

Municipal Election 2014 – Townships

Survey Results - Wellesley, Woolwich, North Dumfries, Wilmot



Townships

WRRC is a volunteer-based community organization that is committed to building a unified voice for gender and sexual diversity for people of all ages in Waterloo Region. We promote sustainable opportunities for advocacy, awareness, education and community-building that are respectful of the diverse interests within the Rainbow community. We work together with local allies to foster a strong and inclusive community.

This candidate survey speaks to the heart of WRRC's mission. The survey has provided us the opportunity to ensure candidates are aware of their constituents within the Rainbow community, prompts candidates to take steps to educate themselves about the concerns and needs of our community, and sets the foundation for eventually engaging our elected representatives in our community building efforts. In addition, by providing the results of the survey to the general public, we are providing an opportunity for members of our community to understand where candidates stand on these important issues – helping us build our unified voice by empowering all of us to make informed decisions.

We encourage you to review the candidate responses, reach out to further engage candidates on issues important to our community and, most importantly, get out to vote on **Monday, October 27th**!

Ontario residents are heading to the polls to vote for the:

- City/Township Mayors and Councillors
- Regional Chair and representatives at the Regional Council
- School Board Trustees

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This is your chance to exercise your right to have a say in how you think your municipality should be governed. You have the option to choose the candidate that you think best represents your interests, or to decline your ballot at the polls. Voting sends a powerful message to politicians about what is important to residents within the municipalities.

There are over 200 candidates running in the 2014 municipal election, but which of those candidates are most informed about the Rainbow community? Which candidates are best prepared to take action on issues which are of concern to the Rainbow community? We at Waterloo Region's Rainbow Coalition wanted to better understand what kind of involvement the candidates have with the Rainbow community, so we sent out an email survey asking 3 questions and gave them a 2 week timeframe to answer the questions. We also confirmed each response directly with the candidate to ensure accuracy. Each candidate from the Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and surrounding Townships were asked the same questions:

1. Do you have any experience or previous involvement with LGBTQ community, or any other community that has been marginalized?
2. If elected, how might you promote inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ community?
3. If elected, how might you address issues of concern to the LGBTQ community, such as the following: *Hate crimes and bullying - LGBTQ youth homelessness - Workplace and employment barriers - Barriers to adoption and assisted reproduction - Access to long-term care and retirement housing - Access to healthcare and social services overall*

We are pleased to report that almost half of all the candidates took the time to respond to our survey. Their responses are included here for you to read and consider when casting your vote on **Monday, October 27, 2014**.

To learn more about how to vote in the municipal election, visit the following pages:

Kitchener - http://app.kitchener.ca/election/es_onvoterlist.aspx

Cambridge - <http://www.cambridge.ca/article.php?sid=269>

Waterloo - <http://www.waterloo.ca/elections>

Wellesley - <http://www.wellesley.ca/misc/elections/?q=misc%2Felections>

Woolwich - <http://www.woolwich.ca/en/council/Municipal-Election.asp>

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Wilmot - <http://www.wilmot.ca/departments-clerks-details.php?Election-10>

North Dumfries -

<http://www.northdumfries.ca/en/newslist/index.aspx?corpId=oFldMqfyp7dgBaggB0H38geQuAleQuAl&newsId=AVJ2G0m8Wxudf5lA5HbbeVxGSweQuAleQuAl>

For more information about the election survey or how to get involved with the Waterloo Region Rainbow Coalition, please contact us at yourwrrc@gmail.com.

Sincerest regards,

Jeremy Steffler,
Chair, Waterloo Region Rainbow Coalition

Tanya Smith,
Coordinator, WRRC Municipal Election Survey

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REGIONAL CHAIR – WATERLOO REGIONAL COUNCIL

Ken Seiling

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1. For many years I have attended events in the LGBTQ community, whether it be Pride festival openings, the centre opening and events, or events at the club in Cambridge. This year I authorized the flying of the rainbow flag at Regional Headquarters during the Pride week events. We also hosted a diversity workshop in the Regional Council chambers. Each year I also wear pink on the Day of Pink to show my support for the community.
2. The Region has an active program of promoting inclusion in all of its work and workplaces and supports the work of other groups advancing an inclusive Region.
3. Many of the areas addressed in your question are the work of other levels of government. However, our Regional Crime Prevention Council works in many areas, one of which is anti-bullying which incorporates the community. We work to ensure no barriers in employment based on gender. We have policies in place to recognize diversity and actively work to implement them. There are a number of initiatives under way with regard to homelessness, a complex issue at best, but one which affect many, especially younger people with LGBTQ issues.

Paul Myles

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<http://paulamyles4waterlooregionalchair.weebly.com/>

1. I used to work at Club Renaissance a LGBTQ Bar in downtown Kitchener.
2. By ensuring that funding and community supports are in place from the Region.
3. By ensuring that the WRPS understands that hate crimes are a serious matter and need to be handled properly. Creating an effective solution to youth homelessness in our Region. Putting in place appropriate policies that reflect that discrimination of any sort is uncalled for and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

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WELLESLEY - WARD 3

Peter van der Maas
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1. Some as a secondary school teacher and fairly frequent social interaction; e.g., members of son's wedding party
2. A difficult question to answer because direct contact with the LGBTQ community would likely come if it presented a delegation to council, in which case the delegation would be granted full and unprejudiced consideration of its presentation.
3. I would work to ensure that a member of the LGBTQ (what about "I") community enjoys all of the respect and support that would be afforded to any other community member.

WELLESLEY - WARD 4

Brian Cunningham
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1. With the LGBTQ community in itself or any affiliated organization I would have to answer your question with by saying no. However, over the years I have had friends who would be part of the LGBTQ; come into contact with members of the community through policing who had been victimized; and have a family member who would be part of the LGBTQ community.
2. I believe that promoting inclusion is more a matter of recognizing that these people are simply individuals in our community who have made an alternative choice, but are equally good neighbours, friends or relatives who contribute to the community. What is important is to ensure there is inclusiveness rather than looking at the individuals as being different, because they are not.
3. There is no standard answer to this question. Such matters need to be addressed based on their individual circumstances whether it be an individual's issue or something affecting the larger community. The most important aspect of the answer to this question as it relates to the examples you have listed is that any unacceptable actions against members of the community should not be tolerated. Advocacy, understanding and acceptance on behalf of effected members is key to developing a healthy community.

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Andrew Epp

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1. Yes I do have experience and previous involvement with marginalized communities including the LGBTQ community.
2. If elected I would promote inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ and other marginalized communities by: a) ensuring equal and fair access to social services and programs; b) basing all of my decisions and points of view at Council on my values of equality and respect for all.
3. If elected my neighbours can be assured that I will do everything I can to help them persevere and overcome whatever obstacle they face. We will stand shoulder-to-shoulder together until we succeed.

WOOLWICH - MAYOR

Doug Hergott

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1. Yes, I have previous experience working with various community issues in the region such as homelessness, mental illness, and neighborhood associations etc. I was also a staff member on the City of Kitchener committee that recommended the recent changes to the City of Kitchener flag policy.
2. If elected, I would make sure that there are not any groups that feel they are being discriminated against. I would willingly attend any meeting to discuss any concerns that any group may have that makes them feel excluded or not belonging to the community.
3. If elected, I would sit down with representatives from the LGBTQ community to discuss the concerns you have outlined in more detail.

Todd Cowan

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www.vision4woolwich.com

1. Yes, have worked with the community thru the Crime Prevention Council of Waterloo Region.
2. I will continue to work with the community thru the Crime Prevention Council. I have also met with outreach workers at St. Johns Kitchen. I will continue to help where I can.
3. Hate, bullying, homelessness are all important issue that will need continual work to help prevention. Awareness and support is always the first step.

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Sandy Shantz

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1. I do not have experience with the LGBTQ community as a group, but I do have friends, family and acquaintances who would fall under the LGBTQ umbrella.
2. I believe that each person is unique and individual and deserves the same respect and opportunities as the next. I understand that when a group has been marginalized it takes bold measures to change perceptions and attitudes. Sometimes that causes a push back. My approach is to treat each person on their own merits without judgement as to their sexual orientation.
3. The issues you listed are of concern to more than just the LGBTQ community and my concern is that we deal with them on a broad level. I believe the LGBTQ community needs to know they are safe and our police services, workplaces and schools are places to work toward changing attitudes. Youth homelessness and homelessness in general is a concern often related to lack of support systems. I believe the Region needs to allocate resources to identifying where the shortfalls are. I would be happy to hear from you how you think government can ensure your community has equal access to services.

WOOLWICH - WARD 1

Patrick Merlihan

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1. I have no direct experience or involvement with LGBTQ community. That is a product of where I live, and opportunity rather than a product of any beliefs I hold.
My experience is one I share with my wife raising two boys in Elmira. They are now ten and twelve. We have shared with them our values that all people should be afforded the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Our values for marriage extend to all those who choose to marry. I know that the conversations with our children translate to the schoolyard and their community, because they refuse to be silent when they hear close-minded comments.
2. I would support initiatives in the community. Our youth centre doesn't currently have a LGBTQ representation. That is one possible area to promote inclusion.
3. Many of these issues would be dealt with at a Regional or Provincial body. There is no place in any community

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for hate crimes and bullying and as a small municipality we could lobby upper tiers of government to address concerns. Thanks for the opportunity to take your survey.

WOOLWICH - WARD 3

Murray G. Martin

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1. I haven't had any experience with the LGBTQ community but have been involved with the members of our community who have special needs.
2. The township continues to work with the Regional committees to have a barrier free community. I share their vision and am mindful of the people in our community who may need additional support. "The Region of Waterloo is committed to, and working towards ensuring that all Regional programs and services are accessible to everyone. Policies and programs are designed to respect the dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all members of our community." ~ Region of Waterloo
3. When questions are brought to council, we can help direct you to the resources that are in place or work with you to find them.

NORTH DUMFRIES - WARD 2

John Berge

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1. I believe that every person regardless of race, gender, religion or sexual orientation should be treated with respect and equality. I have family members who are part of the LGBTQ community and I respect and love them very much.
2. If elected I will continue to promote inclusion of any marginalized members of our community. Because I truly believe all people should have equal rights and have always treated people as such personally, I would be open and happy to discuss with community members what more I could do to promote equality for everyone, especially those in the LGBTQ community.
3. As I've previously stated, I stand strongly behind equal and fair treatment for all and will continue to do so. I

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think education is key to understanding and acceptance and would certainly be open to working with the LGBTQ community to support and overcome any barriers.

WATERLOO REGION CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - WELLESLEY, WOOLWICH

Frank Johnson

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1. Yes, having been a secondary school principal for a number of years I had the gift of working with many LGBTQ staff and students. My goal as a principal was to do my best to ensure that all were welcomed and cared for. To that end, our admin team dealt with bullying or harassment issues seriously and our school had a support group in place long before it was required.

I am a proponent of the Invitational Schools movement which holds that the policies, procedures, processes and places in a school must be inviting to all with inclusion as an underlying theme. Students can be marginalized for many reasons such as income, appearance, political or religious views and so it is important that we take a stance of inclusion. That is why at each school I was principal, this was a priority.

2. At our Board meeting in May I introduced a motion to allow the teachers union to support the LGBTQ community in any way it felt best. This was in response to a delegation that was asking Trustees to sanction teachers who planned to participate in the World Pride Day celebrations. I took a lot of flak from my constituents but I believe it was the right stance to take. I think we need (and needed then) to send a message to our staff and students who identify as LGBTQ that they are welcomed and supported in our schools. We also need to reach out to the LGBTQ community to help us be even more inclusive and to help us see what we might be missing.

3. As a system that supports inclusion and states it as one of its ends statements, it is imperative to act and be seen to be acting. We need to ensure there are no employment barriers or discrimination affecting our LGBTQ staff. As well, we need to deal swiftly and publicly to stem bullying of students (and/or staff) in our schools that is related to being a member of the LGBTQ community or a supporter of the community. We also need to support efforts to ensure aging members of the LGBTQ community are able to find appropriate supports such as housing and social services. Though we deal with school-age children, it is important to lend our voice to those who are marginalized.

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Melanie Van Alphen
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1. I recently had the opportunity to attend the 2nd anniversary for SPECTRUM in Waterloo. This organization is dedicated to supporting the LGBTQ community. It was a pleasure to be invited and hear about their organization's accomplishments. They have done an amazing job creating a space for the rainbow community and providing them with resources. I look forward to being more involved with groups that have been marginalized.
2. It is important to respect and celebrate diversity in our schools. Having clubs and student-run organizations that provide support and resources is critical to address issues of social justice and inclusion. These initiatives need to be supported so they can evolve with the needs of the students. There are policies in place, if elected, I will insure that they are implemented and supported.
3. These are very important issues that must be addressed and educated on. Bullying is not to be tolerated and policy must be enforced so that students and educators feel safe in our schools. If elected I will offer support to those who have been affected by bullying and make sure the policies are implemented in the schools.

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - WILMOT

Carol Millar
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1. I am a recently retired Public Health Nurse who worked in the Healthy Sexuality program for over 15 years. I was also a school nurse who provided sexual health services to youth in the school setting. As well, I worked in the regional sexual health/STI clinics. The services that I provided included working with marginal and high risk, and LGBTQ youth. I provided curriculum support and did many classes on healthy relationships, healthy sexuality, body image, birth control, STI's etc. I provided support and a welcoming, non-judgmental environment in any interactions that I had. I also provided support and offered services to the GSA's in our local high schools and senior public schools. I worked in partnership with ACCKWA to provide workshops in the schools during AIDS Awareness week as well as bringing the AIDS quilts to our community.
2. I am running for Public School Trustee for Waterloo/Wilmot. As a trustee, we need to continue to provide support to the staff and students who are involved in the GSA's at the school. We also need to open a dialogue with the LGBTQ youth in our community to find out what THEY think would be helpful in providing an environment of inclusion and belonging and then strive to work and make that happen. I believe that dialogue and open communication is the best way to create solutions and encourage involvement of youth. We also need

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to provide education and support to parents of LGBTQ youth. Equally as important, I think we need to celebrate!! - celebrate the diversity and differences.

3. As I stated above, I believe that first thing that needs to happen is open dialogue about what issues our youth are experiencing and what they think would make a difference in the schools and the community. I believe that they have answers that we need to listen to and act on. I also believe that we need to continue to educate and inform our educators and administrators. Public Health has already opened a community Youth Sexual Health Clinic in Cambridge and it needs to be better promoted through our schools. Hopefully we will see one in Kitchener soon as well. Thanks for the opportunity to respond. I appreciate the work that you are doing!

Shelly Reed

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1. A very close family member of mine is gay. Aside from that, I have no experience or previous involvement with the LGBTQ community.

2. I would like the opportunity to beef up our school board's anti-bullying policy. I would like the board to take a more pro-active approach by introducing a dedicated character development class in school to teach acceptance, inclusion and compassion for all people/groups.

3. I believe some of these examples are out of the scope of school board trustee, however, guiding parents and students who are experiencing issues such as the ones listed below, to the proper resources, and working with the municipality and region to ensure these resources remain a priority, will be key.

Elliot Fung

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1. Yes, I have worked in the community for an organization that supported newcomers to Canada. Through that organization I worked with other community organizations that support marginalized communities within Waterloo Region. I have also served on Municipal Council as well as the Public School Board, where I have supported initiatives that promote inclusion and equity, including Gay Straight Alliances etc. In my current work (day job), I work with a number of community organizations that support marginalized populations.

2. I would continue to support efforts for equity and inclusion within our school system for all groups who might feel disenfranchised or excluded from feeling accepted within our system. Specifically, I will continue to be a supporter of Gay Straight Alliances in our schools, work to promote our policies on inclusion and making sure

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those policies become engrained and part of the norm.

3. Many issues that I feel can be addressed as a School Board Trustee relate back to appropriate supports being made available in schools, creating a safe, caring and inclusive atmosphere without making it "forced". As well, understanding cultural and community differences early on. The school board should and does have a zero tolerance position on bullying, however not all bullying is recognized or overt. I believe better efforts can be made to engage our youth and teach them impacts to bullying as well as consequences.

John Hendry

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1. I have been an advocate for persons with disabilities for more than 40 years. I presently have a Cabinet Appointment to the Accessibility Standards Council / Standards Development Committee.

2. As a Trustee I would support the protection of All persons under the Equity and Inclusion policy.

3. Currently I sit on the Board Discipline Committee which hears all Board Expulsions so I am very aware of all negative harmful behaviour noted above. I would lobby for swift action in any and all activities which contravene our policies assuring safe and secure schools as well as Equity and Inclusion policies.

Kathleen Woodcock

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1. As a trustee for 11 years, I have been involved in policy development that promotes inclusive and accessible spaces for all. In the high schools, the GSA (Gay Straight Alliance) groups reflect these inclusive policies. As a woman who has been in the workforce full time since 1978, I have witnessed positive changes in policy and behaviour that have begun to create an inclusive working environment for women. There is still work to do in many areas to create a truly inclusive community for women and for the LGBTQ community.

2. Policy development and review is the responsibility of the Board of trustees. Board Policy 1008, Equity & Inclusion provides the framework for many other policies regarding inclusion, accessibility, safe environment, etc. All schools have bully prevention training and leadership initiatives that include, for example, character education initiatives, student leadership and mentorship programs. As well, all schools have a Safe Schools team in place to participate in the development and implementation of school-wide bullying prevention and intervention plans. Policies are in place to ensure that students, staff, families feel safe, comfortable and respected in the schools.

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3. Modelling inclusive strategies within the schools by staff, administrators and trustees demonstrates an expectation of respectful environments. When instances of bullying arise, procedures are in place based on a progressive discipline model and open, honest communication. The release of “Building an Inclusive Workforce” demonstrates the commitment of the WRDSB to creating a welcoming, safe and caring working environment. This strategy builds on the work done to date to remove workplace and employment barriers and increase the diversity of the workforce through fair, inclusive and equitable hiring practices. As a trustee, I can ensure that policies are in places that help create and maintain an inclusive, safe, and respectful environment for all.

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - NORTH DUMFRIES

Colin Carmichael

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1. Not directly, no. I have always been supportive of efforts to be as inclusive as possible of any marginalized community.
2. The school board has an important role - along with the Ministry of Education - in setting the expectations for inclusion that individual schools must adhere to. Ensuring, for example, that LGBTQ teachers and students do not face any barriers to expressing their sexuality in the same ways that heterosexual teachers and students do.
3. The best way I can address issues of concern is first to be accessible to the public so that those concerns can be brought to me and second to bring those concerns to the Board as often as is necessary to address the concerns. I commit to both of those, should I be elected.

WATERLOO DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD – NORTH DUMFRIES

Wendy Price

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mail.com

1. Support groups in all 5 of our high schools, which I support.
2. As a board of trustees we need to make sure that the groups in the schools continue, grow and reach the LGBTQ students and expand in terms of educating the school communities on inclusion and acceptance.
3. Work with the Director of Education to ensure that the board policies on bullying and harassment are followed,

<http://yourwrrc.ca>

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reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Example: Social media and bullying- Kindness Matters and THINK campaign at St Mary's HS.

Bill Conway

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1. No
2. As a school board trustee, I will work to ensure that there is policy and procedures of the board are written for the inclusion of all our students and staff and that promotion is done to make all feel welcome and that there is a place for all within our schools.
3. As a school board trustee, I will work to ensure that there is policy and procedures of the board in place to allow students and staff to have the mechanism to express their concerns and issues freely and that they are dealt with in a timely manner.

Montse Sanzsole Vasquez

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1. While I do not have previous involvement with the LGBTQ community, I do believe that our schools should be inclusive and supportive of its catholic community members.
2. The Catholic school system should provide an opportunity for its LGBTQ community to gather to discuss their concerns and issues by allowing student and staff groups/associations.
3. Continuing to work within the framework of the Catholic religion and the leadership of our Pope Francis, we should be inclusive and respectful of others, treating all with dignity. As such, anti-bullying campaigns should continue to be an important part of school life. A support mechanism should be in place within the board/schools to provide support for all students and staff of our catholic community including those for the LGBTQ community.

Peter Reitmeier

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1. Yes. I am a sitting member of our boards SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee), as well as participation and input in several debates and discussions at the Board table regarding our care of LGBTQ and the associated clubs operating in our high schools. I have also attended meetings of the St. Benedict's Accepting Differences Club, which invites LGBTQ and other victims of bullying together, to hear their concerns and bring them back to the Board table. I have also received and participated in In-Service and related seminars to better understand the needs of all children in our system.

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2. Our ongoing support and commitment to our ends and policy statements that ensure inclusivity of all children in our board will continue to be monitored.

3. Many of these areas do not relate as school board issues, with the exception of our board's commitment to restorative justice, anti-bullying clubs, and clubs specifically for those in the LGBTQ community. (e.g. Prism, Accepting Differences and GSA clubs)

Manuel da Silva

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1. I have not had any direct experience and/or previous involvement with LGBTQ community. I do however, support and encourage programs/groups/supports in our school system to look after the needs of our LGBTQ community.

2. I am proud to have served as a Trustee since 2003 in a school system that continues to have conversation/discussions on what it means to be an Inclusive system. Waterloo Catholic District School Board/System continues to look/strive to ensure that we have programs and resources in place that best look after the needs of our staff, students and community, including LGBTQ.

3. I would continue to work with my fellow Trustees, Director of Education and Senior Administration to ensure that we not only have Policies and Procedures in place, to address the concerns with LGBTQ community, but that such Policies and/or Procedures were being followed across our system and community.

WATERLOO REGION CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - WILMOT

Anthony Piscitelli

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1. During my first term as a school Board Trustee I have primarily focused upon supporting LGBTQ youth in our system. I supported Gay Straight Alliances as a means to assist LGBTQ youth, I was also instrumental in passing a motion expressing support for our teachers and support staff members efforts to support LGBTQ youth. The motion read: "THAT the Waterloo Catholic District School Board as a demonstration of its commitment to inclusion of all its students and staff respects OECTA's right to make its own decision regarding its support for the LGBTQ community."

2. Trustees, by virtue of our position, are leaders in the Catholic community and our words and actions impact the

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understanding of inclusion by our fellow local Catholics. If elected to a second term I will continue to speak out in favour of a broad definition of inclusion and I will support efforts of the LGBTQ community to codify in school board policy supports and protections for LGBTQ staff and students.

3. I believe how LGBTQ teachers and support staff feel they are treated is an important indicator of the success of our school system. I therefore support a 'treatment of staff survey' created by the Board of Trustee. This survey will be used to follow up on previous surveys and to identify the issues within our system. Previous surveys have been led by senior administration; I believe it is essential that the Board of Trustees lead survey efforts to ensure the results are unbiased and to ensure problems are addressed. I also support involving our labour union partners in identifying the questions to ask in the survey, this will ensure the issues that are most important to our employees are addressed. I hope that this will be a safe and anonymous avenue for LGBTQ staff to share their concerns with the Board of Trustees which will allow us to address these issues.

1. I have considerable experience with marginalized groups through my work as a broadcaster. As a reporter and anchor, I've covered everything from PRIDE celebrations to anti-poverty demonstrations.

2. I will continue to support the teachers as the current Trustees have (with the backing of OECTA) in the PRIDE parade and gay-straight alliances in our schools. Supporting all students and staff in the LGBTQ community is a very important part of being inclusive within the WCDSB.

3. Bullying and hate crimes can be major issues among youth. The WCDSB needs to have a zero-tolerance towards any form of bullying. I feel the gay-straight alliance groups are beneficial in helping students from the LGBTQ feel supported within the school system and we need to build on that within the WCDSB.

Amy Fee

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