

Municipal Election 2014 – Waterloo Survey Results



Waterloo

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>

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

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

North Dumfries -

<http://www.northdumfries.ca/en/newslit/index.aspx?corpId=oFIdMqfyp7dgBaqqB0H38geQuAleQuAl&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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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.

MAYOR

Rami Said

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1. Over the past year I have been working to help build the local LGBTQ community. Currently I am in the process of opening the City of Waterloo's first LGBTQ inclusive night club called "The Order" and have already been in talks about working with many other local groups in the community.

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2. In order to promote inclusion and belonging for any diverse group including the LGBTQ community it is important to focus on both education and social growth. I believe in working with our local organisations such as Spectrum, tri-Pride, GLOW and Get REAL we can help to educate the population about the realities of the community and help ease many of the misconceptions people have about the LGBTQ community and allies. I also believe in working with these groups we can empower them in areas of need in which they know best. Along with the previously stated we also need to work together in hosting events to help build a stronger social structure to show our cities support for the LGBTQ community along with giving those who may need help any assistance to interact with these groups and city to ensure they can receive any information or help they may need. Only working together do I believe we can move forward and ensure both the safety and inclusion for everyone in the LGBTQ community.

3. As someone who believes in advocating for all groups including the LGBTQ community I believe it is the responsibility of our local government to work with both our provincial and federal government. In doing so we can help to develop policies in which protect those who are mistreated whether in school, the work place, retirement living and everything in between. As mayor of Waterloo I will work hard with our local organisations to identify both the issues harming the community and find solutions in which we can present to our municipalities, our school boards, our provincial government and our federal government in order to help drive change. Working together I believe we can drive policy to protect those who society has at times turned a blind eye to and in turn resolve many of the issues affecting the community.

Dave Jaworsky
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1. Community is incredibly important to me—and that means all members, including the LGBTQ community. I have proudly attended the tri-Pride festival in Kitchener to show my support as an ally. I also have an extensive record of volunteerism and supporting some of our community's most vulnerable members. I have served on the Tech Advisory Committee of KidsAbility, an organization with a mission to empower children with special needs to realize their full potential, and I currently participate regularly at the House of Friendship food distribution at the Sunnydale Community Centre. During the six years I spent on the Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation grants committee, I have reviewed grant applications from well over 100 not-for-profits, covering a depth and breadth of local issues. While serving on the foundation's board of directors, I was involved in the Vital Signs program, which assesses key indicators or "vital signs" of the region and aims to understand which issues are in

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the most need of attention. As a board, we chose belonging as one of the primary areas to make progress on. It is important to me to promote a sense of belonging and inclusiveness for everyone in our community.

2. I enjoy going out into the community and building partnerships, and that will continue if I am elected. As mayor, I would look forward to partnering with groups like the Waterloo Region Rainbow Coalition on a regular basis to promote belonging for the LGBTQ members of our community.

3. As mayor, I would leverage my skills and over a decade's worth of experience as a government lobbyist to address these important issues at the various levels of government. A key component of my platform is to build a vibrant, caring community, and part of that means building an inclusive community that is safe for all citizens. I see opportunity with the Vital Signs program's focus on belonging as well as the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, which works for social justice and positive change by addressing the root causes of crime. The knowledge gained from these programs can help us address the underlying issues of belonging and hate crimes. I would also look forward to working with various groups to learn about further barriers faced by the LGBTQ community and how I can help make progress on those issues as mayor.

REGIONAL COUNCILLOR

Karen Scian

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1. My community work is currently focused on restorative justice, as the Chair of Community Justice Initiatives (CJI) in Kitchener. CJI works with the Grand Valley Institute for Women, building supportive relationships - in and out of the institution - for the women who reside there. We also work with the local justice system to facilitate restorative justice practices, with a high success rate of keeping offenders out of the circle of incarceration. We also provide extensive mediation services to the community, everything from neighbourhood disputes to interpersonal conflict.

2. I see our work at CJI as incredibly important in our community and I strive to instill restorative practices into my work as a college instructor and politician. A fundamental part of that approach is a very strong awareness of the amazing diversity of experience, perspective, and need that our community holds. I am very interested in helping the LGBTQ community achieve their goals - please contact me to set up a meeting, as I would love to hear more from you in a more personal setting.

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3. CJJ could play a significant role in helping with many of these issues - I'd like to learn more and see how I (and we) can be of assistance.

Jane Mitchell

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1. As part of the Region's diversity strategy, I attended two workshops put on by the Region on LGBTQ staffing and LGBTQ issues generally. When I was a public school trustee 20 years ago, I knew teachers who were gay, I would never have told anyone about their orientation. Today at the Region of Waterloo, I listened to LGBTQ staff talk openly about working at the Region in various positions. The new head of social services introduced his husband in the audience when he attended his first council meeting. While still a long way to go, especially in transgendered issues, things are much better. We flew the rainbow flag during PRIDE.

2. I belong to the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council. For the last few years, the council has welcomed a representative from the LGBTQ community as a member of the council. In November, the council will be having a Friends meeting that is open to the community. Helen Kennedy from EGALE will be talking about violence in the LGBTQ community, particularly the transgendered population. A controversial topic not much addressed. I intend to write a blog about how to address people when the English language does not have gender neutral pronouns. I will continue to support the Region in its quest for equality and diversity.

3. Regional Public Health is working with the school boards on programs to prevent the use of such phrases as "so gay" as well as anti-bullying and safe schools projects. The Region is training workers in equality for all clients, no matter their diversity. As mentioned above, hiring is open to all. Access to long term care and retirement housing is a topic I only just learned about. It will be a growing concern as the baby boom ages. The fact that same sex couples can now marry will help a lot of the consent issues but the attitudes of older people to LGBTQ is a concern for the aged.

Andrew Telegdi

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1. I came to Canada as a eleven year old following the Hungarian Revolution in 1957 and had the experience of being taunted for having an accent and being a displaced person. While I was president of the Federation of Students at University of Waterloo I pushed for inclusion. In 1993, I was the recipient of the KW Mulicultural Center Award for "Inclusion and Equity". I served as the president of the K-Multicultural Centre and as a Waterloo Councillor helped establish the Mayor's Race Relations Committee in Waterloo Region. As a member of Parliament

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for fifteen years I worked for passing hate crime legislation and was a strong proponent for same sex marriage at a time when it was unpopular to do so. I am a very strong proponent of civil liberties and human rights. I had a major confrontation with a fundamentalist group over the issue. I told opponents if they had problems with same sex marriage they should talk to their kids. Google my name on same sex marriage.

2. I would continue doing what I have been doing.

3. Same answer as above.

Sean Strickland

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1. Yes. I know several people and acquaintances who are members of the LGBTQ community. I have supported and continue to support human resource policies at the region that emphasize and protect, encourage diversity of thought, gender, colour and sexual orientation. I have spent a great deal of my time as an elected official helping the poor through increased income supports, social supports and affordable housing.

2. This is a good question. See above regarding progressive human resource policies. In terms of public policy Human Rights protection is paramount. Open to more suggestions on this question.

3. There are a lot of issues in the above many of which are not within the purview of the regional government. Breaking down barriers, educating social service providers, educating community and police forces are very important. I support zero tolerance for hate crimes and am abhorred by them. The region is an equal opportunity employer and we need to continue our inclusive approach to hiring staff many of which, including senior staff, are LGBTQ. I am unaware of access issues to long term care, housing and health care based on gender information and would like to learn more about this.

Ed Korschewitz

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1. YES

2. My experience has been that you need to treat everyone with respect and as an equal. To take affirmative action only alienates others, creating division with the community.

3. Division by labelling is not in anybody's best interest. To allow this behaviour should not be tolerated.

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WARD 4

Rick Kapoor

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1. No
2. I will sit down with you, listen to you, find out how we the City could help you and be involved, come back present the solution. I have a strategy of continues follow up, meetings, and be involved. I make the things happen not let the things happen and this formula is and always worked for me. I am not a politician and not a bureaucrat and will never be. Based on my 25 year experience dealing with businesses, businesses management, financing and dealing with diplomats I assume that I have an idea how to get the things done for the betterment and ongoing developments for better social and community(s). Therefore at the end I will confirm you that if I got elected there for sure will be big time changes that the City worked and for the future and for the betterment lifting life and living standard equalization.
3. As I said I will sit down and listen and learn about you and for sure work for the betterment of LGBTQ. Analyzing is very important before you take any action, that's what I will be performing. This is my commitment to you !!

WARD 5

Mark Whaley

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1. Yes. I have friends, colleagues, co-workers and neighbours in the LGBTQ community.
2. I recognize that the LGBTQ community is a minority group who often face discrimination. I will promote fair hiring practices in Waterloo and bring awareness to the group with my participation in such events as the Rainbow Picnic in Victoria Park which I have attended in the past.
3. As an elected official I recognize that the LGBTQ is a legitimate and recognized minority group that is particularly vulnerable to hate crimes and bullying. As such, I must ensure that the city government I represent treats this group fairly with respect to hiring practices, workplace barriers and access to the same benefits that other employees are entitled to.

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WARD 6

Jeff Henry

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1. I've been pleased to represent the city at Tri-Pride, at the opening and annual anniversaries at Spectrum, and at numerous significant ACCKWA events over the last four years. I've been honoured to hear many stories from the community from those who have experienced marginalization.

2. Symbols are important, which is why finding community space was essential to demonstrate that individuals identifying as LGBTQ are part of Waterloo. Finding permanent space will be the next step in that journey. Broadly speaking, feelings of belonging are experienced at an individual level, and so we have to make sure Waterloo allows everyone to feel it. That comes from doing things with others in neighbourhoods, in schools, in parks, and in community centres. It comes from hearing your issues and perspectives represented in community conversations. I'm open to ideas and discussion with members of the LGBTQ community that feel those things aren't happening so we can address it together.

3. I was happy to facilitate an initial conversation between Jeremy and senior city staff on healthcare and social services supports in our community, and would look forward to providing any additional support required to move that forward. I'm pleased that police have made efforts to reach out to the LGBTQ community on how they can better connect with and serve, including to tackle hate crimes issues. I would be encouraged to see WRRRC connected with the Region on long-term care issues, and would be happy to facilitate connections to move those issues forward. In general, I would appreciate any outreach from WRRRC on issues of particular concern as I would be happy to assist.

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - WATERLOO, 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

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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 ACKWA 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 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.

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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 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

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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.

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 CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD - WATERLOO, 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

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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.

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.