

SECOND CATHOLIC TRUSTEE SANCTIONED

KARABELA BARRED FROM TWO UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

ROLAND CILLIERS
rcilliers@metroland.com

In a single week, the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) determined that two separate trustees had breached the code of conduct and would be barred from participating in upcoming meetings.

At a special meeting on July 28, the board voted five-to-one in favour of a decision banning Oakville trustee Helena Karabela from participating in the upcoming Sept. 6 and Sept. 20 board meeting. The vote is just two days following a similar decision that resulted in Burlington trustee Vincent Iantomasi being

banned from participating in all HCDSB meetings until Nov. 15.

Similar to the Iantomasi decision, the board did not make public the report containing the specific incidences that resulted in the finding of a code of conduct breach. As per policy I-36 Trustee Code of Conduct, the board, who created the report, is not required to make public that report, only the vote and resolution on it.

However, throughout the meeting, trustees referred to alleged communications between Karabela and the public that contained disparaging comments toward other trustees.

HCDSB's Trustee Code of Conduct states, "a Trustee may comment on, or disagree with, a decision taken by the Board. A Trustee may not make disparaging

"I certainly don't agree with all her motives, or way of doing it."

- trustee Tim O'Brien

remarks about another Trustee or a group of Trustees in expressing such comment or disagreement or speculate on the motives of a trustee or group of trustees, or staff."

Burlington trustee Brenda Agnew said during the meeting that she would caution people from assuming what is in the report without seeing it first.

"The reason that this was brought forward is that there have been communications and correspondence that have been sent out that have made personal and disparaging remarks against some trustees and questioned their motives, questioned their upbringing,

questioned their morality, questioned their Catholicity and just questioned their political motivation — and that's where I am. That's where, for me, the challenge sat in this," said Agnew.

On top of the meeting ban, Karabela received an official censure from the board. She was contacted following the meeting for this story, but indicated she did not want to comment on the matter further.

During the July 28 meeting, Karabela said she refuted the allegations against her.

"Our board has been de-



HELENA KARABELA

HCDSB photo

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