

CANDIDATES IDENTIFY TOP ISSUES AFFECTING HALTON HILLS SCHOOL AHEAD OF OCT. 22 VOTE

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by the people opposing it. Key words were taken out of context and used to make a point that was entirely false in nature.

The HDSB released a statement earlier this year which included;

"The Halton District School Board remains committed to inclusion and will continue to demonstrate respect and understanding for all students, staff and members of our school communities. We have an obligation under the Human Rights Code, the Education Act and our own Board policies and procedures to ensure students feel safe and see their identities reflected in our classroom activities and throughout our schools. Therefore, it is expected that schools will continue to actively create and provide inclusive and welcoming learning environments. This includes learning resources that reflect equity, diversity and representation of our families, as well as sup-



port for inclusive student clubs and activities."

Our teachers will still be able to present the curriculum from the ministry and make sure our students have access to necessary information that is supported by the board. There is no reason for any teacher to feel they would face repercussions, as they would be doing the job they have been hired to do.

HALTON CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

DANIEL DRAGICEVIC

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

I feel the top issue affecting education in Halton is population growth. As one of the fastest growing regions in Ontario,

with more housing still to be built, we as a board need to ensure we have the facilities, resources, teachers and staff in place to accommodate the prospective enrolment in our board, especially here in Halton Hills.

I will be proactive and ensure the areas expected to see the most growth are prepared and ready to handle it, as well as addressing areas where less enrolment is expected. We need to ensure our resources are utilized efficiently and effectively throughout our school board. I do not want us to take a reactive approach by building portables instead of new facilities. We know the growth is coming and we should be lobbying our government to ensure the funds are available to coincide with enrolment. If we are not properly prepared, many aspects of our education will suffer. This is not something we can sit back on and deal with as it happens. Being proactive is the only way we should proceed and this is one of

the many strengths I offer.

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?

From my research and consultations, I think declining math scores are an indication of the failure of our current "discovery" math curriculum. I think we need to revert to teaching fundamental math, using formulas, memorization techniques, written long division, multiplication tables, et cetera. I am curious to see what our new government will be implementing in terms of the math curriculum, as it was something they campaigned on.

In terms of how to address the current issues, we should look at other provinces/countries whose students excel in math and see if we can take ideas from them that can be applied here. I would like to see a review of the EQAO testing, taking into account the cost of administering these tests, and other opportunities to fund better resources, smaller class sizes, new/repairs schools, more training for teachers etc. Overall this is something that needs to be addressed provincially, but I am more than willing to lobby our government with ideas and suggestions from our stakeholders.

Do you support rein-

stating the sanctity of life motion? Please explain your position.

I do not support the sanctity of life motion as public consultations resulted in an overwhelming opposition to it.

The fact that no other ideas have been brought forth has created polarized views on this motion. To me, this is a strong indication of a lack of leadership and compromise by our current board. I would like to consider the opportunities of reinvesting our fundraising dollars directly into our community. It is noble and righteous to raise funds for other organizations, but there are students in our own community who would benefit significantly by allocating these funds into programs specific to our unique community needs.

Whether or not the board votes to reinstate the sanctity of life motion will not impact an individual's ability to donate to the charities of their choice. I have always been a strong supporter of charity fundraising and have organized many events that have raised significant funds for many different charities. I co-organize an annual curling fundraiser with proceeds going to Make-A-Wish Foundation. When I donate to our school, my hope is that it addresses needs in our school and community.

JANET O'HEARN-CZARNOTA

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

The top issue affecting education in Halton is funding. School boards have a certain amount of funding at their disposal and trustees need to make careful, responsible, and informed decisions to ensure these funds are appropriately allocated. These monies need to benefit the largest group of students while at the same time recognizing the diverse learning needs and styles of all the students.

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?

School boards must continue to support and encourage their teachers to upgrade their math skills to enable students success within the curriculum as it is written. We must stay the course to reap the benefits. School boards do not design curriculum.

Do you support reinstating the sanctity of life motion? Please explain your position.

Seventy-four per cent of the respondents when surveyed regarding the sanctity of life motion used their voice to indicate they did not want it to

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