

2SLGBTQIA+ Questionnaire for Waterloo Region Municipal Candidates

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Do you identify as a member of a 2SLGBTQIA+ community?

No

What role are you running for?

WCDSB Trustee for Kitchener

What do you believe are the most critical issues for the local 2SLGBTQIA+ community? If elected, how would you work with the local community to address these issues?

First step for me would be to ask LGBT advocates attached to the school board, and engage with the community on priorities. I'd focus on students and parents who raised specific issues to the board, and use that to write and recommend good policy!

Have you ever participated in 2SLGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training?

Not that training specifically, no. Though a good selection of diversity and inclusion trainings that are broader in scope.

Systemic homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are still prevalent in our community, resulting in significant socioeconomic disparities within 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. If elected, how will you combat homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia?

While systemic challenges exist for a lot of minority groups, those faced by the trans community specifically are top of mind. I'm finding social media particularly disparaging. I think it is important for school boards to identify challenges faced by their trans students and staff, to provide them support and advocacy. For Trustees, a bit of education on how to speak to and consider issues faced by the trans community can do a lot to lower the temperature of conflicts.

If elected, how would you address the ongoing issues of homelessness and mental health, especially as they disproportionately affect members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community?

It's so discouraging, isn't it? I think it's important to have supportive, helpful, and caring policies aimed at mental health and addiction issues young people face in school age. This includes policies to support students who are bullied.

Do you agree with the statement that "trans rights are human rights, and must be protected as such?"

Yep.

What is one motion would you bring to council that you think will improve the lives of specifically queer people, racialized individuals and/or marginalized residents and why?

I know it's not exactly what people are expecting to hear, but I would motion for creating dedicated programs for marginalized groups to address mathematics and engineering competencies. I was inspired by this paper:<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED584228.pdf>

When thinking about our schools, do you agree that 2SLGBTQIA+ representation in books and lessons is critical at all grade levels? How would you support 2SLGBTQIA+ students in schools?

For sure, kids need to see themselves in media (whether that's books or art or video). With the caveat that age-appropriety is important for effective pedagogy. I believe in librarians and curriculum designers ability to manage those nuances based on community best practices.