

Questions for Norfolk Candidates for the Offices of School Board Members

Please feel free to type your answers below the questions!

➤ Why are you running for office?

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I'm running because being raised in Norfolk most of my life, I feel I'm aware of the issues and needs of parents concerning educational issue, and having 3 children of my own in our Catholic School System (At St. Cecilia's Pt Dover) my concerns are the same as most parents. Having lived most of my childhood on the farm I also aware of busing issues and having our children elementary education as close to home as possible.

➤ How will you ensure that rural students will not be negatively impacted by decisions you make?

I have tried my best that we don't negatively impact on our rural schools. However the 20 to 1 in primary classes have negatively impacted on our small rural schools. WE as a Board have not done enough to persuade the Province that this will not work in our Elementary schools in Rural Norfolk without splitting all our other grades. I have tried to persuade the Board we need to convince the Province rural schools either need more funding for Teachers and have all classes with a 20 to 1 ratios or we should be exempt from the 20 to 1 ratio where it will do more harm than good for the junior and senior classes in our elementary schools. Our Board must start thinking outside the box and come up with new ways of dealing with the Province, because our Board is just as important if not more so than the bigger Boards throughout the Province.

➤ Will you consider putting guidelines in place regarding busing times?

➤ I must only assume you mean more guidelines as to how long a student will be on the bus traveling from school to home. We already have guidelines in place, such as a Secondary Student going to Holy Trinity will not be on the bus for more than 60 minutes one way. But these are guidelines only (*and do not have to be followed and can be ignored.*) and there is one for elementary schools as well. I think you want something more as a policy, which cannot be ignored. And no I don't have a problem with putting a policy in place in regards to busing times

- Given the fact that schools in rural communities serve several purposes, what priority will you give to the value of these schools?
- **I know for a fact in some communities such as LaSalette and Sacred Heart In Courtland the schools are the centre of the Community and it also gives a sense of Community. We must keep these schools open and I think my past record will confirm for you this belief. Families deserve to have their children educated as close to home as possible, and in their own communities.**
- Do you understand what your role as a school trustee will be? Do you understand relationship between the role of the school board and the role of the province?

I as a Trustee understand that the role of School Board and the Province are one and the same, ("the education of our youth). However having said this, the Province treats all school Boards alike, as if they are all in large urban areas. We as Trustees and as a Board must communicate and sometimes argue that Rural Boards can not be treated the same as urban ones and specials needs such as Transportation and Class sizes and the uniqueness of Rural Boards must be addressed properly in the funding formula. Which is not presently the case!!!!!!!!!!

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- To what extent have the needs of rural areas in the development and operation of local childcare plans been addressed?
- **There is only one childcare plan in operation at the present time which is the Best Start program, however since the Federal Government has opted out of it. It is a plan I don't endorse because there is too few places for children in child care programs in the schools. And its either the rich or very poor (who will have it paid for or who gets a tax right off) can send their child. For most of the lower to mid middle class this is no help at all. We need and can do better, but we will need more provincial and federal dollars to make this a reality or let private enterprise make it affordable for everyone with a tax break.**
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- Are childcare programs/services coordinated with other family/children services delivered in the municipality/district?
- **Yes the Best Start program!**
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- What additional support/tools are required by the municipalities to deliver childcare programs that meet rural needs?

More dollars are need for an adequate child care programs, that allows anyone to enroll their child in and not just to the have and have nots,

nothing is gear towards the middle class who make too much money according to the government, but do not make enough to be able to make the child care payments!

Dennis Blake

Questions for Norfolk Candidates for the Offices of School Board Members

Please feel free to type your answers below the questions!

- Why are you running for office?
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- I am running for the Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic DSB because I believe that the Catholic school supporters from Norfolk need a strong, dedicated and involved Trustee. I was born and raised in Port Dover, and
- I live in Waterford. I have spent all my adult life working in Norfolk, and believe that it is the best place to live.
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- How will you ensure that rural students will not be negatively impacted by decisions you make?

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- All decisions that I make will be based on what is best for all students. As a Trustee from Norfolk, it is my responsibility to ensure the rural students of Norfolk have a strong voice at the board table. It is my responsibility to speak up at the board table to make sure that the other Trustees understand the decisions that we make do not have a negative effect on our students.

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- Will you consider putting guidelines in place regarding busing times?

It is the board's responsibility to ensure that our rural students are not spending an inappropriate length of time on the school bus. As a Trustee that represents an area with the majority of students that are bus riders, I would be very vocal in insisting that our students are able to get to and from school in a reasonable length of time.

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- Given the fact that schools in rural communities serve several purposes, what priority will you give to the value of these schools?

Rural schools are extremely valuable to the communities. Every school is a top priority for me, and I know that I will be a strong voice for all the schools in Norfolk county.

- Do you understand what your role as a school trustee will be? Do you understand relationship between the role of the school board and the role of the province?

- The role of the Trustee is to govern. The Trustees set policies and pass the budget, as outlined by the Provincial government.
- The Provincial government has set very tight budget lines, and local school boards are expected to adhere to these. The local school boards need to be very pro-active and lobby the provincial government on a regular basis to ensure that the government does not forget that rural Ontario has special needs (transportation, small, rural schools, etc).
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- To what extent have the needs of rural areas in the development and operation of local child care plans been addressed?

Norfolk does have an Early years centre, which is locally run. There is always room for improvement in the development and delivery of child care programs. Partnerships are important in all projects, and I am know that the BHNCDSD is working with all interested groups to ensure our children receive the “Best start” to their education as possible.

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Jeff Miller