



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Oak Ridges MPP Frank Klees was at St. Charles Garnier School in Richmond Hill along with MPP Tina Molinari, centre, to meet with vice principal Kathi Tearne and others Tuesday.

'Underutilized in cabinet,' Klees considers leadership

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decided to retire as party leader, "the political landscape has completely changed"

Klees considered running for the leadership of the Canadian Alliance last year. He dropped out of the race when he discovered one of his financial backers tied the donation to Klees' support of another candidate if a second ballot was required.

But Klees doesn't think money will be an issue in the run to replace Harris.

"I don't believe it will be as expensive as is being reported in the media," he said. "It's not about fancy promotional material but one-on-one

contact with party members. It's a one-member, one-vote process. It's not going to be decided by Bay Street or big money

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but by ordinary Ontarians who are members of the party." The announced can-

didates are Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, Health Minister Tony Clement, Environment Minister Elizabeth Witmer and Labour Minister Chris Stockwell.

Klees, noting the cut-off for declaring for the leadership is in January, said any other candidates will probably declare their intentions within the next two or three weeks. First elected in June, 1995, Klees was re-elected in June, 1999, at which time he was appointed minister without portfolio, with responsibilities as whip and deputy house leader.

Klees lives in Aurora with his wife Jaime, and their two children, Alissa and Robert.

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