

Eek hosts discussion event focused on helping families



King Township Councillor Avia Eek (left), East Gwillimbury Trustee Lorelea Carruthers, Minister Teresa Piruzza, Bradford Deputy Mayor Rob Keffer and past Liberal candidate Gloria Rezsler, gathered to discuss issues recently. Submitted Photo

The Hon. Teresa Piruzza, MPP for Windsor West and Minister of Children and Youth Services, participated in a discussion last week at the home of King Township Councillor Avia Eek.

"I'm incredibly proud of the progress our Liberal government has made for children, youth and families," said Minister Piruzza. "Our education system is now the best in the English-speaking world, and we're looking to make it even greater."

Minister Piruzza highlighted the Ontario Liberal government's achievements for children and youth, including nearly \$3.3 million more in funding, all from the provincial government, to the County of Simcoe Children's Services.

Bradford Deputy Mayor and county councillor Rob Keffer, who attended the discussion, noted the new funding will support an additional 200 children with special needs while providing for child care for an additional 195 children.

"This \$3.3 million increase in funding from the provincial government will make a real difference for our local families," said Deputy Mayor Keffer.

Minister Piruzza also celebrated new schools opening throughout York--Simcoe, including two in East Gwillimbury alone in two years, and the roll out of full-day kindergarten.

As Minister of Women's Issues and chair of the cabinet committee on poverty reduction, Minister Piruzza fielded questions about children in care and a recently announced \$3 million investment in school breakfast programs.

She also spoke to the government's continued investments to break gridlock across the GTHA, including investing \$40 million to improve Highway 400 between Barrie and King Township, the extension of Highway 404 and increased GO transit services on the Barrie line.

"I understand, as a mom myself, how big a challenge traffic can be. It's certainly an economic and environmental issue but it's also about our quality of life: whether it's a long commute leaving us tired at the end of the day and late home to cook dinner, or stuck in traffic with a kid waiting at day care, we all know we have to break gridlock in this region," said Minister Piruzza, adding, "Under Premier Kathleen Wynne's leadership, our government has a real plan to invest in transit and improve our highways and we have a plan to pay for it, unlike the other parties."

The discussion was hosted by the York--Simcoe Provincial Liberal Association, bringing together Liberal members, stakeholders, municipal politicians and community members.