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'Voters want to hear the issue, not insults'

Five share their view of campaign

Say they're looking forward to debate

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A recent Star poll by EKOS Research Associates showed 14.3 per cent of voters were undecided. The Star is tracking five of these undecided voters in the weeks leading up to the Oct. 2 provincial vote.

Today, the five share their impressions of the campaign, at the midway point.

Dave Barker, 49, writer, Toronto:

"The one thing people running for office should understand is that most people really don't have the patience for mud slinging, and we've had a lot of that going on in this campaign from all sides," says Barker.

"The voters want to hear the issue and what the parties have to offer, not insults and jabs about the past. Everybody's too busy these days. We don't have time for that kind of nonsense. People are nervous about dwindling health care and what many believe is a failing education. It's time to get serious."

He said the NDP is no longer an option and that Liberal Leader Dalton McGuinty seems to be making some headway in getting his message out and he likes what he's hearing. "It's between Eves and McGuinty for me."

Nazir Sangay, 42, travel agency owner/immigration consultant, Oakville:

"What a difference a week makes," Sangay says. "Eves was on the attack when the election was called and I'm sure a lot of people thought he would just ride on his momentum ... but look at the polls, it's a very exciting race."

"I've listened to everyone, I'm giving all the leaders a fair chance. I'm really looking forward to the debate, but right now I have to say I'm leaning towards the Liberals."

With two young children, Sangay says McGuinty has gotten his attention with his platform on education. "We need more teachers, more schools. Education is just so important, society is built on education."

Michelle Johnston, 25, accountant, Toronto:

"I'm leaning towards Eves, but it isn't definite," says Johnston. "I want to hear it from the horse's mouth, and that's where the debate will be so important."

"A lot of people say the Conservatives don't look out for the good of all the people. You get bombarded with so many opinions you don't know who or what to believe anymore. I hope the debate really helps crystallize what's been going on the last little while."

She said NDP Leader Howard Hampton definitely won't get her vote, but that McGuinty has been getting her attention and she "definitely" wants to hear more of his ideas before she enters the voting booth.

Susan Alexander, 42, administrator, Vaughan:

"I'm still undecided, but I'll vote for whoever guarantees our education system gets back on track," says the mother of

two. "It's been chaos the past few years. It's either work-to-rule, or strikes or just plain unrest. I feel sorry for the students."

She says McGuinty seems more willing to work with teachers and that the Conservative government has gone out of its way to annoy them.

"I think McGuinty is talking about hiring more teachers and Eves says he wants to make it against the law for them to strike. I know most parents don't care about the politics between the educators and the government and just want there kids to be educated."

She also says she wants to know why she had to buy over \$200 worth of school supplies.

Vivien True, 42, self-employed, Oshawa:

"I listen to the radio every morning before I leave and I've been hearing a lot, but I haven't been hearing anything new from McGuinty and, to tell you the truth, I still don't know anything about Hampton," says True. "And I'm a bit disappointed in Eves, as well."

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