

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRUSTEES OF THE C.D.S.B.E.O.

The OECTA Political Advisory Committee would like to profile Trustees, the elected stewards of Catholic Education in Eastern Ontario. Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire will go a long way to helping us to inform our Catholic community of the work you do on our behalf. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

Responses by James Borer, candidate for Stormont, Dundas.

1. How long have you been a Trustee?

I haven't had the privilege yet.

2. What district do you represent?

I am running as a candidate for the Stormont and Dundas Counties.

3. Do you plan to seek re-election in the fall of 2010?

Not applicable, although I have been a member of the board's Special Education Advisory Committee for close to 3 years now.

4. How would you describe the job or the role of Trustee?

I see the role of the Trustee as to provide high-level governance and guidance to the administration of the board based on the needs, goals and interest of their constituents.

- A Trustee has legal and moral obligations to ensure that the student is always at the center of any decision taken within the board.
- At a high level, the Trustees must work to engage, understand and effectively communicate with the constituents and communities they are elected to represent. This means having a proactive and open approach to executing the duties and responsibilities for which they volunteered for by seeking election. They must be selfless in their conduct and open to all parties involved in educating and supporting the education of students within the board.
- A Trustee as a member of the board of Trustees is accountable for hiring the director of education and appraising the performance of that person.
- The Trustee must work to build a strong team culture amongst all employees of the board in an atmosphere where everyone feels respected and appreciated for what they bring to the board. This must happen while ensuring that culture holds the interest of the student to be above all else.
- In the end the Trustee willingly accepts the liability of ensuring that the students within the board receive the highest quality education possible while upholding the Catholic values that are central to culture of the board.

5. What strengths do you bring to the C.D.S.B.E.O?

I have a proven track record of serving Canadians for over 20 years as a soldier and getting positive results. Over those 20 years I have had many responsibilities including teaching and running training for hundreds of soldiers. I have practical experience in all aspects of running a military training school. From human relations and resources to the logistics of housing, feeding and supplying the training. Identifying short, medium and long term needs and overseeing contracting with civilian agencies. I lead a culture where everyone wanted to work as a team while striving to achieve their personal best in support of providing the best learning environment possible. The level of unlimited liability I personally assumed is best explained by saying that the soldiers trained under my watch were being prepared to go to war; there was no room for failure.

Additionally I have worked at both the Provincial and Federal level with government to improve the support and ultimately the quality of life for children. I acted in an advisory role to the Federal government at the roundtable discussions on how best to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability. Last year I lead a coalition of organizations under the name "Project Kids H.E.A.R." (You can Google that name to learn more). We held a widely covered event at Queen's Park on the 19th of October 2009. This was to address the need for guidelines on how to support children who are hard of hearing or deaf within mainstream schools. This was very successful. After meeting with the Minister of Education and continuing to work with the staff of that ministry there are now, only one-year later, guidelines in place.

These are but a few examples of how I serve my community. I believe that in education there must be a strong team culture. This means being able to understand the positions of all stakeholders and providing leadership in building the team.

6. Please describe the priorities you have for the C.D.S.B.E.O.

- My first priority is and will always be to ensure that all students are given equally, the best education and opportunities possible. This must be what drives the decisions made within the board.
- Secondly to create a culture of openness and transparency in order to foster a team where everyone feels equal in the way they are treated and respected.
- To create a board that is seen as the board of choice in the area for both students and staff.

7. What is your understanding of the role that Eastern OECTA plays in the work of the C.D.S.B.E.O?

Based on the information on the Eastern Ontario OECTA web site, I offer the following summary as my understanding of their role in the work of the C.D.S.B.E.O. There are two main purposes identified neither in exclusion of the other:

- First to promote Catholic values within the education environment for both students and staff in order to provide the best possible learning opportunities and development for everyone.
- Secondly to represent the interests of it's members within all matters regarding collective bargaining and agreements affecting that agreement.

8. **How do you view relations between the C.D.S.B.E.O. and OECTA? Please elaborate on your opinion.**

A number of people from different stations and positions within both organizations have confided some concerns to me. This is indicative of an environment lacking in trust and openness. Left unchecked this logically leads to polarized positions and less than optimal conditions for providing the students with the best opportunities and education.

9. **What improvements do you feel would be helpful for the C.D.S.B.E.O?**

It would be unfair to everyone involved, including myself, to get into specific details until I am able to get some greater awareness as to specific situations. I will state that my intent, if elected, will be to provide leadership and energy towards creating a culture of open and transparent conduct. My ultimate goal would be to achieve a board culture of respect and openness so that everyone is equally comfortable talking about both the successes and challenges to be faced as a team. This culture would make it possible to achieve the mission of providing the best opportunities and education for the students while following our Catholic values.

Hopefully I have been able to provide some insight as to my background, vision and reasons for seeking election as a School Trustee within the board.

Thank you for your service and your help.