

Trustee Candidates have their say

The Halton Catholic District School Board serves over 29,000 students of all ages, and says that “God’s call to love and to serve is nurtured in staff and students in 50 school sites,” including Acton.

Halton Hills is served by one trustee – the incumbent is Rosanna Palmieri of Georgetown, who is vice-chair of the Board.

Mark Rowe, an Acton native, noted local historian/

author and former teacher is challenging Palmieri, making his first run for public office.

We asked the candidates the following questions.

CANDIDATE	#1 - What would you do if staff recommended cutting school bus routes in Acton or Georgetown?	#2 - The recent EQAO results for Grade three students at St. Joseph Catholic School showed they lagged behind their provincial and Board counterparts in reading, writing and math. What would you do to improve learning?	#3 - What should voters know about you? What skills do you bring to the table to advocate for Acton students and parents?	#4 - What is your vision to ensure Acton students continue to receive a Christ-centered education?	#5 - If elected, you have four years. What do you want to accomplish?
<p>Rosana Palmieri</p> 	<p>We have one set of walking limit distances for the entire region of Halton, all municipalities, all 4 school boards. If staff recommend cutting routes, they would need to get an exception to the policy, which would require 6 out of 9 trustees to support the change. I would suggest they find the savings in the municipalities that do have public transit and I would not support the cut.</p>	<p>The province has a system to assist schools lagging behind with extra funding and teaching manpower. Last year, trustees initiated a system of targets and measurements, in addition to the EQAO, in an attempt to improve all areas of the School Board. I have requested that administration address in our system the performance gap between girls and boys, encourage more reading opportunities, and more time on math skills.</p>	<p>I have served on many Catholic school councils (elementary and secondary) in Halton when my children were in school, and I now have a grandson in the system. I have been a small business owner, and serve as a Catechist for children in our church. I have learned the skills of business, parent, volunteer, and now, trustee. I have always found the Acton parents and students very kind, authentic and warm, making me feel at home whenever I attend the school or church.</p>	<p>I have and will continue to support increased faith development for the teachers. Children sense the faith of an adult and we want to inspire our children. I will also continue to support the increased use of materials available to teachers that allow them to teach all subjects through a Catholic lens and help the students connect our faith into their daily lives.</p>	<p>Publicly funded Catholic Education in Ontario cannot depend on simply being protected. It must be strengthened and that strength must come from within, by taking an honest look, by celebrating our strengths, and a willingness to work on areas that need improvement. We need to hold ourselves accountable and insist on policies that place importance on integrity and above all, give glory to God.</p>
<p>Mark Rowe</p> 	<p>I would represent the interests of the ratepayers of Acton to the Board. I would speak out to advocate their cause and request an exception if necessary. As the Minister has stated, transportation is a local issue and I would ensure Acton is not forgotten.</p>	<p>I would work with trustees and staff to ensure these students are given every opportunity to succeed. Firstly, I would ensure all available resources are provided to the school. Secondly, I would budget for teacher in-service and training. Thirdly, I would encourage parents to ask questions and become involved in their child’s progress. Finally, we would work as a school community to ensure students are appropriately supported to create a climate where success is attainable.</p>	<p>I was raised in Acton. I know how Acton gets forgotten in this corner of Halton and the GTA. I was a member of St. Joseph’s Parish and served the Parish as a reader on Sundays. I was a member of Scouts Canada and served as a leader for 1st Acton. I am currently Chair of Heritage Halton Hills, working to inventory and preserve the built heritage of Acton, and I am the archivist of the Esquesing Historical Society. I am the author of Acton: A History of Leathertown.</p>	<p>We are called to lead by example. God calls us to develop our skills and talents to the best of our abilities within our community. Our schools should be a community of students and staff supporting each other and supporting their community of Acton by being involved in the life of the community. The trustee is there to support these goals.</p>	<p>I want to see the Halton Catholic School Board as a positive witness to Jesus Christ. We will strive for academic excellence; we will care for our community and for each other in what we say and in our actions; we will uphold Catholic education; we will work with our parish to ensure the values of the Board and the Church are one and the same and we will provide help and guidance for all those who stumble on their way through our education system.</p>

Ward Two - Rural Acton Candidates

