



# FAIR Ottawa survey of school board trustee candidates

Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

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FAIR Ottawa

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## Background

### What is FAIR Ottawa?

The Foundation Against Intolerance and Racism (FAIR) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organisation with over one hundred chapters and more than thirty-five thousand members across Canada and the United States. More details can be found on the organisation's website [www.fairforall.org](http://www.fairforall.org).

FAIR is dedicated to advancing civil rights and fundamental freedoms for all Canadians, and promoting a common culture based on fairness, understanding, and humanity. Recognizing Canada as a beautiful mosaic of diverse cultures and people, FAIR supports pro-human beliefs that appreciate the unique identities and common humanity of every single person, regardless of their viewpoints or immutable traits such as skin colour, ancestry or ethnicity.

The FAIR Ottawa chapter was formed in April 2022 and meets twice a month. Its activities are focused on promoting critical thinking, free inquiry, open debate and a common culture based on fairness, understanding, and humanity in Ottawa's schools, workplaces and municipal government.

### Why we did the survey

The purpose of the survey is to solicit the views of candidates running for election as trustees of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board on questions that are important to FAIR members. Through reporting each candidate's views, FAIR Ottawa aims to help voters decide who to support in the October 24th election. FAIR does not endorse or support any candidate for political office.

### How we conducted the survey

#### Creating the survey

At the first FAIR Ottawa meeting in August of this year a set of guiding questions was determined by the membership. These questions were then refined by a smaller working group, incorporating feedback from members and creating the final survey which is displayed in appendix one at the end of this document. The survey was hosted on a section of the FAIR website where candidates were invited to fill out the survey and submit their responses.

## Contacting candidates

Candidates were contacted using the information from the City of Ottawa's website of *Certified and acclaimed candidates and registered third party advertisers* ([link](#)). Candidates were invited to complete the survey by email on Wednesday August 31st, 2022. All but four candidates had an email address listed. Two weeks after sending the first email, all those who had yet to provide a response were contacted by telephone. Twelve phone calls were made in total. If candidates picked up the call they were reminded of the email and asked to fill out the survey. If they did not pick-up, a message was left with the same information.

## How results are being presented

The information gathered from the candidates is being presented exactly as it was submitted through the surveying tool. The results below display all the information that was collected. FAIR Ottawa did not change or edit the responses in any way. The aim in presenting the responses this way is to accurately and faithfully represent what the candidates submitted.

In order to ensure the survey responses are useful to voters they are organised by school board zone. Included are the names of primary and secondary schools within the zone as they are displayed on the school board's website. There is a list of candidates, in alphabetical order for that zone, along with information on whether or not the candidate responded to the survey. After the list of candidates for a zone is each of the questions in the survey and the responses candidates provided. If the candidate left a response field blank, the results don't show anything for that question.

## Zone 1 – West Carleton-March/Stittsville/Rideau-Jock

### Schools

#### Elementary

A. Lorne Cassidy Elementary School  
Fernbank Elementary School  
Goulbourn Middle School  
Huntley Centennial Public School  
Kars on the Rideau Public School  
Manotick Public School

North Gower/Marlborough Public School  
Richmond Public School  
Stittsville Public School  
Stonecrest Elementary School  
Westwind Public School

#### Secondary

South Carleton High School

West Carleton Secondary School

### Candidates

**Gananatha Subrahmanyam**

Did not provide responses

**Jonathon Salinas**

Did not provide responses

**Lynn Scott**

Did not provide responses

### Responses

None of the candidates running in Zone 1 provided responses

## Zone 2 – Kanata North/Kanata South

### Schools

#### Elementary

Bridlewood Community Elementary School	Roch Carrier Elementary School
Castlefrank Elementary School	Roland Michener Public School
Glen Cairn Public School	South March Public School
Jack Donohue Public School	Stephen Leacock Public School
John Young Elementary School	W. Erskine Johnston Public School
Kanata Highlands Public School	W.O. Mitchell Elementary School
Katimavik Elementary School	

#### Secondary

A.Y. Jackson Secondary School	Earl of March Secondary School
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### Candidates

<b>Ashley Darling</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Alex Rochman</b>	No contact information
<b>Alastair Luft</b>	Did not provide responses
<b>Alysha Aziz</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Michael Edwards</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Thomas DeGroot</b>	Did not provide responses

### Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

#### **Ashley Darling**

I am running for school board trustee to bring the voice of an educator to the table. I have a Bachelor of Education (Primary/Junior) and a degree in Child Studies. I have taught in the OCDSB, in London, UK, Kobe, Japan, and I am currently teaching ESL online.

With major disruptions over the last three academic years, we need to put a heavy emphasis back into education, particularly STEAM and language arts. While some students thrived with online learning, many others fell behind for a variety of reasons. As a board, we need to devote time, focus and resources to ensuring students are meeting or exceeding the expectations set out by the Province.

I want to see the board's Exit Outcomes upheld across the board, ensuring students are given every opportunity to develop and hone the characteristics and skills outlined.

I want to see parents continue to be included in the school community, as has been encouraged for many, many years. Parents entrust their children to the OCDSB, and we need to make sure that is never taken lightly.

You can read more about what I hope to see come out of my term as OCDSB Trustee for Zone 2 at [www.trusteedarling.ca](http://www.trusteedarling.ca).

### **Alysha Aziz**

I am running for School Board Trustee for Zone 2 because I believe Ottawa deserves representatives that are passionate and dedicated to working towards the best possible outcomes for our communities. You can learn more on my website [alysha2022.com](http://alysha2022.com)

### **Michael Edwards**

As an educator with 30 years experience in the public school sector, I believe that I am uniquely qualified to be your voice at the Ottawa Carleton District School Board, my wife and I have raised two amazing daughters who thrived in the public school system. I am a certified teacher and I have worked with at-risk youth and individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder in both a school and group home setting.

Over the span of my career, I have had the privilege of working with students possessing a range of exceptionalities. I have shared in their struggles and celebrated their successes. I believe that there is no limit to what students can accomplish when they are supported and encouraged in an environment that is both collaborative and inclusive. This belief will guide me in every decision I make on your behalf.

As a classroom teacher, I have witnessed first hand the positive effect that good policy, properly supported, can have on student learning. I am confident in my ability to ensure that any policies brought forward by trustees will be educationally sound and effectively implemented.

Certainly, these are challenging times. The pandemic has created many obstacles that students, their families, and educators continue to navigate. While we have begun to create spaces for marginalized students to be heard, there is still work to be done. The current economic environment has placed additional stress on many families in our community and the provincial government's planned cuts to education will no doubt present us with many challenges moving forward.

I am running to be school trustee because I believe an inclusive and vibrant public school system offers us the best chance for preparing our children to meet the challenges that they will face as they enter into adulthood.

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

<b>Ashley Darling</b>	Disagree
<b>Alysha Aziz</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Michael Edwards</b>	Agree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

<b>Ashley Darling</b>	Disagree
<b>Alysha Aziz</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Michael Edwards</b>	Neutral

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

<b>Ashley Darling</b>	Disagree
<b>Alysha Aziz</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Michael Edwards</b>	Neutral

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

<b>Ashley Darling</b>	Disagree
<b>Alysha Aziz</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Michael Edwards</b>	Agree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

<b>Ashley Darling</b>	Disagree
<b>Alysha Aziz</b>	Agree
<b>Michael Edwards</b>	Agree



Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

<b>Ashley Darling</b>	Neutral
<b>Alysha Aziz</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Michael Edwards</b>	Neutral

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

<b>Ashley Darling</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Alysha Aziz</b>	Disagree
<b>Michael Edwards</b>	Neutral

Is there anything else you would like to add?

### **Ashley Darling**

When it comes to "potentially controversial subjects and language", I feel that, if age appropriate, parents should be notified of the upcoming topic and be permitted to 'opt out' if it is contrary to their belief system. As the largest board in Ottawa, the OCDSB has families from all walks of life, and it is important that each family is treated with dignity and respect to their faith, culture, and/or beliefs.

That being said, when it is presented it, it needs to be done in such a way that students are still given the opportunity to think critically, being encouraged to take time to think about the subject matter, ask questions, form their own ideas and opinions without being told they must think one way or another.

### **Michael Edwards**

Some questions above require more context to answer properly. I've added my answers below.

Q: Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

In programs in which student participation has been limited because of the characteristics listed then yes, I would like to see policies implemented to address this situation. I also believe that students coming from low-income situations should be considered when considering programming and the participation of students previously excluded.

Q. Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

I believe that classrooms should represent the vibrancy of our community at large. I would agree that this should be a consideration when hiring. That being said, and in the case in which an applicant's immutable characteristic (sexual orientation, gender fluid, bisexual, gay, etc.) is not apparent and not shared, I would be interested in exploring ways to be more inclusive when it comes to hiring.

Q. White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

"White supremacy" is a very loaded term depending upon context. I would agree that there are systemic issues that have resulted in students being discriminated against because of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic situation etc. that need to be addressed with the goal of remove barriers.

Q. Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

Curriculum is set at the provincial level, teachers are obligated to deliver the curriculum that is set by a committee of educational experts in consultation with the community at large.

Q. I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

The OCDSB document on Gender Identity is designed to create safe places in school for gender diverse students. Knowing which students identify as being gender diverse facilitates the implementation of supports designed to ensure their safety and their emotional and mental well-being at school, provided they feel comfortable sharing. In the cases in which students have not yet confided with their parent(s) regarding their gender preference the hope is that by providing supports at school students will build the confidence needed to discuss with parent(s) their feelings in this regard.

If students believed that their gender choices, shared with teachers, would be relayed to parents they might not self-identify and as a result not utilize the supports; emotional, mental etc. available to them at a school. In these cases, students well being would be compromised and parents would still not know how their child identified. The policy on Gender Identity is designed to provide students with the supports that they need with the hope that a discussion with parents will ensue at some point in the future in cases in which parent(s) are not currently aware of their child's feelings.

## Zone 3 – Barrhaven West/Barrhaven East

### Schools

#### Elementary

Adrienne Clarkson Elementary School  
Berrigan Elementary School  
Cedarview M.S. Barrhaven Public School  
Chapman Mills Public School

Farley Mowat Public School  
Half Moon Bay Public School  
Jockvale Elementary School  
Mary Honeywell Elementary School

#### Secondary

John McCrae Secondary School

Longfields-Davidson Heights Secondary School

### Candidates

**Donna Blackburn**

Did not provide responses

**Patricia Kmiec**

Did not provide responses

**Natalie Rowe**

No contact information

### Responses

None of the candidates running in Zone 3 provided responses

## Zone 4 – Bay/Kitchissippi

### Schools

#### Elementary

Bayshore Public School	Fisher Park Public School
Broadview Avenue Public School	Hilson Avenue Public School
Connaught Public School	Lakeview Public School
D. Roy Kennedy Public School	Severn Avenue Public School
Devonshire Community Public School	Woodroffe Avenue Public School
Elmdale Public School	

#### Secondary

Nepean High School	Woodroffe High School
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### Candidates

<b>Suzanne Nash</b>	Did not provide responses
<b>Kevin Wright</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Rasha Alnaqeeb</b>	No contact information

### Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

#### **Kevin Wright**

The top two priorities I have are:

- creating an inclusive and positive school climate that promotes staff engagement and student achievement
- ensuring effective stewardship of the board's resources

What inspired me to run for the trustee position is a solid belief, based on years of listening to similar testimonies from teachers, ECE staff, and school administrators, that the people in the school system are passionate about what they do and they are skilled in their craft, but the system gets in its own way. Through past opportunities I have had as a professional engineer, and in various governance roles, I've concluded that the cost of taking shortcuts and the push to achieve more of the same outcomes with less of the necessary resources is a predictable set of diminishing returns followed by long term deterioration in quality.

Ultimately, my view is:

- The school system establishes the environments which foster growth and creativity for students and

staff.

- The culture of each school is central to the culture of our local communities each and every day
- The energy and passion our teachers and staff have for educating will directly shape the energy and passion our students have for learning
- The commitment our future leaders will have for our society is currently being forged by the commitment we have to our students

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Kevin Wright** Disagree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Kevin Wright** Neutral

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

**Kevin Wright** Agree

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

**Kevin Wright** Disagree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

**Kevin Wright** Strongly Agree

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

**Kevin Wright** Strongly Disagree

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

**Kevin Wright** Neutral

## Zone 5 – College/Knoxdale-Merivale

### Schools

#### Elementary

Agincourt Road Public School  
Bells Corners Public School  
Briargreen Public School  
Knoxdale Public School

Manordale Public School  
Meadowlands Public School  
Pinecrest Public School  
Sir Winston Churchill Public School

#### Secondary

Bell High School  
Merivale High School

Sir Guy Carleton Secondary School  
Sir Robert Borden High School

### Candidates

**Steven Warren**

Has provided responses

**Amanda Presley**

Did not provide responses

**Gemma Nicholson**

Did not provide responses

### Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

#### **Steven Warren**

I'm running because I believe in making change and introducing new perspectives to the Board of Trustees. As someone who graduated high school last year, I know what students need in order to achieve their best results. My main priorities include tackling the climate crisis, empowering the student voice and advancing public education.

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Steven Warren**

Strongly Agree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Steven Warren** Strongly Agree

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

**Steven Warren** Strongly Agree

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

**Steven Warren** Strongly Agree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

**Steven Warren** Strongly Agree

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

**Steven Warren** Disagree

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

**Steven Warren** Strongly Disagree

## Zone 6 – Rideau-Vanier/Rideau-Rockcliffe

### Schools

#### Elementary

Manor Park Public School  
Queen Elizabeth Public School  
Queen Mary Street Public School  
Robert E. Wilson Public School

Rockcliffe Park Public School  
Viscount Alexander Public School  
York Street Public School

#### Secondary

Ottawa Technical Secondary School

### Candidates

<b>Keith de Silvia-Legault</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Lyra Evans</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Ryan Ward</b>	Did not provide responses
<b>Shannon Boschy</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Anthony Hope</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Jennifer Moroziuk</b>	Did not provide responses

### Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

#### **Keith de Silvia-Legault**

I am a member of the LGBTQ+ community and one of my motivators is making sure school is a safe place for all students, my remaining top three motivators are:

**Student Advocacy:** Making sure students are stakeholders in their education, when students are taking part in the decision making process, they will enjoy learning more and therefore they will be retaining more.

**Mental Health:** Our schools right now lack proper resources for students experiencing mental illness, learning disabilities or neurodiversity, I want to improve mental health in schools on all fronts, for students and for staff.

**School Equity:** In Zone 6 particularly there is a large wealth disparity, both the highest income and lowest income neighbourhoods in the city are in Zone 6, so we see a lot of schools that suffered immensely



through the pandemic, school councils fell apart and now student's are missing out on some great school memories. We are also seeing the board continuing to close schools in this Zone while new neighbourhood developments are built every few years meaning more families, a lot of our schools parking lots are filled with portables, which is no place for a child to be learning.

### **Lyra Evans**

I am running to make systemic change, because I believe that society needs passionate people to get involved; to leave the world a better place for our children than we received it from our parents. My policy positions have been profoundly influenced by my experience as a homeless teenager, an experience which motivated me to get involved in activism, and by extension politics. I believe there are better systems possible for those struggling and in need, and I want to help build a society where the vulnerable aren't abandoned and left falling through the cracks.

My goal as an OCDSB Trustee is to identify and rectify the structural and systemic issues at the school board which could negatively impact student well-being or academic potential.

### **Shannon Boschy**

My central concern is the proliferation of identity politics in schools. If the trajectory of escalating tensions, division and toxicity that have affected the universities in Canada spread to the public school system and entrench themselves, we are creating long-term divisions in Canada.

I'd like to be part of confronting this in the public square

### **Anthony Hope**

I am running for the position of OCDSB Trustee in Zone 6 because I believe in the uplifting power that strong public education has on building leaders of good character and integrity. I am seeking to ensure the quality of our public education is preserved and to be an advocate for students, parents and school district staff.

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

<b>Keith de Silvia-Legault</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Lyra Evans</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Shannon Boschy</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Anthony Hope</b>	Agree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

<b>Keith de Silvia-Legault</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Lyra Evans</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Shannon Boschy</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Anthony Hope</b>	Agree

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

<b>Keith de Silvia-Legault</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Lyra Evans</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Shannon Boschy</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Anthony Hope</b>	Neutral

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

<b>Keith de Silvia-Legault</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Lyra Evans</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Shannon Boschy</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Anthony Hope</b>	Disagree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

<b>Keith de Silvia-Legault</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Lyra Evans</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Shannon Boschy</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Anthony Hope</b>	Neutral

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

<b>Keith de Silvia-Legault</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Lyra Evans</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Shannon Boschy</b>	Agree
<b>Anthony Hope</b>	Strongly Disagree

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

<b>Keith de Silvia-Legault</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Lyra Evans</b>	Strongly Disagree
<b>Shannon Boschy</b>	Strongly Agree
<b>Anthony Hope</b>	Disagree

Is there anything else you would like to add?

### **Keith de Silvia-Legault**

It is incredibly important that all students feel safe in school, if a student does not feel safe in school, their education will suffer, so we need to make sure the every student, no matter their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, or any other immutable characteristics feels safe in the classroom, the hallway, the library, the cafeteria, and the playground.

### **Shannon Boschy**

Re: Question - Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

This requires some qualification. Controversial subjects when age appropriate should be presented in politically and ideologically neutral terms. A teacher's politics, or ideologies endorsed by faculty, admin or unions should not be taught without context and and the inclusion of viewpoint-diversity.

Schools should recognize and respect the views and beliefs of constituent groups, like people of faith, and respect that the primacy rights of moral, ethical and spiritual guidance belong to parents. And they should never undermine those sacred bonds of trust between parents and children by imposing their own politics.

### **Anthony Hope**

It is unfortunate that in today's "culture wars," the discourse around identity is pitched as black-or-white. The questions above are phrased in a way to evoke a strong political statement (e.g., providing extra

support or not to students based on certain characteristics). I don't believe teachers should be "directed" to focus on one set of demographics over another, but rather create a classroom environment in which everyone feels welcome and where reasoned discourse on why certain people (based on race, gender, orientation, etc.) have been historically and/or currently marginalized. As with hiring decisions, the argument often centres around hiring/promoting based on meritocracy vs. based on diversity characteristics. I don't believe anyone should be hired solely based on diversity; rather, they should be hired or promoted because they are the best candidate. It is a reality, however, that there are often more than one candidate who is a "best-fit," so under these circumstances, I believe it would be appropriate to look at diversity characteristics to ensure the people being served by educational institutions see themselves reflected in staff, and for staff to bring a diversity of experiences to schools. Regarding white supremacy, I don't believe it is overly present in schools. However, the legacy of racism persists (both intentionally and unintentionally) and that should be discussed in a school environment towards the ends of identifying a problem, not to put others down.

## Zone 7 – Osgoode/Riverside South-Findlay Creek

### Schools

#### Elementary

Castor Valley Elementary School  
Greely Elementary School  
Metcalf Public School

Osgoode Public School  
Steve MacLean Public School  
Vimy Ridge Public School

#### Secondary

Osgoode Township High School

### Candidates

**Jennifer Jennekens**

Did not provide responses

**Maria Inam Khan**

Did not provide responses

### Responses

None of the candidates running in Zone 7 provided responses

# Zone 8 – Orléans East-Cumberland/Orléans South-Navan

## Schools

### Elementary

Avalon Public School	Maple Ridge Elementary School
Dunning-Foubert Elementary School	Summerside Public School
Fallingbrook Community Elementary School	Trillium Elementary School
Heritage Public School	

### Secondary

Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School

## Candidates

<b>Shannon Kramer</b>	Did not provide responses
<b>Donna Dickson</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Chanel Pfahl</b>	Has provided responses

## Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

### **Donna Dickson**

I think support for kids to attend education in a safe environment. So, efforts in providing youth with a safe environment.

Safety in schools for students and educators.

### **Chanel Pfahl**

I am running because as a former teacher I've seen firsthand how political activism has entered into schools and I am concerned that it is harmful to the students and to society at large.

I believe there is far too much emphasis these days on identity groups (dividing kids by race, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.). Kids are now learning that society is made of the "oppressors" (white, heterosexual, male, etc) and the "oppressed" (black, LGBT, etc). I would like to see us focus more on our common humanity, and the importance of equality for all. Not only are these biased teachings fostering a victimhood mindset, but the extreme push for political correctness is hindering the development of critical thinking skills. Schools should be prioritizing core skill development (reading, writing, math, science), not ideology, in order that each student is prepared to succeed in life. I will look for opportunities to bring

students, teachers, and administrations together in pursuit of their core mission of delivering educational excellence.

I am a person who isn't afraid to stand for what I believe is right, and I am open minded. If elected, these qualities will allow me to say what I think needs to be said even when it is unpopular, but also to listen to others who think differently.

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Donna Dickson** Strongly Agree

**Chanel Pfahl** Strongly Disagree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Donna Dickson** Strongly Agree

**Chanel Pfahl** Strongly Disagree

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

**Donna Dickson** Strongly Agree

**Chanel Pfahl** Strongly Disagree

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

**Donna Dickson** Strongly Agree

**Chanel Pfahl** Strongly Disagree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

**Donna Dickson** Disagree

**Chanel Pfahl** Strongly Disagree

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

**Donna Dickson** Strongly Agree

**Chanel Pfahl** Strongly Disagree

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

**Donna Dickson** Strongly Agree

**Chanel Pfahl** Strongly Agree

Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Donna Dickson**

I stands up for fairness and equality. Believes in families and youth to grow into young adults who will have an education to guide them toward higher education and employment ..... contributing to their communities.



## Zone 9 – Capital/Alta Vista

### Schools

#### Elementary

Alta Vista Public School  
Arch Street Public School  
Charles H. Hulse Public School  
Featherston Drive Public School  
First Avenue Public School

Hawthorne Public School  
Hopewell Avenue Public School  
Mutchmor Public School  
Pleasant Park Public School  
Vincent Massey Public School

#### Secondary

Canterbury High School  
Glebe Collegiate Institute

Hillcrest High School  
Ridgemont High School

### Candidates

**Jessie-Lee Wallace**

Has provided responses

**Nili Kaplan-Myrth**

Has provided responses

**Josh Rachlis**

Did not provide responses

### Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

#### **Jessie-Lee Wallace**

When I reflect on the last two-plus years—they have been an incredibly challenging time for everyone, but especially families. As a parent to a child in public school I saw this first-hand. Children and youth are still trying to catch up socially, emotionally, and scholastically. As part of my platform, I focus on getting students back to learning and thriving.

My hometown is Ottawa. I live with my family in the Glebe Annexe. I have a 15-year track record of community development and currently serve children and youth as a director in a city-wide charity. I am passionate and committed and have time to devote to this critical public service position. I have significant experience managing complex budgets, large teams, committees, and multiple relationships for positive community outcomes.

Here are a few of my platform areas:

- Reinstatement of extracurricular programs that build school communities and student development.
- Address overcrowding at schools. The Province dictates class sizes, yet there are still creative

solutions we can apply at the Board and school levels.

- Support evidence-based learning resources and Covid safety protocols, including masking, improved ventilation, and vaccines per Ottawa Public Health guidelines.
- Connect with staff, community partners, and the City to help make school streets safer, especially for drop-off and pick-up times.
- Champion the #righttoread, and interventions like structured literacy programs to get children back on track after a tough two years.

The Ontario Human Right Commission released a report after ten years of study earlier this year. The report clearly showed that we are failing our young people. Before the pandemic, 26% of Grade 3 students were not meeting literacy standards, and 19% of Grade 6 students. \* Over half of students with special needs were not meeting the provincial average. Similar results were also found in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

Due to the pandemic, anecdotal results and outcomes are far worse for literacy, math skills, and social and emotional skills. If elected, I will be hyper-focused on helping close the learning gap for all children and youth in Ottawa, especially in Capital and Alta Vista Wards. We can create schools as safer spaces where all students thrive, especially 2SLGBTQ+ and racialized youth, but we need to do so together. To learn more, please visit: [linktr.ee/jessieleewallace](https://linktr.ee/jessieleewallace)

\*(Source: The Right to Read Inquiry Report, February 2022, The Ontario Human Rights Commission).

### **Nili Kaplan-Myrth**

As a family physician, I spend my days advocating for my patients. I am running for Trustee for the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board so that I can advocate for the broader Ottawa community. There is significant overlap in the issues that come up in healthcare and in education. My passion is standing up for people with disabilities, for LGBTQ2+ rights, for neuro-diversity, for families that live in poverty, for all children and youth to learn in safe, supportive classrooms. I believe strongly in equity, to ensure that every family has access to high quality, publicly funded education. No student should face discrimination on the basis of culture, religion, language, gender identity, sexuality, physical disability, learning disability, or neurodiversity. As a mother of three grown children, I also believe that we should teach the next generation to be empathetic, to be engaged citizens, and to fight for environmental responsibility and sustainability.

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Jessie-Lee Wallace**

Strongly Agree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Jessie-Lee Wallace**

Strongly Agree

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

**Jessie-Lee Wallace** Strongly Agree

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

**Jessie-Lee Wallace** Strongly Agree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

**Jessie-Lee Wallace** Agree

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

**Jessie-Lee Wallace** Disagree

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

**Jessie-Lee Wallace** Strongly Disagree

Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Jessie-Lee Wallace**

Thanks for reaching out. Please let me know if you'd like to have any further discussions. JLW

**Nili Kaplan-Myrth**

The questions as you have posed them are ambiguous. I cannot answer them the way they've been written.

I strongly believe that issues of systemic discrimination must be addressed in classrooms and educational institutions.

There should be affirmative action policies in every board of education to address gender biases, systemic racial discrimination, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other forms of discrimination in the hiring processes for teachers, for staff, for academic promotions. There should also be affirmative action policies for boards of education, to ensure diversity of those elected as Trustees.

We should call out all colonialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and any other form of discrimination in classrooms and schools as well as boards of education.

I've been asked about the banning of books. Historically, literature is a target of political attack. I do not agree with the banning of books. However, materials that are historically problematic can ONLY be taught in the context of critical analysis. All students must be mature enough to engage in such a discussion, and educators must ensure the emotional and cultural safety of every student. This means that educators must be skilled. If they do not have the ability to discuss material critically, to analyze problematic discourse, they should be challenged.

Trans-identified and non-binary youth do not require parental consent to change their pronouns, their names, or their gender markers. They must be fully supported in school to be themselves, however they identify, at all times.

## Zone 10 – Somerset

### Schools

#### Elementary

Cambridge Street Community Public School  
Centennial Public School

Elgin Street Public School  
Glashan Public School

#### Secondary

Adult High School

Lisgar Collegiate Institute

### Candidates

**Justine Bell**

Did not provide responses

**John Bitzan**

Has provided responses

### Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

**John Bitzan**

What I perceived as the negative impact of pandemic-related public health measures on education and child care motivated me to become involved.

Another driver was that I read about and heard from parents and children who believe that hateful speech against them was on the rise.

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**John Bitzan**

Disagree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**John Bitzan**

Strongly Disagree

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

**John Bitzan** Disagree

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

**John Bitzan** Disagree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

**John Bitzan** Neutral

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

**John Bitzan** Neutral

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

**John Bitzan** Strongly Agree

Is there anything else you would like to add?

**John Bitzan**

I recognize that discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics exists in society and that no institution is shielded from it. My answer to the question about special supports is not intended to deny that this is the case. However, I strongly believe that needs-based criteria and learning outcomes data (e.g. grades and standardized testing results) in a given area should be the basis for any decision about providing “extra attention and classroom supports” there. Making a priori assumptions about the need for academic supports on the basis of immutable characteristics seems imprudent to me.

I would also clarify that I would not try to change existing HR practices at the Board.

I have answered neutral to two questions which I thought would require me to have more information to provide a definitive answer.

# Zone 11 – River/Gloucester-Southgate

## Schools

### Elementary

Bayview Public School  
Blossom Park Public School  
Carleton Heights Public School  
Clifford Bowey Public School  
Dunlop Public School  
Fielding Drive Public School

General Vanier Public School  
Robert Bateman Public School  
Roberta Bondar Public School  
Sawmill Creek Elementary School  
W.E. Gowling Public School

### Secondary

Brookfield High School

## Candidates

<b>Matthew Lee</b>	Has provided responses
<b>Mamata Dutta</b>	Did not provide responses
<b>Ryan St-Jean</b>	Did not provide responses
<b>Maher Jebara</b>	Has provided responses

## Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

### **Matthew Lee**

I believe in a proactive approach to our community's institutions. What this means is that rather than try to change them when you need them, be a part of their development before that point. As someone who has recently gotten married and am beginning to build a family (which will include kids), I want to guide the organization and structure of the schools where my kids will be educated at in the future. Especially in a governmental system where initiatives take years to get implemented, I am running in this cycle to start the ball rolling in time for my kids to see any such programs.

### **Maher Jebara**

Open minded discussions and encourage critical thinking

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Matthew Lee** Disagree

**Maher Jebara** Disagree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Matthew Lee** Neutral

**Maher Jebara** Disagree

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

**Matthew Lee** Strongly Disagree

**Maher Jebara** Disagree

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

**Matthew Lee** Disagree

**Maher Jebara** Disagree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

**Matthew Lee** Neutral

**Maher Jebara** Agree

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

**Matthew Lee** Strongly Disagree

**Maher Jebara** Disagree



I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

**Matthew Lee**

Agree

**Maher Jebara**

Strongly Agree

Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Matthew Lee**

I believe that all students, regardless of their identity, should have the environment and opportunities to pursue their academic interests. I also believe that we should not be using identity or personal background as the basis for decision making or selections. While we do need to take into considerations how policy decisions will impact marginalized communities, policy development should focus on addressing common and underlying issues to alleviate the struggle of all students who face a given circumstance.

**Maher Jebara**

We need to encourage dialogue and to acknowledge that humans are not a monolith. We are a diverse group of beings and should not be sheltered or sensitive to open peaceful discussions on different topics and view.

# Zone 12 – Orléans West-Innes/Beacon Hill-Cyrville

## Schools

### Elementary

Carson Grove Elementary School  
Convent Glen Elementary School  
Emily Carr Middle School  
Forest Valley Elementary School  
Glen Ogilvie Public School  
Henry Larsen Elementary School

Henry Munro Middle School  
Le Phare Elementary School  
Orleans Wood Elementary School  
Robert Hopkins Public School  
Terry Fox Elementary School

### Secondary

Cairine Wilson Secondary School  
Colonel By Secondary School

Gloucester High School

## Candidates

**Sandra Griffith-Bonaparte**

Did not provide responses

**Peter Heyck**

Has provided responses

**Cathryne Milburn**

Has provided responses

## Responses

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

### **Peter Heyck**

I am running for OCDSB Trustee because I want to engage with our community to build a school system that reflects local priorities and improves student achievement. My plan for student success includes:

1. Well-staffed schools with qualified teachers, appropriate resources and smaller class sizes
2. Restoration of school buildings so that schools are safe, clean and well maintained
3. Additional resources for students with special needs, and for their families
4. Education for all ages: from early childhood programs to classes for adults and seniors
5. Improved access to mental health resources for students and teachers

### **Cathryne Milburn**

I have a passion for helping my community, communications, creativity, and advocating for education, mentorship, diversity, and inclusion.

I want to represent residents as the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board school board trustee in Zone 12 to help foster student achievement, well-being, and equity throughout students' school careers.

I want students and parents, tell me what they want to see in their schools, and I will advocate to bring their voices to the school board.

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Peter Heyck** Agree

**Cathryne Milburn** Agree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.

**Peter Heyck** Agree

**Cathryne Milburn** Agree

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.

**Peter Heyck** Agree

**Cathryne Milburn** Agree

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.

**Peter Heyck** Agree

**Cathryne Milburn** Agree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.

**Peter Heyck** Neutral

**Cathryne Milburn** Agree

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.

**Peter Heyck** Disagree

**Cathryne Milburn** Disagree

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.

**Peter Heyck** Neutral


**Cathryne Milburn** Disagree

Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Peter Heyck**

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this survey. Please do not hesitate to contact me further should you have any questions or concerns.

# Appendix 1: Survey as seen by respondents



[ABOUT](#) [PROGRAMS](#) [CHAPTERS](#) [RESOURCES](#) [MEMBERS](#) [TAKE ACTION](#) [JOIN US](#)

## School Board Trustee Candidate Survey

Thank you for your interest in taking this school board trustee candidate survey. This is an opportunity to let your potential constituency know clearly where you stand on the issues that are important to them. Responses to this survey will be collected by FAIR Ontario and may be reported on our website.

What is your name?

What is your email address? (Email addresses will not be published)

In which school board district are you running for trustee?  
Algoma District School Board

Which electoral zone (Ward/Zone/Area) of your district are you running in (if any)?

What motivates you to serve on the school board (i.e., why are you running)? Is there a particular issue about which you are passionate that is part of your motivation to serve?

For the next set of questions, please indicate your level of agreement with the statements provided.

School boards should direct teaching staff to provide extra attention and classroom supports to students based upon race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.  
 Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

Boards should create school and program admission policies that prioritise students based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics.  
 Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other immutable characteristics should be considered in deciding who to prioritise for the hiring and promotion of teachers, administrators, and staff.  
 Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

White supremacy is a major systemic issue in Ontario schools today.  
 Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

School resource officers should not be present in schools.  
 Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

Potentially controversial subjects and language, even when age appropriate, should not be allowed for discourse in a school setting.  
 Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

I support requiring parental notification and/or approval for student name and gender changes.  
 Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

Is there anything else you would like to add?

[Submit](#)

**CONTACT**

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