



Government Relations and OFIS

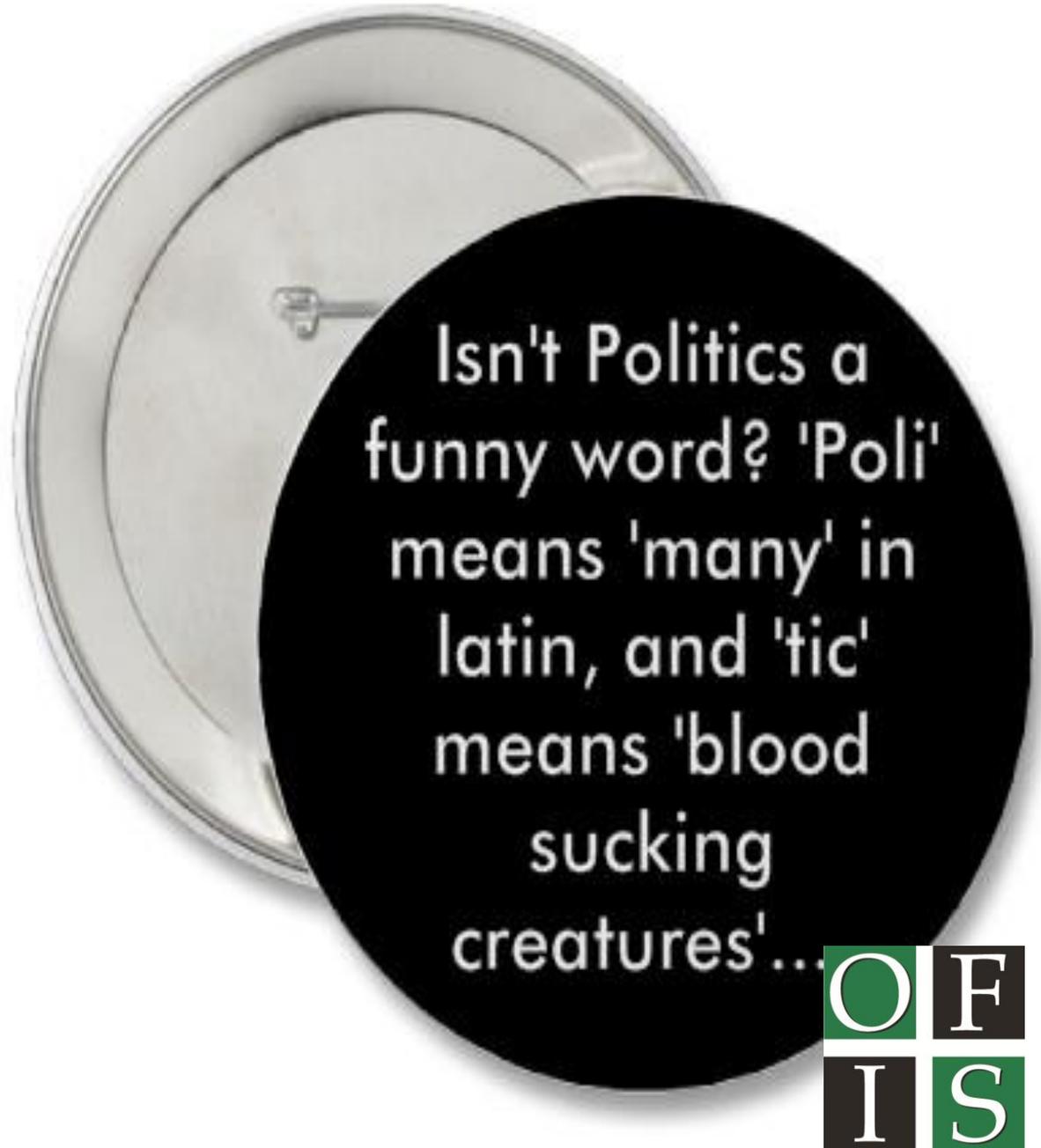
Barb Bierman – Presenter
OFIS Executive Director

•We live in a society where decisions that politicians and government officials (bureaucrats) make affect every aspect of our lives

✓No One Is Exempt

•We live in a society where more and more people feel powerless to influence those decisions

✓Learn To Use Influence



What Is the OFIS Definition Of Government Relations?



A systematic effort to influence the actions and policies of government to help achieve particular objectives or protect particular interests in a way that reflects well on us and the decision-makers involved



How To Be A Good Influence On Government...

1 By Building Relationships – with all those involved in government 's policies & decisions (politicos & bureaucrats)

2 By Showing Respect – Listening, Learning, Respecting Confidences & Points of View, Participating Regularly

3 By Searching For Ways To Reach Goals While Reaching Government Goals Too - Public Interest AND Your Own

4 By Helping Those In Government To Achieve Political Gains Based On Good Public Policy & By Taking Your Share Of “Political Heat” When Decisions Are Tough

5 By Telling The Truth & Doing It Openly

6 By Engaging The Broadest Group Possible – ALL Independent School Stakeholders



Government Relations Efforts Succeed When...



- we treat the process and everyone in it with respect***
- we produce an effect without the direct exercise of command (don't buy, borrow or blackmail influence)***



3 Marketing Concepts That Will Strengthen YOUR Relationship With Government

1

Determine What The Government Really Wants – How Can You Meet That Need? – What Does The Government Want To Achieve In Your Area Of Concern & How Can You Help Them Reach These Goals?

2

Distinguish Between “Features” And “Benefits” – What Are Your Features That Could Be More Persuasively Expressed As Benefits That Could Be Delivered To Government? Search For Ways To Your Reach Goals While Reaching Other Government Goals Too!

3

Be Alert To Opportunities To Offer “New & Improved” Products Or Services – How can you do a better job of meeting Government Goals By Adding Some New & Improved Features & Benefits To Your Programs Or Services?



OFIS Strategy With Government On All Files...



- 1. Always start by asking what the government hopes to achieve and how we can help***
- 2. Focus on the benefits to the government from the ideas we raise (value what the government values)***
- 3. Seek to provide new & improved goods and services (become integral!)***



What Will This Year's Budget Mean For Independent Schools?

Education wasn't hit as hard as some other sectors in this most recent budget but it was hit. There are opportunities here for independent schools...

1

Public School Closings & Board Amalgamations – government is looking for ways to stop funding small or “under-enrolled” schools.

*This year the government will adjust funding (school operations grants) for school buildings so there will be fewer “incentives” for keeping empty or small schools open

*While this is often considered to be a rural issue, these changes are intended to affect mainly urban boards

(ex – TDSB has 70,000 “empty spaces” which could translate to the closure of 140 schools)

TOTAL CUT - \$116 million

Opportunity! – geographical proximity/neighbourhoods will begin to play a bigger role in parents choosing independent schools (their neighbourhood schools may be closing & they may want to stay in the neighbourhood) – location may become a bigger advertising/marketing feature



What Will This Year's Budget Mean For Independent Schools?

Education wasn't hit as hard as some other sectors in this most recent budget but it was hit. There are opportunities here for independent schools...

2

High School Credits – Starting in fall of 2013, public school boards will no longer receive per pupil funding for students taking more than 34 credits. Currently the province measures graduation rates after 5 years (which is why they are higher), and many students take more than the 30 credits necessary to graduate (4 year graduation rate is currently 73%)

TOTAL CUT: 36 Million

Opportunity: Based on varied learning styles and post high school graduation goals, many students will still want/need additional high school credits which will likely be less and less available at local public high schools. Public high schools will not continue to offer courses for which they receive no funding. Independent schools have the freedom to offer courses and programs students need with greater flexibility.



What Will This Year's Budget Mean For Independent Schools?

Education wasn't hit as hard as some other sectors in this most recent budget but it was hit. There are opportunities here for independent schools...

3

Funding For The Arts & More – Since 2003, the province has offered a Program Enhancement Guide with additional funding to provide “students with a well-rounded education through programs such as the arts, physical education and outdoor education. The se grant funds are being completely cut.

TOTAL CUT: 66 Million

Opportunity: Independent schools will be able to fine-tune their niches to focus on some program opportunities that will no longer be available in public schools. Research show that parents are increasingly savvy about choosing schools that develop their children in a wide range of disciplines, not just academics.



Other Cuts To Education In Case You're Interested...



- Teacher`s Salaries – 97 million
- Curriculum Specialists & Consultants – 91 million
- School Operations & Renewal – 32 million
- Busing – 34 million
- Continuing Education – 1.8 million
- Special Education – 5.3 million
- EQAO – 2.5% reduction
- Aboriginal Education – 150 million gap
- Other (parenting & literacy centres, community use of schools, safe school programs, library staff, student success programs etc.) – 107 million
- School Board Admin. & Governance – 6.4 million
- Declining Enrolment Grants – 6.6 million

Will These Cuts Really Happen?



*The provincial budget was brought down BEFORE the end of the fiscal year (March 31) – this means programs can be cut or ended immediately – anyone used to the government moving slowly is in for a surprise – cuts will be real & sudden!

*Rating agencies are pushing Ontario very HARD ! – Government needs to give the rating agencies some reassurance, and it has to do it soon

*The current government is in a minority posture – the budget could be defeated by a motion of non-confidence which would result in a new government & a new budget



OFIS Best Predictions

On Previous Files

**Removing Grandfather Clause On
Independent Day Schools Operating
Early Learning Programs
(Established Prior to 1993)**

1

Ontario Private Schools Coordinator has indicated he will bring this policy issue to the Minister for immediate abolishing

Today

This policy has not been abolished
-government has other issues that are more pressing (FDK, deficit, federation negotiations etc.)
-assessment of legal threat surrounding policy change
-costs for Ministry associated with implementation of policy and the lack of connected revenue

OFIS Best Predictions

On Previous Files

Amalgamation of Special Health Funding For Independent Schools With Funding For Public Schools

1

This annual 11 million dollar budget was set for independent schools to better serve students with special health needs. Schools could apply through local CCAC's for access to these funds

Today

Because no more than 3 million of this fund was ever used annually, the government made a decision to amalgamate the this fund with the public schools` fund. This has resulted in some new wait times and messages that money is no longer available. OFIS is working with the Ministry of Health on making sure that there is equity of need on this file.

OFIS Best Predictions

On Previous Files

The Scarlet Letter For Independent Schools

1

In 2010 the Minister of Education announced that all high school credits earned in private schools would be indicated on transcript with the letter “P” (in an effort to crack down on and raise more awareness for supposed “credit mills”

Today

Students registered in public schools, who concurrently obtain credits granted through inspected private schools will have those credits notated with a “P”. Private schools do not have to note the “P” on OSR`s of students registered in their schools.

**Note: This was never part of the policy announcements but is included in the OS: K-12 Program & Policy Requirements*



OFIS Best Predictions

On Previous Files

Growing Accountability For Independent Schools

1

The government has indicated its desire to hold elementary & secondary private schools more greatly accountable for program & policy requirements. Inspected secondary schools are subject to all Ministry rigors. Elementary schools have minimalist obligations under the Education Act.

Today

The government has neither the staff, or money to inspect elementary private schools. Furthermore, any such inspections would require new legislation. OFIS does encourage members to meet/exceed MOE standards should this ever change. *Note that all MOE documents since 2010 include expectations for K-12.

THANK YOU!

•Questions?

✓ 15 minutes now

•Questions Later?

✓ info@ofis.ca

✓ Attend OFIS Learning Days (fall/spring)

•For Further Reference!

✓ "Cardus Education Survey – Do Private Schools Deliver On Their Promises?"

✓ "Fraser Institute – Ontario`s 2012 Budget A Missed Opportunity

THANK YOU!