

Q-AND-A: TRUSTEE CANDIDATES WEIGH IN ON ISSUES AFFECTING HALTON HILLS SCHOOLS

We asked the Halton Hills school board trustee candidates for their opinions on pertinent topics in their respective boards.

HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

JEANNE GRAY

What do you see as the top issue

sue affecting education in Halton and what steps would you take to address it?

The top issue affecting education in Halton is the level of funding the board receives from the provincial government. For the past 10 years, the HDSB has received funding \$1,290 below the provincial funding average per student. There needs to be a reset on the current Ontario education funding formula so that the students and programs in the HDSB are more adequately funded. Imagine the potential for change if the HDSB were to be funded at the provincial average per pupil funding (64,000 students times \$1,290) To address this, I am working with the other members of the board of trustees to build awareness and begin a grassroots campaign and call-to-action campaign



with the members of the school councils at each of the 15 schools in Halton Hills. I have connected with our MPP Ted Arnott who has communicated with the Hon. Minister of Education Lisa Thompson. Finally, we will need to work closely with the newly formed government to ensure that there is full awareness of the historical education funding pattern in the province.

Grade 6 math scores, according to EQAO data, are down in Halton and across the province. Why do you think that is and how

should it be addressed?

The HDSB Grade 6 math scores fell one per cent during this past year where 56 per cent of the students met the provincial standard which is equivalent to a B or 70 per cent and above. This rate stands above the provincial average of 49 per cent. To address this, the HDSB senior admin., program leaders, school administration and teachers are employing a number of initiatives such as the math program project which provides focused supports for students with learning disabilities, and analyzing data to monitor the strategies being used to improve student achievement. Students are also being provided with learning opportunities outside of the school day such as after school sessions and summer math camps. Teachers are receiving instructional support and training through board, school, and self-directed learning (e-learning) as well as regional professional learning opportunities. In addition, math support resources are also being

made available to parents in our community.

Do you support the provincial government's rollback of the sex-ed curriculum? If so, which aspects of the 2015 curriculum do you oppose? If not, do you see a way for teachers to address the issues without facing repercussions?

I do not support the provincial government's rollback of the elementary health education curriculum. As a former elementary and secondary school physical and health education teacher,

I am fully aware of the inadequacies of the old curriculum and therefore was very supportive of the 2015 curriculum and how it was being delivered in a very sensitive and accommodating manner in our schools. School administration and teachers kept parents informed about the content and time frame for the delivery of the health education curriculum so that parents could make a choice to include or not include their child in the classroom when the curriculum was being delivered.

To determine a new way forward, I applaud the government's approach to launching education public consultations beginning late last month (Sept. 28). The invitation is for parents, students, educators and interested individuals or organizations to provide feedback on the education system in Ontario - including a review of the Physical and Health Education curriculum. It is now up to the citizens of Ontario to participate in these consultations, which wrap up Dec. 15.

SHARI WHITE

What do you see as the top issue affecting education in Halton and what steps would you take to address it?

There isn't just one issue and

See page 13



By Cory Soal
R.H.A.D.

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Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott schedules meetings with constituents in Georgetown on a regular basis in the Homecoming Room, Lower Level of the Halton Hills Public Library, 9 Church Street.

To arrange a meeting, please call the Wellington-Halton Hills Provincial Riding Office at 1-800-265-2366.

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