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### Section 1 – Accountability

**1. In your opinion, what is the role of parents in the Board's decision-making process?**

In my opinion, parents play an instrumental role in key decisions made by the Board because it is their children who are directly impacted by the decisions. Parents are most invested and deserve the opportunity to discuss and consult with trustees on the issues that matter the most to them. While parents are very busy, they should always have the opportunity to express their views openly with their elected representative.

**2. If you are elected, how do you see your role as a trustee in the decision-making process?**

I believe it is imperative for trustees to consult widely before making any key decisions. I have a consultative approach and will be available to parents and children to work with them on key issues. Ultimately, it is the trustee's responsibility to work with those who are most invested and to make decisions that best reflect the community's input as well as their own personal beliefs.

**3. Do you believe that trustees should serve as intermediaries between parents and the Board and/or their school (when all other avenues have been exhausted)?**

Yes

Please explain.

**4. Do you believe the Board's decision-making process could be more transparent?**

Yes

If yes, what measures would you propose to improve the Board's transparency and accountability?

I think it's important to always keep the lines of communication open. We can always strive to share information more freely. Reports should be available in a timely manner, meetings should be open and we should all be responsive to childrens and parents' needs.

**5. What do you believe should have greater weight in the decisions made by trustees: the advice of educational professionals or the input of parents and communities?**

[no response]

**Please explain.**

This is a challenging question to answer as I think we need to find the right balance between the experts and those of us that know our own children best.

**6. This past year has seen an increase in in-camera (closed-door) committee and Board meetings. As a trustee, would you undertake to ensure that in-camera meetings are held only when necessary to protect the privacy of individuals?**

Yes

**Additional Comments**

Parents have a right to information about their children's education.

**7. Last year, the Board reviewed its Alternative Schools program and its Secondary Gifted program. Despite strong stakeholder support for these programs, Board staff recommended that they either be closed or eventually phased out. As a trustee, what kind of information would you seek and what kind of questions would you ask in order to come to a decision when staff recommendations are opposed to the views of the community?**

I see the role as trustee as an advocate for parents' views on the board. I would consult with parents and invested stakeholders to see what their concerns were and would raise those questions at the board table.

I personally will be particularly concerned with issues of meeting children and parents' needs, as well as containing costs. Perhaps we can think creatively for better, more comprehensive solutions, as well as research best practices.

**8. Good decision-making requires good and comprehensive data which is shared with all public education stakeholders. What will you do as a trustee to ensure that Board reports are released to the public in a timely fashion and contain accurate information?**

As trustee for zone 10, I will work hard to ensure the Board shares accurate information in a timely manner with the public so everyone can form their views based on the latest information.

**9. Teachers and support staff who work in the classroom every day with students are well-acquainted with student needs, yet are not permitted to contribute to the public discussion when changes to programs and services are under consideration. Do you believe that the experience and knowledge of the professionals in the classroom should be better represented in the Board's decision-making process?**

Absolutely, our teachers and support staff see first-hand what is and isn't working for our kids. They are best positioned to help the Board make the right decisions at the right time, in the best interests of our children's success.

## **Section 2 – Educational Issues**

**10. Given the chronic under-funding of education, what new ideas would you bring to the table to address the Board's ongoing financial challenges?**

Like all of us face with our own family budgets, it is becoming increasingly difficult to live within our means. However, it is very important for the Board to prioritize its expenses, based on what will most effectively support our children's growth and development. I believe in the value of connecting with others to ensure the Board is focused on the right things, and is ensuring we are getting value for money.

**11. It can be a challenge to meet the demand for French Immersion while maintaining a strong, viable English program. How important do you think it is for the Board to respond to the ever-increasing demand for French Immersion in this region?**

Important

**Additional Comments**

[no comments entered]

**12. Do you favour the Board's revised student transfer policy that restricts students' ability to transfer from their neighbourhood school to the school of their choice?**

Yes

**Please explain.**

I think parents know their children best and should be entitled to make decisions about which school most appropriately meets their needs.

**13. While the Ontario Ministry of Education is encouraging school boards to integrate students with special learning needs into the regular classroom whenever appropriate, it recognizes specialized classes as one of a range of options for exceptional students. At present, the OCDSB provides specialized classes for students with autism, Asperger's syndrome, developmental disabilities, giftedness and a number of other exceptionalities. Do you support the continued provision of specialized classes for students with these and other special educational needs?**

Yes

**13. a) If yes, what would you do to reduce waiting lists and improve student access to these classes?**

The Board should rely on the advice of experts to decide who has the greatest need for additional specialized resources.

**13. b) If you answered no, how would you ensure that both exceptional students and their peers without special learning needs receive the support they need in order to learn and thrive in the regular classroom?**

[no response]

**13. c) When changes are proposed to special programs, would you agree that any proposed changes should first be evaluated through pilot programs with well-defined, measurable outcomes?**

Yes

**14. Recent changes to program delivery at this Board have reduced access to specialist teachers in the arts, science, physical education, and other subjects, especially at the intermediate level. Do you believe that students are receiving enough subject specialist education in the elementary/intermediate years?**

Yes

**Please explain.**

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**15. At the same time as students have less access to outdoor education centres, research is showing that children need experiences in the natural world for improved learning, for their well-being, and to be informed citizens about the environment. Would you increase the role of outdoor education centres in our students' education?**

Yes

**If yes, how?**

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**16. The Alternative Schools program was reviewed this past year and found by the Board to have many benefits for students. As a trustee, would you ensure this program is continued and is extended to zones where it's not currently available?**

Yes

**If yes, what are your ideas to make this happen?**

If we are finding based on expert review and parent feed-back that the Alternative Schools program was beneficial for students, we should certainly consider continuing and extending the program, while balancing the other priorities of the school system.

**17. Ottawa receives more refugees than any other city in Ontario, has the second largest immigrant population in the province, and the first language of approximately one third of Ottawa residents is neither English nor French. Do**

**you believe that the OCDSB is doing as well as it could to serve the needs of students and families that are new to Canada?**

No

**If no, what changes would you propose?**

### **Section 3 – Philosophy**

**18. Current trustees: Please give an example of something you did last year to further public education. Other candidates: Please name a specific effort you would promote if you were elected.**

I am committed to:

1. Working hard so that Ottawa kids have access to a world class education
2. Ensuring the OCDSB operates within its means
3. Focusing the Board on decisions that matter most to kids and parents.

**19. What is your vision of education and its role in our community?**

As a full-time mother raising a young boy, I know and understand the opportunities and challenges of educating children in Ottawa. I strongly believe we should expect access to world-class, high-quality public education for all of our children, creating the best atmosphere for each child to thrive, as well as informative programs and services beyond the classroom that teach our children important life skills.

It is also paramount to me as a taxpayer that we keep costs low and balance the school board budget, while ensuring we are providing the right services to meet our children's needs.

In addition to ensuring our schools are safe and clean, I believe we should better support the impressive teachers working tirelessly to educate and nurture our community's children. Teachers can and should be encouraged to use innovative, progressive and creative teaching techniques that work best for our children to grow and develop.

We want the best for our kids. With the right leadership, working together, I know we can get it.

Please visit [megancarroll.ca](http://megancarroll.ca) for more information.