

*OCASC asked all trustee candidates the following questions about school councils:*

**1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?**

**2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?**

**3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?**

*The process to gather answers was as follows:*

- *The list of candidates was gathered from the City of Ottawa election website the day after nominations closed.*
- *The email address listed next to the candidates name was used to send the questions*
- *All candidates were emailed at the same time and asked the same questions and given the same deadline to respond.*
- *If the email was returned undelivered, the email address was checked and the email was resent*
- *If there was no email provided on the City of Ottawa website, no further attempts to contact the candidate were made.*

*We hope this information is useful to you and your school council peers. Answers are printed verbatim except where considered potentially slanderous, extra spaces were used, or where spelling was incorrect. If the prescribed length of 300 words per answer was exceeded, edits were done at the discretion of the compiler. 18 of 32 candidates contacted responded (58% response rate)*

**Direct any questions to: [chair@ocasc.ca](mailto:chair@ocasc.ca)**



## Zone 1

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Sue Grant

1) I understand that school council's mandate is to enhance the learning experience of our children. I feel that school councils should support the teachers by providing them with additional tools to teach the curriculum, paid for through fundraising. They should also provide staff with feedback regarding the learning environment and parental concerns. They should provide staff opportunities to interact with students and parents in a less formal atmosphere such as social events. They should provide leadership opportunities for students by offering them a voice at the table through student representatives. School councils provide many of the necessary "extras" which make such a huge difference to the educational experience such as arts programming, playground and physical education equipment, social skills training and anti-bullying initiatives. School councils should be actively working to engage and involve parents in their child's education and to act as a communication conduit between parents, staff and the Board.

2) I have been an active member of a school council for more than 15 years. I have served on school councils in the UK, in the Catholic Board in Kingston and at the OCDSB, both elementary and secondary school. I am currently a voting member of council at Huntley Centennial P.S.

3) I want to establish a forum for school councils in our zone to exchange ideas and information. I want to work closely with school councils to improve communication with parents and community groups. I want to be actively involved and engaged with school councils. I want greater co-operation so that together we can find innovative solutions to make our schools a positive place of learning full of joy and enrichment for all children.

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### Andrea Ingham

No response received.

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**Todd Johnson**

No response received.

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**Lynn Scott**

1) Because school councils embrace a range of community views, they are a key resource for principals, superintendents and trustees on both school-based and district-wide issues that affect students and staff in their schools. Through their advice, fundraising and school volunteer recruitment, they enhance school life for students, and the support they provide helps school staff do a better job of meeting students' needs. School councils provide new ideas that are especially relevant to the climate in their schools, and offer insight into both negative and positive effects of potential changes to how the school operates. Effective school councils make better schools.

2) Served on executives of four parent/school associations and Carleton Council of Parent/School Associations. Three years as president of CCP/SA, building active participation from 25 to 60 of the total of 85 schools. Worked to maintain a meaningful voice for OCASC in board committees and to ensure consistent information flow to school councils district-wide. Continuing to refine an effective working relationship between OCASC and PIC, and to support a stronger advisory role for school councils relative to school improvement planning and other school-based decisions. Bringing school council concerns into board decision-making whenever needed.

3) I will be a phone call or email away whenever there is a need for advice, intervention, or action. I will alert councils to upcoming issues with a direct impact on their schools. Each year, I will try to attend at least one school council meeting per school. When major issues or information need zone-wide discussion, I will convene a zone meeting; smaller meetings may be held for area-specific issues. Issues requiring board discussion will be brought forward in a timely, strategic way, in collaboration with councils. I will advocate strongly on behalf of all Zone 1 schools and students.

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## Zone 2

Christine Boothby (acclaimed)

## Zone 3

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Donna Blackburn

- 1) School councils can play many different roles that enhance the school community. Councils can provide advice to the administration on what is important to the parents in the school. Additionally, councils organize many events that bring the community together and raise funds that enhance the student experience.
- 2) I have personally sat on two school councils and held leadership positions on both. (Vice-chair) I was chosen by my peers to be their OCASC representative. I then went on to sit on the OCASC executive and represented OCASC on two Board committees. (Children and Youth at Risk and Human Resources)
- 3) As a Trustee, I meet with and communicate with the Councils in my Zone on a regular basis. Upon my re-election this will not change.

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### Kimberly Bouffard

- 1) I think the role of the school council is to provide ideas and suggestions to assist the principal and, where appropriate, school board trustees in their decision-making on educational issues. They provide advice and represent an important segment of the school community. I think that they play a significant role in engaging parents and in looking out for the best interests of all students in the school.
- 2) Despite having worked with schools and schools boards across ON, AB and BC for the last 8 years I haven't really had the opportunity to work very closely with school councils. My work was either at the Superintendent or Director level or working directly with Teachers and Students. As a teacher and coach I often worked directly with parents but never with a school council.
- 3) I am a Community Mobilizer, Educator and Program Manager by trade. As such, I am someone who needs to have the full picture before making a decision and the only way to do that is to work with all the key stakeholders. I see school councils as a key stakeholder.

One of the first things I did when I put my name forward as a trustee, was sit in on a few school council meetings at schools throughout my zone "Barrhaven/Knoxdale-Merivale" . Through this experience, it became very clear to me that school councils bring a wealth of information and experience to the table. As your trustee, I would make it a priority to be in constant contact with the school councils in my area. I see them as a great resource for bouncing ideas and for getting a sense of the issues and priorities that are of concern to my constituents.

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### **Ashok Kumar Kalra**

Candidate indicated via email that answers to the questions could be found on the candidate's website:  
<http://ashokkalra.weebly.com/>

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### **Chi Sui**

No response received.

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## Zone 4

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Theresa Kavanagh

No response received.

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### Calvin Palen

No response received.

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## Zone 5

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### David Foltin

1) I feel that school councils play a vital role in our education system. They provide a forum through which parents and other members of school communities can contribute to improving student achievement and school performance.

The partnership of school and community representatives on a school council helps to build mutual understanding and interaction between a school and its community, resulting in benefits for both. By giving information to parents and community representatives, getting feedback from them, and presenting their views to the school and the school board, a school council involves the community in the discussion of educational issues and helps the school identify and respond to the educational needs of the community.

I feel that the most effective school councils are those that focus on student learning and the best interests of all students. School councils should also be actively involved in setting school priorities for improving student achievement, promoting meaningful parental and community involvement and actively seeking the views of their school communities. They should have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and include members who represent the diverse views of their school communities.

I also feel that it is necessary for school councils to keep well informed about school and board policies and procedures, have clear and consistent processes for decision making, communicate with the community about their activities and maintain high ethical standards.

Education is a partnership involving parents, students, teachers, principals, school boards, government, and the community. School Councils give us an opportunity to strengthen that partnership, and to be part of a dedicated team working to ensure a high quality and accountable education system for our children.

2) With my extensive educational background as a director at a local college, a former public high school teacher, and a McGill University graduate with a Bachelor of Education degree specializing in secondary school education, I am thoroughly familiar with the history, role, workings, and the necessity of, school

councils. During my years as a public high school teacher, I attended and participated in a number of school council meetings and was directly involved in their fundraising efforts for a number of field trips and special events. As a candidate for OCDSB Trustee, I have been in contact with all of the school councils in my zone, providing them with information on my candidacy and my contact information. I have recently accepted an invitation to be a guest speaker at Sir Guy Carleton Secondary School's Parent Council meeting on Tuesday, October 7th.

3) The school councils of the College Ward (Zone 5) can expect me to represent the interests of the students, parents and constituents of the Ward, and I feel that can best represent our local interests, as I am the only candidate for school trustee who lives and works in the College Ward. They can also expect me to be a point of contact for parents and community members who have questions and/or concerns about their local school and to help in finding solutions or facilitating interaction with the school and board administration. As a Director at a local college, and a former public high school teacher, I am the only candidate for College Ward trustee who has the educational background and experience to effectively represent the councils' voices to the school board. The councils could also expect me to establish regular and consistent communication with all school councils through the use of email, e-newsletters, Twitter, Facebook, websites, meetings and other public forums. I would also facilitate communication among school councils within my jurisdiction to be better able to speak on their behalf at the board table. I would also consult with parents, students and supporters of the board on the board's multi-year plan and bring the concerns of these groups to the attention of the board. And I could be expected to attend school council, community group, municipal council and other government meetings. I would also work with my school board colleagues and other community partners to ensure that all the students within the board's jurisdiction have equal opportunities to reach their maximum potential.

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### **Anita Olsen Harper**

No response received.

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### **Jeremy Wittet**

1) School councils play an important role in our community schools. They provide a vital communication link between parents/guardians, teachers, administration and the student body. School councils should play a central role in establishing the values and overall tone of the local school. Council members should be consulted by school administration on issues such as school codes of conduct, parent involvement, school projects and community partnerships. I believe it is important that the board of

trustees and senior administration also consult with parent councils if changes are proposed to school operations. Councils must have input into changes such as bell times, transportation routes, special education resources and school accommodation reviews.

2) As a former trustee with the Grand Erie District School Board, I had the pleasure of working with many school councils in my district. I was pleased to accept many invitations to attend meetings and provide updates on what is taking place at the board table. During my time as a student in the system I sat on my local school council representing the student body. In the past, my family has been actively involved with school council. My father, now a retired secondary school teacher, participated in monthly school council meetings as the staff representative, while my mother was a community representative on the elementary school council.

3) If elected as trustee, I am committed to being an accessible and vocal trustee on behalf of all school councils in Zone 5 (College) I will make every effort to attend school council meetings and functions on rotating basis, as well as provide monthly newsletter updates on what is taking place at the school board. I am also committed to ensuring school councils can focus on the things they do best and reducing the fundraising strain placed on them for items such as play structures and school equipment.

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## Zone 6

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Talis-Ilmars Brauns

(could not be contacted – no email contact information available)

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### Chris Ellis

1) The school councils have a key role in connecting the school to the community. They have an active role in welcoming and supporting the full diversity of their schools and communities; ensuring that everyone's voice is heard. School Councils can give meaningful input and clear advice to the school, the School Board, the parents and the community on initiatives, both during school hours and extracurricular, that would best meet the needs of the students and communities. School Councils should act as advocates for student success, speaking out and lobbying decision makers at every opportunity. In addition, School Councils can also advocate for support for teachers and school administrators from the Board and the provincial government to ensure there is adequate funding and resourcing to deliver a full and robust curriculum.

#### 2) In Schools

- Queen Mary
  - community member, 2007-2010, 2011-2012, 2013-14
  - input on supporting multicultural population, parent engagement
- Hawthorne
  - community member, 2011-2013
  - helped address communication issues
- Rideau

- parent member, 2002-2003
- Chair, 2003-2005
- community member, 2008-2014
- supported priorities of student success, parent outreach/engagement, welcoming environment, community connections
- implemented after school basketball
- brought in Computers for Schools
- galvanized community to fight threatened school closure
- Queen Elizabeth
  - 2001-2002, represented school council at OCASC and in boundary review process
- Overbrook
  - 1996-2000, led school council advocacy through three school closure processes and helped retain Middle French Immersion in the area
- Member and Executive member of Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC)
  - Liaison Officer, Zone 6, 1998-2001
  - Vice Chair 2001-2002
  - Communication Officer, 2001-2003
  - Coordinator, OCASC Conference and School Council Workshop, 2003
  - Treasurer, 2005-2007, 2011-2012
  - Representative, various Board Committees, 2003-2013

#### **School Board**

- Brought groups and individuals together to advocate for local schools
- Presented to the Board and lobbied Trustees on behalf of School Councils on schools and school closures, boundary issues, program issues

#### **Member, OCDSB Committees**

- Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) representative to:
  - Education Committee, 2011-2012
  - Budget Committee, 2011-2013
  - Diversity & Equity Task Force, 2010-2011
  - Community Council for Ethnocultural Equity, alternate 2010-2011
  - Special Education Program and Service Review Advisory Steering Committee, 2003-2006
  - Consultation Policy Task Group, 2001-2002.
  - Co-authored OCDSB Consultation Policy
- Quadrant C Closure Study, 1999-2000
- Beacon Hill-Ottawa East Secondary Accommodation Study, 2008-2009
- Advisory Committee on Equity, Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres, 2011-present
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), community representative, 2010-present
- Secondary School Review Ad Hoc Committee, SEAC representative, 2010-present

3) I look forward to working closely with School Councils to build school and School Council capacity. I will support School Councils to connect with the full range of families in their communities. I will regularly, transparently and clearly update School Councils of upcoming and current issues and decisions of the Board that will affect their students and schools. I am keenly committed to robust, continual and effective consultation with all stakeholders including students, teachers, parents, and community members. I will work hard to ensure the best possible outcomes for students in Zone 6 and in all other public schools in Ottawa. I am committed to on-going communication and contact with School Councils who I see as valued and important partners in achieving the full potential of schools and education. I will be readily available to speak with School Councils and families at any time and look forward to serving the school.

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## Zone 7

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Curtis Bulatovich

No response received.

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### Lori Daneliak

1) I feel that a school council is meant to enhance the school resources and school experience for parents, teachers and students. I do not believe that school councils should have to make up for the shortfalls of the Board (which is what they have been doing in order to survive). I believe that if there was a little less pressure on the school councils to make up for these shortfalls, then they could really get back to enhancing the school experience. Less stress/pressure should increase the number of parent volunteers as well.

2) Up until recently, my experience with school councils has been from the Community Association end of things. For the past 10 years I have been the connection between our Co-operative nursery school and our local parent council to the community association. I make sure community events aren't planned for the school fundraising events and we always make sure to advertise the school fundraising events. I have written letters on behalf of the community association in support of things needed for our local school.

I have recently stepped down from our Community Association and am sharing a secretary position with Osgoode Public School Parent Council. I have shifted my perspective and would now like to be on the inside of the parent schools, still keeping connections with local community associations. I have been to 3 different parent council meetings and am compiling notes about each school which include the main fund raisers, main concerns, and what seems to be working best at each and what isn't working well. I will be sharing any tips on what is working well with each parent council at the end of having attended all 15 and getting more details. I have done this with local community associations and it has been very helpful.

3) They should expect to know me to see me. Upon knowing me in person, they will feel comfortable

letting me know what issues arise. I will help by discussing those issues with other Trustees and problem solve from there. I will build relationships and network resources. They can also expect to always be treated with respect and genuine caring. They can also expect a fast answer and a full follow-up. I will always be trying to recruit volunteers for your organization as well as parent councils and community associations and will do everything I can to help with the main fundraisers by helping to plan, by advertising, by showing up to help and enjoy each community.

### **Jerrett DeFazio**

No response received.

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### **Mark Fisher**

No response received.

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### **Jennifer Jennekens**

1) School councils provide an important forum for which parents and community members can contribute their thoughts and concerns regarding student achievements, school performance and community priorities. Issues relating to student conduct/dress codes, safe arrival programs, fundraising activities, policy strategies and planning, board funding, and conflict resolutions give council members the opportunity to ensure accountability and make sound recommendations. Many school councils are also actively involved in organizing social events for the school community celebrating important events and providing opportunities for students to interact with their peers outside of school hours.

Student success and improved learning opportunities should be the goal of the Councils. The actions of the councils should be to focus on activities which help young people succeed in school and give supporting communication between school and the home. Being connected to the community through the council benefits the individual schools and offers different perspectives as each community/school may have unique and differing concerns. Also, linking the school to the community resources available encourages greater support for the school from organizations that may not otherwise have a direct link. A good community representative can help build public engagement in the local school beyond the parents and caregivers.

Membership in the School Council is important and rewarding as I strongly believe it takes a community to raise a student.

2) My first experience with a school council started when I was in Grade 8 and ran unsuccessfully against

the “popular” girl. Thankfully, my volunteer work with school events made up for my disappointing loss.

As a parent of a special needs student, my parental involvement has been on an individual basis. I have worked closely over the years with school council members as well as the many Educational Assistants, Special Education teachers, Principals, and any other staff member that was directly or indirectly involved in my son’s academic life. This ongoing relationship helped my son navigate through challenging situations and gave him the opportunity to participate in many academic and social events.

I feel it is important and satisfying to participate and advocate for our children/students. Children are the cornerstone of our society, as our children succeed, society succeeds. And finally, to quote Franklin Roosevelt, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future".

3) Strengthen the ideology that supports an environment where the curriculum teaches a combination of academics and social behaviour skill sets. School is not just about academics. It is also about socialization. Social skills are learned through team sports, extra-curricular activities and friends within the neighbourhood. Graduating from high school, students should have a skill set that gives them the basic tools to survive and excel in post-secondary education and eventually the work-force. This skill set can only be achieved by a balance of good education and learning basic life skills.

Promote an “integrated” not “secluded” environment for students with special needs. Depending on the student’s ability, some students may benefit and flourish by participating in certain classes such as gym or music. As a parent of a special education student, students do not learn or feel they are a part of team/school and quite often are not recognized by their classmates.

I also feel strongly that we need to expand and promote more social policies in regards to bullying in schools. The sad reality is that human nature will probably never allow bullying to go away. In light of this, we must give children the resources to stand up to their bullies assertively and empower them to ignore hurtful words and actions while understanding it does not reflect upon themselves! We need to teach children to be critical thinkers as young as possible and allow them to express themselves in a safe environment to facilitate their healthy growth and development. This is a fundamental basic in developing self-confidence.

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## Zone 8

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Keith Penny

- 1) I feel that the school council plays a vital role in the education system as a whole not only to staff and students. They are a local partner and an advisory body for the administration but also set standards, influence decisions, monitor achievement, support learning and provide for enhancements that could not be otherwise funded.
- 2) I served as an elementary school council chair for 10 years and as a secondary school council chair for 4 years.
- 3) I will attend sc meetings as often as possible. I will listen to and act upon local sc concerns. I will support parental engagement and try to make sure that sc's get PRO and other grants. I will try to have zone wide meetings and will keep sc's updated with the latest information on board and other issues.

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### Virginia Quinn

No response received.

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### Pat Ready

No response received.

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## Zone 9

Shawn Menard (acclaimed)

## Zone 10

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Idris Ben-Tahir

(could not be contacted – no email contact information available)

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### Erica Braunovan

1) School Councils are an integral aspect of our school system. They are a great opportunity for community members, especially parents to get involved with their schools, and their children's education. I see them as a bridge between families and schools. I know that many of them also fill a needed fundraising role for events and programs at the school.

2) In my role as Social Worker providing addictions services to schools I have worked with many school councils to improve awareness of addictions issues. I have also supported several events put on by the school council at my children's school.

3) School councils can expect that I will be responsive to communication and open to listening to their ideas. I look forward to working with school councils and consulting with them on a variety of issues.

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### Guy Hughes

1) Ontario Regulation 612 defines school councils in law, but they are so much more than that. School councils are the keystone to healthy engagement between parents and school staff. They must have a strong formal mandate to plan curricular, social and community activities, and consider challenges facing staff and students. However, I believe that school councils should have the ear of the administration, including school board trustees, so that when parents are widely concerned about any particular issue they can easily voice their concerns through a formal body. School councils should also be accorded the role of sounding board for new ideas for school administrators. The dynamic exchange of ideas and feedback between staff, parents, students and the wider school community should be anchored around school councils.

2) My mommy was on the school council when I was just a tyke. I remember having to carry proposed bus zone maps back and forth. Does that count? ;)

But seriously, because my partner and I are still only preparing to be foster parents with the Childrens' Aid Society, we have not had the chance to be involved with a school council as parents.

I'm not running for glory, power and certainly not for the wages of this office. And, unlike others, I am not backed by a political party juggernaut. I'm running to make sure students come first, especially when it comes to rumoured plans for strike action. Teachers and school staff must be paid fairly and given fair benefits, and they must have a right to strike in severe circumstances. But the province also needs to come to the bargaining table prepared to listen and negotiate honestly and openly.

3) I am a strong believer in democracy. For me that means elected officials serve the residents who elected them, and that those residents have a right to have their views heard by their elected officials, who in turn have a serious obligation to listen. I would never use this office to woo a political party or as a backdrop for a provincial electoral campaign.

As your trustee, I will ensure students come first in every decision of the school board. I will make myself available to discuss your issues, no matter how big or small.

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## Colin Leger

1) In my opinion, school councils are an important stakeholder which should be taken seriously during the policy development process. As you may have seen, one of my campaign pillars is to improve public consultation methods between the OCDSB and the various school councils by reforming any existing public consultation methods. In doing so, school councils, with their wealth of knowledge and firsthand experience, would be allowed to provide their input succinctly and professionally to the OCDSB. If elected, I would love to champion any form of public consultation reforms to ensure that school councils are taken seriously so that a school council can play a part in the lives of staff and students.

2) I will be quite candid in answering this question; all of my experiences with public school systems derive from my involvement at the student level. However, in my humble opinion, experience with school councils shouldn't be a "do or die" facet for the ideal school board trustee. Instead, policy professionalism should be the desired trait for any school board trustee with the OCDSB—which I outline in the following question.

3) If elected as the school board trustee for Zone 10, you would have a dedicated school board trustee that would promote evidence based policy decisions, encourage public consultation and serve as an

honest broker during public consultation and collective bargaining agreements. Furthermore, due to my education from the Master of Arts program at the University of Ottawa Public and International Affairs program, you would have a trustee who understands new public management styles which would benefit the OCDSB immensely.

In brief, I humbly offer that I would be a great school board trustee for Zone 10 and plan to focus on the following three priorities if elected.

- Reform public consultation methods
- Promote/increase after-school programs which provide a safe place for students after school.
- Implementing more social policies to reduce bullying in schools—i.e. encouraging more college/university youth to help solve the problems of our era.

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**Daniel Nugent**

No response received.

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## Zone 11

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Sylvia Martin

1) It is in the policy documentation of the OCDSB, the teachers union, and no doubt Parent affiliated organizations what their expectations are of their school board trustee.

The school council has to follow the expectation of the Provincial Governing body and work within all these perimeters. Given the source of funding for the Council to administer on behalf of the Schools as dictated/expected by the Province, Teachers unions, and Parent groups. I see the role very much as an active Liaison between all stakeholders, the teachers, the students. It is a relationship that needs to be respected and nurtured ongoing.

I get the importance of education; the long term importance and the long term career effect on a person's life. Community economics, and the Global exchange of ideologies all begin, day one, when a child attends their first class. We as parents see it "day at a time." The economists who do the projections see it as long term. The province, the main funding body wants to see long term initiatives as well.

The OCDSB has its plan in effect until it is up for revision in 2015.

Every three months I will be submitting to all stakeholders a report card for them to grade me and if after that first year, I have one F after another, then I need to step down. For the stakeholder, it means that I am not the right fit. Thing is, I believe I am.

I believe in the cliché "it takes a village to raise a child."

We depend on our teachers, and their resources, and the school board and its resources. We trust "them" with our children, (their minds and well being).....I subscribe to working together in a respectful and professional manner.

2) Being involved with the school community saved my life: My dad had just died, I felt... what was the point...I tended to lunch in the same area as the "brainiacs" (student council; debate teams, activity clubs.) And the next 5 years ate my lunch there. An older student on council took me under her wing. Following year ran for class representative because No one wanted it. I was acclaimed.

**1978-82 York University, Toronto, ON.** On campus jobs: Job #1 opening coffee shop at 8 am and Job #2 giving out change in the arcade/games room during my spare/after school / weekends. Manager can't make council meeting, to present. Report revenue: \$14,000.00 (primary source of \$ for college operating budget.) I found this number odd because I kept statistics on how much money students were feeding the machines. I requested an audit from Students council. Council authorizes me to do an audit before contacting a professional forensic auditor and to keep information in-house. I found Council % was actually \$34,000 a year/ After attending weekly council meetings as a guest to learn the process/ it is suggested why don't I run for council seat next election. I do, and win. Year two, Council suggested I be their representative on the Board of Publications as their Director and on The Board of Governors. Both Letters were approved and I find myself on two more Councils. Incredible learning experiences.

My dad's regiment was one of the first Canadian units to join the Americans as they arrived in Korea, 1950. His legacy to me is the act of being of service to others. THAT is what makes a community healthy and successful and THAT is what makes me "tick".

3) I am a person completely committed to the shareholders of this community on all levels as we all work together to continue and to improve on current actions: have the best school experience and educational experience in this province for the student, teacher, and parent.

I believe in exploring all options. That means listening to the teachers, the students and partnering with business and lobbying the Provincial Govt.

It concerns me actually when a Trustee does not live in the school zone they plan to represent. This explains a lot really, the fact currently, most parents / stakeholders have no idea who their Trustee is, or what the Trustee does, or who to contact when they have an issue; after 4 years: "WE" have a communications problem.

I will bring Four years of monthly "Let's Talk" at central locations for each community in the Zone. Four years to meet with the schools and teachers and hear what they would like to contribute to make their school zone THE BEST. I won't be just wearing a button that says Trustee on it; I will be that key component in keeping our relationships working in a positive and respectful way. It's time families feel part of a whole, and not isolated in the many pockets of every neighborhood that makes up Zone 11.

I am taking my role on as a full time responsibility. You won't see any "in-camera" with no disclosure points in the minutes of my meetings. It will be Transparency and Accountability 100%. You won't see me going to conferences out of county at the stakeholder's expense. We have Skype, we can download conference PDF's. I won't require an additional honorarium to serve on a committee. It is part of the job as I understand it.

## Jeff Scullion

No response received.

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## Shirley Seward

1) School councils should play a critical and central role in the lives of staff and students. They should contribute to a sense of community; enhance the relationship between home and school; and provide valuable advice to their Principal, Trustee and senior Board staff. In the context of River Zone schools that I have represented as Trustee for the past four years, school councils perform these duties through active engagement in a range of productive activities.

River Zone school councils create a **stronger sense of community** by organizing or introducing extra-curricular activities such as sports, clubs and special events. New activities spring up every year, and enrich the lives of students and staff. For example, multicultural lunches celebrate diversity in our schools, and create student pride in their heritage. River Zone councils also develop important community partnerships that contribute to student well being and enhance learning. One school, for example, developed partnerships with several donors who contributed to a an outdoor learning and play space for students with developmental disabilities.

In River Zone, school councils take very seriously their duty to enhance the **home-school relationship**. Parents are encouraged to attend school council meetings, and minutes are distributed to the parent body. Many councils contribute to the establishment and maintenance of school and school council websites, and other electronic media such as Facebook. School councils often organize and send out notices about specific upcoming events, as a way to encourage greater parental participation in the life of their children's school.

River Zone school councils play a significant role in **providing ongoing advice and input** on Board and school budget and education priorities, new Board initiatives and policies, preparation of the Principal profiles used in hiring/transfer of principals, annual school EQAO scores, and a wide range of other critical issues.

Before being elected Trustee for River Zone in 2010, I was actively engaged in my daughters' school councils. I learned quickly that this was an excellent way to engage with my children's education and school life. In fact, it was this engagement that motivated me to run for Trustee in 2010.

2) Over the past four years, as the Trustee for River Zone, I have been closely involved with all the school councils in River Zone. I have attended meetings on a regular basis, and have kept in touch with the co-chairs and other Council members between meetings. I often turn to councils for input and advice on

Board policies and initiatives, and have received very valuable feedback on a range of important issues including full day kindergarten, special education, outdoor learning spaces and play structures, as well as the appropriate and effective use of technology in the learning process.

Frequently I receive a “heads up” from Councils on issues that are of concern to parents. A recent example raised by one of my school councils is the large size of some kindergarten classes. I encouraged and facilitated delegations of parents at Board meetings to elaborate on these concerns and to ask questions about Board policy and practice.

Every year for the last four years, I have held consultations with school councils prior to the development of the \$800 million OCDSB budget. On the basis of that input, I have made amendments to the budget to increase support for special education, outdoor learning spaces, English as a second language for recent immigrants, and other initiatives that are important to River Zone.

3) As a Trustee, I am grateful that we have a school council structure in our schools, and that OCASC provides a valuable space and mechanism for dialogue and exchange. I was absolutely delighted to attend the recent Training Day, where there was so much to share and learn. And OCASC provides valuable input on an ongoing basis to the Board and its committees.

Councils should expect me to continue to be very engaged with them if I have the honour of being re-elected for the next four years. Councils should expect me to be responsive to their needs. They should expect me to keep them informed about new initiatives and activities at the Board. And, they should expect me to seek their input regularly.

My commitment to councils for the next four years is to work with you to help accomplish what is best for our children, in terms of their achievement and well being. As your Trustee, my priorities are the always the councils, parents, students and the community in River Zone.

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## Zone 12

- 1) What role do you feel a school council should play in the lives of staff and students?
- 2) What experience do you have working with or for school councils?
- 3) What should councils expect from you as the trustee representing their schools?

### Peter Heyck

No response received.

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### Sandra Schwartz

- 1) I believe school councils are an integral part of the school community, and an important partner in education. Communities need to have meaningful input and an ability to influence decisions affecting their local schools – school councils provide that role in a more formalized way. They provide a unique forum for parents and staff, and by extension students, to share news, connect on important school issues and initiate and support projects that enrich education. An active and engaged community, through parent involvement in school councils, contributes to the success of a school and to positive student outcomes.
  - 2) I have been an active volunteer in various school council activities, from fundraising initiatives, to meet the teacher nights, to graduation ceremonies. As an active and involved parent, I've attended many school council meetings and proudly served as school council chair at Henry Munro Middle School for two years.
  - 3) I will offer a new type of representation at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) with a fresh perspective and a commitment to better, consistent communication. I will be accessible, approachable and accountable. As part of my commitment to the residents in Zone 12, it's my intention to attend school council meetings at all my area schools at least quarterly. I will create ways to regularly update the community by website, newsletter and/or social media to keep residents informed when Board policies change, as well as when I come across innovative or interesting ways to encourage parental involvement. Most importantly, I will work with school councils to encourage their representation at Board meetings and to influence government policy when issues need our collective attention.
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## Michael Urminsky

1) The primary goal of any School Council needs to focus on student achievement and involving parents in helping to improve student achievement. In addition, school council's play important roles in making new parents feel welcome, building linkages with the broader community, fund-raising and generally enriching the school environment. Education workers need to feel supported by their School Council, and this is best done through regular consultation with the principal and teacher representative on the school council.

2) I have been an active member of Le Phare School Council for 3 years. I pushed early on for the school council to focus more on supporting the school improvement plan for student achievement (SIPSA). I am most proud of my work with the school principal to address declining EQAO math scores, math was one of the challenges identified in the school's SIPSA. We worked together to bring a world class speaker on the teaching of mathematics to give a talk to parents of two schools in the community. At the same time we have been working to implement a series of family math nights at Le Phare. The first family math night for JK, SK and grade 1 will begin on October 7 2014. We have partnered with the Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre to bring in a math program into the school where parents and their children can have fun learning math together. I hope to soon implement the same for the upper years at Le Phare, as we bring more community partners on board.

3) A Trustee owes school councils and the parents they represent their ability to listen and engage with them, but they also owe them their judgment and experience. As a trustee School Council's should expect regular communications from me and consultations on their priorities for their school. These are particularly important during budget consultations and with respect to capital improvements. School councils should also expect their trustees to be part of their school community, only through a close relationship between a trustee and a school council, will a trustee truly come to understand the needs and challenges that a school and community face.

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