



Legislative Assembly

JOHN YAKABUSKI, MPP
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NEWS RELEASE

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Yakabuski calls on Government to amend funding formula

(**Toronto**) John Yakabuski, MPP for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke called on the McGuinty government on Tuesday to respond on the issue of school closures, noting that seven schools in his riding have recently been slated for closure. "I am disgusted and dismayed that this government has again neglected the needs of rural Ontario and deliberately overlooked the families and young children these closures will affect," Yakabuski said. "I will not sit by and watch this government destroy our schools, having no regard for our children or their futures."

Yakabuski met with a number of parents concerned about these closures at public meetings held in Arnprior and Renfrew over the last several weeks. Meetings were also held in Opeongo, Pembroke and Deep River. Many parents expressed their extreme concern that the funding formula does not adequately meet the needs of rural schools and is a major reason for the proposed closures. Others noted that the McGuinty government, despite its campaign promise to keep rural schools open, has done nothing to prevent these closures.

"The McGuinty government cancelled the education tax credit for seniors and the equity in education tax credit and promised to reinvest those funds back into our education system keeping rural schools open," Yakabuski said. "Since this government has come into power, however, our entire school system has deteriorated and now, school boards in my riding are loosing the resources and infrastructure that they need to keep our schools thriving."

Mr. Yakabuski reminded the Education Minister Gerrard Kennedy in the Legislature Tuesday that rural schools throughout his riding are the heart of many communities and that no schools have closed in the region since 1993. He went on to say that without immediate intervention and swift amendment of the funding formula, boards will have to close school doors, having been given no other option and no help from this government.

