

# Cooper seeks public school trusteeship

By Andy Johnson

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David Cooper has added his name to the municipal ballot list for school board trustee representing Alnwick-Haldimand, Hamilton Township, and the Town of Cobourg.

The Cobourg resident says he is straightforward, tells it like it is, and has a genuine desire to improve the delivery of education in the area.

The 47-year-old father of two young daughters admits he is no expert when it comes to Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board policy or politics, but he is willing to wade right in and learn everything necessary.

"I don't know how much power a trustee has, but I'm certainly willing to find out," he said.

The recently elected Liberal government in Ontario has pledged \$1.6-billion in additional funding to the education system, Mr. Cooper said. If elected, his priority will be to ensure the local portion is spent well. That means no school closures, more money on text books and supplies in the classroom, more attention to librarians and libraries and special education and guidance counselors, and more teachers if Mr.

Cooper has his way.

"I hear horror stories from my nieces and nephews: by Halloween they're out of paper and pencils," he said, noting he wants to see a shift in focus — making the bottom line less of a priority,

and providing quality education more of a priority.

"The people who have been running the school system know everything about the bottom line. They know the value of nothing but the cost of everything," he said.

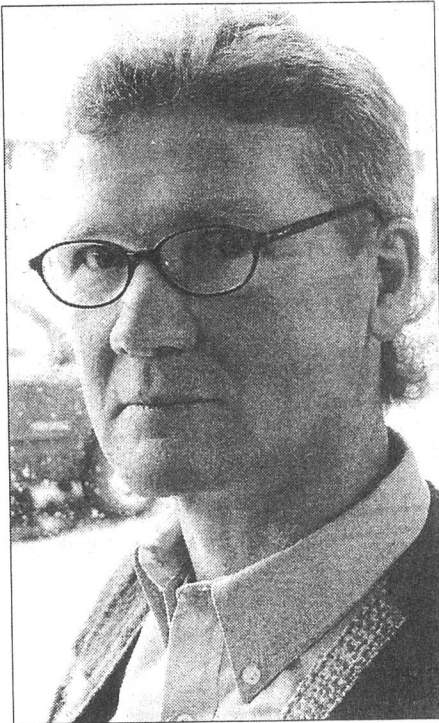
Mr. Cooper spent 20 years working in the restaurant business in Toronto, followed by five years in the television and film industry. The restaurant business gave him administrative skills

and listening skills which would serve him well as a trustee, he said.

"I'm a good listener. Being in the restaurant business for so long I certainly learned how to listen and get people what they want," he said.

Mr. Cooper also described himself as a good listener, said he speaks from his heart, and said he sincerely wants to help people get better education.

"The learning curve will be steep but I'm willing to figure it out," Mr. Cooper said.



David Cooper wants to see less focus on the bottom line and more on quality education.