

# Trustees struggle for control

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"We just feel the chair and vice-chair don't speak for the majority of the board members," said Palmieri. "There's no common vision."

She said they are asking the board chair and vice-chair to consider their non-binding motion "for the good of the board."

It wasn't one issue that led to the motion, but a "combination of a few things," she said.

"It's general leadership and understanding of our role as trustees," said Palmieri.

Danko listed numerous examples of incidents, which he felt warranted making such a statement.

"He (Bailey) has made remarks that he is not responsible for our decisions. Personally, he has rebuked me for asking for background information on St. Thomas Aquinas. I didn't think that was something he should have done," he said.

"He made his remarks in public so we're making ours in public."

Bailey is taking the public call for his resignation in stride, stating he has done nothing to deserve such action, stating, "Everybody is entitled to an opinion of sorts, but when someone is making a decision like that they should have something to back it up."

"The board has operated properly in the past; it's doing very very well and I think the results speak for themselves."

After 10 years with the Halton Catholic school board and seven terms as its board chair, Bailey said it's the first time he has been asked to resign.

Meanwhile, fellow Burlington Trustee Bob Van de Vrande is taking Danko's motion seriously. He believes many trustees feel it is time for a change in leadership.

"We think that the existing leadership has had sufficient time to try to bring all of the trustees, including all the new people together and work towards a common vision," he said.

"That isn't happening, so we think it's time to put someone in there that's prepared to do that."

Van de Vrande agrees the board is functioning well, but does not credit it to Bailey's leadership.

Embattled vice-chair LeMay also weighed in on the call for her resignation.

"The whole thing is disappointing because it's not serving the children. If you want to do things then think of the children first," she said.

This is the latest in a series of clashes between Bailey and some trustees over procedures and policies of the board.

During an April 10 meeting not enough trustees would support Bailey's call to approve minutes of an earlier meeting, citing insufficient details in the written record as the cause. Before that, five of nine trustees did not attend a special meeting called by Bailey to provide the board's elected officials with a legal review of their roles and responsibilities.

"If we're not doing it right it's my job as the chair to check to find out whether or not we're operating properly. If we're not, it's my responsibility to bring it back to the board," said Bailey.

Other trustees don't want to see Bailey or LeMay step down.

"Everyday at the school we push the principals on no bullying in the schools and now we have bullying in the boardroom," Oakville trustee Ed Viana said, adding, "Give me a break."

Van de Vrande believes he possesses enough support to get the motion passed.

Van de Vrande would not confirm or deny plans to seek either position should resignations take place.

Should the motion prove successful, Bailey and LeMay said they will continue their work with the Halton Catholic District School Board on behalf of their respective communities.

Last night's vote took place after the *Independent and Free Press* went to press.

—With files from Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

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