70%) to say that they are 'absolutely certain' to go out and vote than those whose families earn between \$30,000 and \$60,000 a year (68%) or those whose families earn less than \$30,000 a year (54%).

- The same trend is noticed among education levels. Those who have a university education are more likely to say that they will ‘absolutely go out and vote’ (73%) than those with some postsecondary education (65%) or no high school diploma (62%).

Examining Voter's Second Choice...

Last week, the New Democratic Party would have been the second choice of 21% of Ontarians, while the Liberal (18%), Progressive Conservative (17%) and Green (17%) parties were the second choice of slightly fewer Ontarians. However, this week the NDP is the second choice of 26% of Ontarians, while the Green Party is now the second choice of 20% of Ontarians, followed by the Liberals (16%) and the Progressive Conservatives (15%).

- Progressive Conservative supporters are most likely to mention the NDP (26%) as their second choice, followed by the Liberals (24%) and the Green Party (18%). One in ten (9%) voters say, unaided, that they would not support any other party.
- Liberal supporters are most likely to mention the NDP as their second choice (35%), followed by the Progressive Conservatives (27%) and the Green Party (19%). Seven percent of Liberals say, unaided, that they would not support any other party.
- NDP supporters are most likely to mention the Liberals as their second choice (36%), followed by the Green (33%) and the PCs (12%). Six percent of NDP supporters say, unaided, that they would not vote for any other party.
- Green Party supporters are most likely to mention the NDP as their second choice (32%), followed by the Liberals (29%) and the Progressive Conservatives (16%). Ten percent of Green Party supporters say, unaided, that they would not vote for any other party.



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