

OSSTF DISTRICT 10

Lambton Kent District School Board Trustee Candidate Questionnaire

Q1: If elected as school trustee, identify your top three (3) priorities and explain their importance.

A1: i) Funding – Many schools require upgrades & repairs for safety, health & an appropriate teaching environment. Special Needs funding needs to be reviewed as it is presently based on total numbers of students rather than actual needs.

ii) Violence in the Schools – related to funding as by provincial law we need to provide accommodations to all students.

iii) Amalgamating Schools & School Closures – Especially concerned about our schools in smaller & rural areas. There is a need to work with the Catholic School Board to combine schools in these smaller areas. To date, the St. Clair Catholic School Board has not shown an interest in this concept.

Q2: What would you do if you believed the provincial government's policies and actions were negatively affecting education in your community?

A2: Our MPPs in this area are, for the most part, Conservatives. I would encourage all of us, including our parents, grandparents & friends, to lobby these MPPs by knocking on their doors, using their smart phones & social media to express their concerns & to make it clear that if they don't listen, come election time, there will be consequences.

Also, the provincial organization of Trustees (OPSBA) is a group that lobbies of behalf of all School Boards. I would be encouraging this group to lobby on our behalf as well as working with all organizations associated with education such as OSSTF, ETFO & CUPE.

Q3: What relationship do you want with the employees/their unions?

A3: We need to work together as our employees' concerns affect what happens in the classroom & we are all dedicated to student success. In my experience, we have had a good relationship with our staff & their unions, but we cannot assume all is well. We must "listen" carefully to make certain we are hearing what is being said as we should have common goals to provide the best education for our students.

Q4: What kinds of support staff and programs do you feel are essential to meet the needs of children with specials needs? What steps would you take to ensure these supports are provided?

A4: We need more support for our teachers & our students. This relates back to the funding formula which we need to continue to push for change. It needs to be based on School Board & individual school needs. I have been impressed by the special needs staff of LKDSB as they have done their best to meet the needs of our special needs' students. But I do realize we need more resources such as EAs to assist teachers, good breakfast programs & better access to community programs.

Q5: What strategies would you use to recruit new teachers for local employment opportunities?

A5: I don't have a good answer for this question. We have done a lot of to this past year & it is beneficial to have new teachers in the system. It seems to me we have several individuals who want to teach in this area & I am aware we have had individuals who have tried for years to get on the permanent supply list & have not been able to be included.

JACK FLETCHER