



Municipal Election Tips

Why should I vote for school trustee in the municipal elections?

On October 27th, voters will elect the people responsible for developing policy that affects the two million students in Ontario's publicly funded schools – local school board trustees. This tip sheet will help you understand the important role trustees play in Ontario's education system.

1. I thought school boards didn't really have any power, so why should I vote?

The province does have overall control over education funding and policy, but many decisions that directly affect students are made at the board level. For example, school boards:

- decide how to spend the funds they receive from the province for things like hiring teachers and other staff, ESL programs, busing and Full Day Kindergarten
- make decisions about building new schools and closing schools
- control policy for things like special education, programs for newcomers, French Immersion, safe schools and homework
- create programs to fit the unique needs of the board, such as Model Schools for Inner Cities in Toronto, or the Killarney-Shebanoning Environmental Education Centre, operated by the Sudbury Catholic school board in cooperation with Killarney Provincial Park.

2. Why should I vote for school trustees?

- School board trustees, like municipal councilors, are a vital level of local democracy. By voting, you have a say in all of the important decisions that your school board makes, and you ensure that your views can be represented by your school board.

3. What do trustees do?

- Trustees represent the interests of parents and students in their area. Even though they are not paid

salaries like municipal councilors and provincial politicians, their jobs are wide-ranging.

- Trustees do things like:
 - Help parents who have concerns about everything from busing to special education
 - Sit on committees where decisions are made about student expulsions, principal and superintendent hiring, special education, parent involvement, programs like French Immersion, extra-curricular activities and more.
 - Make decisions about the school board's budget.
 - Consult with their communities on the board's multi-year plan and bring concerns from their community to the school board as a whole.

4. How can I find out who is running for trustee in my area?

- Ontario's four school board associations, working with Elections Ontario, have created a great website with all of the information you need about school board elections. Visit the site at <http://elections.ontarioschooltrustees.org/en/index.html>

For more tip sheets and other information about education, go to the People for Education website at www.peopleforeducation.ca