



ONTARIO NDP EDUCATION OUTREACH TOOLKIT



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

What this is for: This is a guide for power mapping, organizing a phone zap, tabling on your campus, or writing an op-ed. We're out in the community to:

- ▶ Raise awareness about Ford's cuts to OSAP.
- ▶ Collect petition signatures to present at Queen's Park.
- ▶ Identify people to flyer & table on your campus, host a local townhall with students, organize and attend a protest, call and email Conservative MPPs, write op-eds, and get media attention.

POWER MAPPING LOCAL INFLUENCE

What this is Power Mapping?

- ▶ Finding spheres of influence that already exist
- ▶ Mapping who knows who, how can one conversation help spread our message?
- ▶ Relational organizing, person to person conversations over coffee, the phone, email
- ▶ Result will be the spread of the key message to a larger network
- ▶ Success looks like social media posts, local media coverage and a change in policy



Where to start

- ▶ Identify “central individuals”, people who are sources of information and advice, that are connected to community groups, labour or student organizations, relevant issue spaces or online networks.
- ▶ Consider what resources people have access to, such as meeting spaces, newsletters, social media pages, or organizational affiliations
- ▶ Map relationships between these individuals and your organizing team
- ▶ Identify who in your organization is best positioned to reach out to each person; create tangible plans for outreach, follow-up, and asks.

Taking action

- ▶ Once central individuals are identified along with the best person on your organizing team to reach out to them, initiate contact with them.
 - Send an email asking them to consider signing our petition and then follow-up with a request for a phone call or coffee.
- ▶ Ask if they would be willing to share the campaign, host a conversation, or provide a testimonial

POWERMAPPING FOR OSAP

Power mapping for post-secondary education can feel very large since so many people are students, graduates, or directly connected to campus life. Many of the people most affected are already connected through both formal and informal networks. Formal networks through student unions, campus clubs, advocacy groups, and labour organizations. Informal networks can be personal networks of classmates, social media groups, and program-based communities. The goal of power mapping in this campaign is to identify those existing

networks, understand who is trusted within them, and build pathways for our SAVE OSAP message to travel organically through campus and student spaces that already talk about affordability and access every day.

When applying power mapping to post-secondary education, organizers should start by thinking about where students talk about affordability and access. Rather than starting with large institutions, begin with lived experience through students, campus workers, and faculty. Identify who organizes meetings, moderates online groups, runs newsletters, or is regularly asked for advice. Those individuals often have far more influence than formal leadership titles suggest. A single conversation with a trusted student leader or campus advocate can open doors to dozens or hundreds of people who already understand the urgency of student affordability.

Types of groups and communities to prioritize for outreach and relationship-building include:

- ▶ Local Labour Councils <https://ofl.ca/about/labourcouncils/>
- ▶ Student Unions & Campus Groups at Colleges & Universities
- ▶ Union locals for PSE workers, support staff
- ▶ Highschool students hoping/planning to attend PSE

Online spaces are especially important for this issue. Organizers should look for:

- ▶ Local and campus-based Facebook groups for students and communities.
- ▶ Reddit communities focused on universities, colleges, or local community.
- ▶ WhatsApp or Signal groups used by students, classes, clubs, or organizers.
- ▶ Email lists and newsletters run by campus organizations.

Once these groups are identified, the focus should be on relationship-building rather than mass messaging. Start by listening: ask what barriers students are facing, what stories resonate, and what they wish decision-makers understood. Then connect those experiences

back to the core campaign message: that the Ford Government is choosing to weaken student financial aid, making education less accessible and increasing student debt. Over time, ask for deeper engagement, such as sharing the petition, posting in their networks, attending a town hall, or offering a testimonial. This approach ensures the campaign grows through trusted relationships and lived experience, rather than feeling imposed from the outside.

TURNING ALLIES INTO ACTIVISTS

Power mapping and community outreach are the first steps in building momentum for this campaign. As relationships are developed with education workers, patient advocates, community groups, and lived-experience networks, organizers should be inviting those allies into a shared public moment: a local SAVE OSAP Townhall that you organize!

This townhall will be an opportunity to gather your allies, galvanize your message, educate your volunteers, and direct your supporters and allies towards resources and outreach opportunities in their local community. When you are talking to allies, supporters, or anyone you run into who may share an interest in defending Ontario's education system, tell them about your Townhall!

TACTIC 1 – PHONE ZAP

A phone zap is a community activity to call MPP offices to let them know how you feel about the takeover of local decision making in schools and the lack of funding for students. In a phone zap you'll gather people together, in person or virtual, to make calls together. This can be 2 people or 200 people, the focus is on calling conservative MPPs to provide your opinion and demand more for our schools.

Getting Started:

1. Ask people in your network to join you to make calls
2. Meet in person at a coffee shop, someone's dinner table, library or virtually on zoom
3. Practice what you'll say with each other and write a general script
4. Start making calls! If no one picks-up leave a voicemail
5. Debrief, hear if anyone spoke with anyone and celebrate together having done something to support students
6. Bonus: Take a picture of your action and post online encouraging folks to join the next phone zap! Make it a regular thing!

You can find the phone number of Conservative MPP offices online by filtering by party:

<https://www.ola.org/en/members/current>

TACTIC 2 – WRITE AN OP-ED

A well-crafted op-ed published in a local paper or online platform can go a long way in reaching your target audience. An op-ed should be an opinion piece with a sharp focus and credibly-sourced information to represent a specific viewpoint. A great op-ed will be honest, focus on personal stories and impact, name the problem (the Ford Government) clearly and propose a solution (increased funding for students). It should have less to do with winning an argument and more to do with telling the story.

How to get started:

1. Headline, what's the core message in your letter
2. Byline, your name, titles and short bio highlighting why someone should listen to you on this topic, for example you're a student, a parent, an education worker
3. Thesis statement, your opinion on OSAP
4. Reason, why you have this opinion

5. Facts, one or two sentences in a paragraph to back-up what you're saying or to demonstrate urgency
6. Conclusion, final paragraph reinforcing the opinion and reason with a call to action (write or call your MPP)

General Tips:

Use plain language, avoid jargon and acronyms

- ▶ Consider your audience (parents and teachers)
- ▶ Have sources for any facts presented
- ▶ Be compelling and respectful

If your op-ed is published, please send a link to organize@ontariondp.ca so that we can promote it. Share your op-ed and others in community groups on Facebook and WhatsApp.

More resources on writing op-eds publicly available here:

<https://www.theopedproject.org/resources>

TACTIC 3 – TABLE / FLYER ON YOUR CAMPUS

Tabling and flyering on campus is one of the most effective ways to reach students directly where they are. It allows you to have conversations about OSAP, rising costs, and student debt, while collecting petition signatures and identifying people who want to get involved. A strong table creates visibility, builds momentum, and helps normalize the conversation that students deserve better support. Contact organize@ontariondp.ca for any logistical support.

Getting Started:

- ▶ Pick a high-traffic location on campus such as student centres, libraries, main walkways, or near lecture halls
- ▶ Check with your student union or campus administration about booking a table or space
- ▶ Bring materials: flyers, petition sheets,

clipboards, pens, and a sign that clearly says **SAVE OSAP**

- ▶ Set up a simple, visible table that invites people to stop and engage
- ▶ Have a clear ask ready: sign the petition, share your story, and get involved

Engaging Students:

- ▶ Start with a simple opener: “Are you worried about OSAP or student debt?” or “Do you think education should be more affordable?”
- ▶ Keep conversations short and focused, but be ready to go deeper if someone is interested
- ▶ Ask students about their own experiences with tuition, rent, and financial aid
- ▶ Connect their story back to the campaign: cuts to OSAP mean less support and more debt
- ▶ Always end with an action: sign the petition, join the campaign, or attend an event

Flyering Tips:

- ▶ Stand in high-traffic areas and offer flyers directly to students as they pass by
- ▶ Keep your message short and clear: SAVE OSAP, protect student support, reduce debt
- ▶ Pair flyering with quick conversations whenever possible
- ▶ Go out at peak times between classes for maximum reach
- ▶ Track how many conversations you're having and what issues students raise most often

Remember to take photos of your table or flyering action and share them online to build visibility. We want these actions to build momentum. If your campus has an NDP student club, reach out to them to coordinate these efforts. If a club doesn't exist, start one! Reach out to us at organize@ontariondp.ca and we can assist you with this.

TACTIC 4 – ORGANIZE A TOWNHALL ON YOUR CAMPUS

A campus townhall is a powerful way to bring students together, elevate their experiences, and build collective momentum around the SAVE OSAP campaign. It creates a space for students to share stories, learn about the issue, and take action together. A strong townhall should combine personal testimony, clear information, and concrete next steps.

Getting Started:

- ▶ Book a room on campus through your student union or administration (lecture hall, classroom, or common space)
- ▶ Set a clear date and time that works for students (evenings or late afternoons are best)
- ▶ Invite speakers such as students, recent graduates, campus workers, local MPPs and municipal councillors, or advocates who can speak to affordability and OSAP
- ▶ Promote the event through social media, student groups, class announcements, and flyering on campus

Contact us at organize@ontariondp.ca to create a simple RSVP link to track attendance and follow up

Event Structure:

- ▶ Welcome and introduction to the SAVE OSAP campaign
- ▶ Short overview of OSAP changes and how they are affecting students
- ▶ Student stories and lived experiences (this is the most important part)
- ▶ Discussion or Q&A to allow participants to share and ask questions
- ▶ Clear organizing ask: sign the petition, join a phone zap, write an op-ed, or get involved locally
- ▶ Closing with next steps and upcoming events

Making it Effective:

- ▶ Focus on real student experiences rather than abstract policy
- ▶ Keep presentations short and prioritize participation and discussion
- ▶ Create an accessible and welcoming space for students from different backgrounds
- ▶ Collect contact information from attendees so you can follow up
- ▶ Assign roles in advance (facilitator, speakers, note-taker, outreach lead)

After the townhall, follow up with attendees by sending a thank-you email that shares key takeaways and clear next steps to stay involved. Share photos, stories, and highlights from the event on social media to build visibility and momentum. Invite participants to upcoming actions like phone zaps or campus tabling, and encourage them to bring others into the campaign. This follow-up is critical to turning interest into sustained involvement and growing the movement beyond a single event.