



Making a Difference for Kids
Running for Election
as a School Board Trustee
Guide for Candidates
and Communities



**Education
that Connects**
Global Achievement
with Local Accountability

Election Day:
Monday,
October 27, 2014



**Education
that Connects**
Global Achievement
with Local Accountability

Contents



1 School Boards and School Board Trustees

What is a School Board?
School Board Trustees – Who are they?
Why are they important?
What are the Time Commitments for a School Board Trustee?
Can anyone be a School Board Trustee?
Experience and Knowledge that would be good to have
Trustee Orientation
Trustee Honorarium
Board Administration
Trustees, School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees
I want to run for School Board Trustee. What do I have to do?



2 Education in Ontario

Education Funding
Curriculum
Education Quality and Accountability Office



3 The Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association

What is OCSTA?
Statement of Mission and Beliefs



4 The Ontario Public School Boards' Association

What is OPSBA?
Statement of Mission and Beliefs



Touch the future Become a school trustee

TALK TO ANY TRUSTEE and you will hear about the joys, and the challenges as well, that come with working on behalf of Ontario’s children, their families and their communities.

VISIT ANY SCHOOL BOARD WEBSITE – and prepare to be amazed by the breadth and depth of the programs and activities that Ontario school boards have developed to guide and shape Generation Next. There are programs designed to promote achievement of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students, and to welcome the world of new immigrants to Canada. There are math Olympiads, literacy initiatives, sports programs, art exhibitions, science fairs, innovative programs for children with special needs, EcoSchools, early learning centres, adult education, homework clubs and a strong safety net of support services – all designed to help students succeed to the best of their abilities.

THROUGH THEIR MEMBERSHIP on local school boards and their involvement with provincial school board associations, trustees also have the opportunity to play a broader advocacy role and influence government policy.

DESPITE BUDGET CONSTRAINTS, Ontario’s school boards have demonstrated time and again that, through the collective efforts of creative and committed trustees, they are making a difference for kids.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A SCHOOL TRUSTEE?

The following guide offers the ABCs of running for office and outlines the roles and responsibilities of school boards and trustees.

Key Dates – 2014

NOMINATION AND CAMPAIGN PERIOD BEGINS	January 2, 2014
NOMINATION DAY (LAST DAY TO BE NOMINATED)	September 12, 2014
FINAL DAY FOR WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDACY	September 12, 2014
VOTING DAY	October 27, 2014
SCHOOL BOARD TERM BEGINS	December 1, 2014
CAMPAIGN PERIOD ENDS	December 31, 2014
FINANCIAL FILING DEADLINE	March 25, 2015
SCHOOL BOARD TERM ENDS	November 30, 2018

More information

can be found at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing web site:
www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page219.aspx.

RESOURCE DEVELOPED BY:

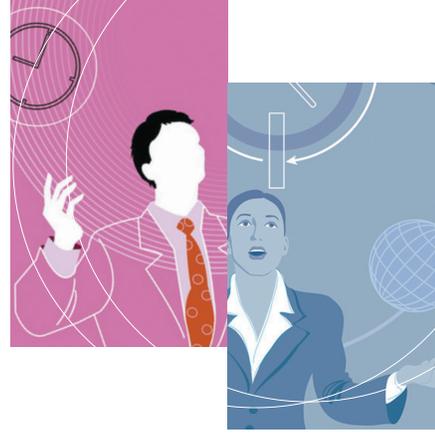
Ontario Public School Boards’ Association (OPSBA)

Ontario Catholic School Trustees’ Association (OCSTA)

Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l’Ontario (ACÉPO)

Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)

SECTION ONE: School Boards and School Board Trustees



What is a School Board?

A school board is a body that operates the province's publicly funded schools. The school board is governed by its publicly elected board members (trustees). Trustees can be elected to one of four different kinds of school boards: English public, English Catholic, French public and French Catholic.

A fundamental pillar of a democratic society is free education for its citizens. Ontario's publicly funded school boards provide high standards in programming and ensure that there are supports and resources to help all students to reach those standards.

The responsibilities of school boards are set out in Ontario's *Education Act* which states that every school board shall:

- promote student achievement and well-being, a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils, and prevention of bullying;
- ensure effective stewardship of the board's resources;
- deliver effective and appropriate education programs to its pupils;
- develop and maintain policies and organizational structures that,
 - (i) promote the boards goals and,
 - (ii) encourage pupils to pursue their educational goals;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies developed by the board in achieving the board's goals and the efficiency of the implementation of those policies;
- develop a multi-year plan aimed at achieving the boards' goals;
- annually review the multi-year plan with the board's Director of Education or the supervisory officer acting as the board's Director of Education; and

- monitor and evaluate the performance of the board's Director of Education, or the supervisory officer acting as the board's Director of Education, in meeting,
 - (i) his or her duties under this Act or any policy, guideline or regulation made under this Act, (including duties under the multi-year plan), and
 - (ii) any other duties assigned by the board.

Beyond these broad areas of accountability, the *Education Act* also spells out duties for school boards that include such obligations as effective operation of schools, setting the board's budget, implementing the Ministry's curriculum policies, and ensuring that appropriate staff are hired as required by schools. Boards will also make determinations about such matters as pupil transportation, school libraries, continuing education, childcare facilities on school sites. More details can be found in section 170 of the *Education Act*. See: www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90e02_e.htm.

A school board is **not**:

- a parliament with party divisions. A school board is a single body made up of members, i.e., trustees. A school board should speak with one voice on the decisions it has collectively made.
- interested only in the opinions of families with children. A school board must recognize that all of society has a stake in public education.
- a sub-committee of the municipality. In fact, school boards govern budgets substantially greater than those of most municipalities.
- a closed or private body. All school boards are public institutions and their meetings are open to the public.

Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development.

KOFI ANNAN

School Board Trustees – Who are they? Why are they important?

School board trustees are the **members** of the district school board. They are locally-elected representatives of the public, and they are the community’s advocate for public education. They are required to carry out their responsibilities in a manner that assists the board in fulfilling its duties under the *Education Act*.

A trustee’s role is to maintain a focus on student achievement and well-being and to participate in making decisions that benefit the entire board district while representing the interests of his or her constituents. Trustees must also communicate the views and decisions of the board back to their constituents.

This is not as simple as it sounds. Because Ontario is large and diverse, the job of school board trustee varies widely. A trustee is responsible for identifying the needs and priorities of their community and for ensuring these are considered in the decisions that result in practical educational opportunities for students. In doing so, trustees must mediate among conflicting interests and values. A trustee must do this in collaboration with the other members of the school board by developing policies that work for all students, and ensuring they are implemented effectively. Whether it is consulting with communities on how the board will provide French Immersion programs or offer before and after school programs or name a new school, it is the local trustee who makes sure that the community has a direct way to express its views on vital education decisions that affect our day-to-day lives. School trustees play an indispensable role in preserving our democratic heritage.

The school trustee is a member of a team

Only the team (the Board), not an individual trustee, has the authority to make decisions or take action. A school board must place all students first when making any decision.

Trustees are required to uphold the implementation of any board resolution after it is passed by the board. In exercising their role, they are required to comply with the board’s code of conduct.

Trustees are responsible for establishing policy direction

Policies set out the expectations about what should happen or how services are to be provided within the school board. A well-written policy describes to parents, the public and the board’s staff, what they can expect. The Board of Trustees ensure that the director of education carries out responsibilities for implementing board’s policies. They entrust the day to day management of the board to its staff through the board’s director of education.

Trustees, as members of the board, are accountable to the province

The Board of Trustees is accountable to the Province of Ontario for the proper conduct of their duties and powers, including the implementation of provincial policy and the use of provincially allocated funds.

Trustees are accountable to their electorate

As elected officials trustees must balance the demands of the community with the duties required by the Ministry of Education. By law, they are required to consult with parents, students and supporters of the board on the board’s multi-year plan and bring the concerns of these groups to the attention of the board. This can be challenging and takes dedicated leadership coupled with a willingness to seek innovative ideas and the courage to implement them.



School Board Trustees are community leaders

School board trustees have a responsibility to all the families in their community – not just their neighbours, and not just families with school-aged children. They work with their school board colleagues and with other community partners to ensure that all the students within the board’s jurisdiction have equal opportunities to reach their maximum potential.

Trustees demonstrate their leadership in the following key areas:

- Establishing vision to ensure a strong public education system
- Setting goals for student achievement
- Undertaking assessment to measure progress
- Promoting accountability throughout the school board
- Allocating resources in ways that ensure equity of opportunity and demonstrate accountability
- Establishing a respectful, caring, professional climate throughout the school board
- Creating collaborative relationships inside the board and across the community
- Promoting continuous improvement
- Promoting community involvement and establishing communications

What are the Time Commitments for a School Board Trustee?

Attending Board Meetings and Committee Meetings

Trustees are expected to prepare for, and participate in, all board meetings and all meetings of board committees of which they are members. Preparing for a board meeting by reviewing all the material can be time-consuming. Attendance at board meetings can be in person or through electronic means. Board meetings are not, however, the only time commitment for trustees. To get a full picture of board-related requirements, candidates should check with their local school board office.

Other duties at the School Board

There are other obligations for school board trustees to undertake in their role as a school board member. Some of these are statutory (meaning mandated by the province) and some are not. Statutory duties include the appointment of a trustee to various committees such as the Special Education Advisory Committee, to board-based quasi-judicial committees such as those responsible for conducting proceedings dealing with the suspension or expulsion of students, to the Audit committee, the Supervised Alternative Learning committee and the Parent Involvement Committee. The board may also establish non-statutory committees or working groups as needed and these will have trustee membership.

Attending Community Meetings as a representative of the School board

One of a trustee’s key responsibilities is to facilitate communication between the board and community groups. Trustees may be asked to attend meetings such as: school council meetings, community groups, municipal councils and municipal committees, meetings with MPPs and MPs, and other community agencies such as district health councils and library

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

NELSON MANDELA

boards. Community meetings are often held at night to enable working parents to attend.

Attending school events and community functions will give candidates a fuller picture of the role.

Responding to the concerns of parents and others

A trustee is often the first point of contact for parents and community members who have questions and/or concerns about their local school. While individual trustees do not have the authority to direct board staff to undertake any particular action they can help in answering questions, finding solutions or facilitating interaction with the school and board administration.

Communications

Responding to telephone calls or e-mails, meeting requests and queries from constituents is an important part of the trustee role and requires some time commitment.

Time commitments will vary but it is not uncommon for a trustee to spend an average of 15 hours per week on all the activities associated with the role.

Can anyone be a School Board Trustee?

A person is qualified to be elected as a school board trustee if the person is qualified to vote in a school board election and is a resident of the school board district. When filing a nomination a candidate must meet all of the following requirements:

- a resident within the jurisdiction of the board;
- a supporter* of the board;
- a Canadian citizen;
- at least 18 years old;
- Roman Catholic (if running for a separate school board);
- not legally prohibited from voting; and
- not disqualified by any legislation from holding school board office.

(*“Supporter” refers to the individual’s support for one of the four publicly funded school systems. A list of supporters for each system is kept by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation.)

Note: A candidate, if nominated, must remain qualified throughout the election and, if elected, throughout the term of office. The term of office is 4 years. School board candidates should confirm that they have the qualifications described in section 219 of the *Education Act*. It is the responsibility of the candidate to determine whether he or she is qualified to be elected to and hold office.

A candidate for school board office cannot be a clerk, deputy clerk, treasurer or deputy treasurer of a municipality within the jurisdiction of a board.

The following persons **are disqualified** from being elected to school board office:

- any person not eligible to vote in the municipality;
- an employee of any school board unless he or she
 - (i) takes an unpaid leave of absence before being nominated, and
 - (ii) resigns, if elected to the office; (See additional note below*)
- a judge of any court;
- a member of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, a Senator or a member of the House of Commons; or
- an inmate of a penal or correctional institution under sentence of imprisonment.

Note: An employee of a school board who wishes to run for office on any school board must take an unpaid leave of absence prior to being nominated. If elected, the employee must resign. A person may not be employed by one school board and hold office on a different school board. A clerk, treasurer, deputy clerk, deputy treasurer of a municipality wishing to run for office on a school board must also take unpaid leave prior to being nominated and resign if elected. An employer is required to grant a leave of absence.



Experience and Knowledge that would be good to have

Trustee candidates do not need to have a background in education. However, the following skills and experience would be assets for potential trustee candidates.

Basic understanding of official meeting procedures and governance policies

Candidates should review a copy of their board's bylaws, governance policies and Code of Ethics or Conduct. They could also observe board meetings to get an understanding of the process.

Basic understanding of a Trustee's role as a member of a Board

Under the *Education Act* trustee power lies solely in membership on the corporate school board. The corporate board of trustees is legally accountable to the public and to the Minister of Education for the collective decisions of the board and for the delivery and quality of educational services. This means that once the Board of Trustees has voted, it is a trustee's responsibility to act in a manner that promotes and upholds the board's decision and to communicate the board's decision back to the constituency.

Some awareness of the legal, political and legislative parameters in which school boards operate

School board operations are often highly prescribed by legislation or regulation or other forms of provincially driven policy. Candidates need to be aware of this fact, especially when making campaign promises.

Willingness to learn

A newly-elected school trustee has a fairly steep learning curve, and must be willing to spend time becoming familiar with existing board policies and relevant legislation.

Acceptance to serve on a school board assumes an awareness of the legislated expectations and responsibilities conferred through legislation, provincial policy, contractual agreements or any other mechanism. Trustees must act within these parameters, and be aware of the consequences of decisions that don't respect these commitments. Anyone considering candidacy for school board membership should carefully consider these accountability relationships and responsibilities when making the important decisions to serve, or continuing to serve, on a district school board.

Orientation for School Board Trustees

At the start of the term of office, each school board provides an in-depth orientation session for trustees to acquaint them with roles, relationships and responsibilities within the board and to provide an overview of the specific environment of the school board.

If you are thinking of running to be a school board trustee, you are invited to visit: www.ontarioschooltrustees.org. This website offers a comprehensive set of resources about the role of today's school board trustee.

Honorarium for School Board Trustees

School Board Trustees are entitled to be paid an honorarium while in office. The amount varies from board to board and is guided by Ontario Regulation 357/06. The honorarium is made up of an annual base amount, an amount related to the school board's enrolment, an amount payable to the trustee for attendance at meetings, and a distance amount in the case of boards covering large areas. The chair and vice-chair of a board are entitled to additional amounts for the responsibility of their office. An honorarium is not intended to be a salary; the honorarium amount across Ontario ranges from \$6,000 to \$26,000.

Education gives citizenship broader meaning, giving us the tools to face today's challenges and the will to meet them head on. To shape the world, we must first and foremost shape our place in it.

MICHAËLLE JEAN, former Governor-General of Canada

Board Administration

The chief executive officer of the board is the director of education. One of the most important leadership relationships in the school system is the one that exists between the Board of Trustees and the director of education. While their roles are distinct and different, they must also be complementary for the system to operate effectively. Each board's success depends on the direction provided by the board and on the leadership of the director of education. Each director of education's job is greatly influenced by the successes the board achieves and by the challenges it faces. Both parties need to be cognizant of their inter-dependence, and willing to work cooperatively for the successes of the system and the students in the schools.

Organizational structures differ among boards. However, the school board's administration manages the day-to-day functions of operating the school system.

Trustees, School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees (PICs)

Trustees and School Councils

Effective trustees establish regular and consistent communication with their school councils. Through the use of email, e-newsletters, social media such as Twitter, websites, meetings and other public forums, trustees and school councils can remain in constant communication. Increasingly, trustees are creating online journals, websites or blogs to help them communicate with their constituents. Trustees who facilitate communication among school councils within their jurisdiction are better able to speak on their behalf at the board table.

School councils are provincially-mandated advisory bodies, providing advice to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the school board. Their

structure and responsibilities are determined by government regulation. A trustee that has open and consistent communication with school councils is creating a climate of inclusion that benefits the board and the students in its schools.

It is important to note that a trustee's responsibility is to advocate for decisions which will better serve the board's entire jurisdiction, while school councils advocate almost exclusively for their own students in their own schools. This is an important point to remember when determining what advice one should consider.

Parent Involvement Committees

Every school board in Ontario has a Parent Involvement Committee (PIC). A key part of the PIC role is to encourage and enhance meaningful parent involvement across the board to improve student success in school and in life. They do this by:

- Providing information and advice to the Board of Trustees on parent engagement
- Communicating with and supporting school councils, and
- Undertaking activities to help parents support their children's learning at home and at school

Most members are parents and the committee is chaired by a parent. The director of education and a trustee representative also sit on the committee. This helps communication flow both ways. It helps the school board communicate with parents and makes sure that parent voices are heard by the board.

Ontario Regulation 612/00 sets out the mandate, structure and functions for both Parent Involvement Committees and School Councils. More information can be found at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/getinvolved.html>.



I want to run for School Board Trustee. What do I have to do?

Key Dates – 2014

NOMINATION AND CAMPAIGN PERIOD BEGINS	January 2, 2014
NOMINATION DAY (LAST DAY TO BE NOMINATED)	September 12, 2014
FINAL DAY FOR WITHDRAWAL OF CANDIDACY	September 12, 2014
VOTING DAY	October 27, 2014
SCHOOL BOARD TERM BEGINS	December 1, 2014
CAMPAIGN PERIOD ENDS	December 31, 2014
FINANCIAL FILING DEADLINE	March 27, 2015
SCHOOL BOARD TERM ENDS	November 30, 2018

Detailed information can be found in the *2014 Candidates' Guide for Ontario Municipal and School Board Elections* at: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=10336>.

Nomination

Interested candidates must file nomination papers. Nomination papers may be filed in the office of the municipal clerk from the first day of January 2014 that municipal offices are open (January 2, 2014 in most municipalities) until 2 p.m. on nomination day, Friday, September 12, 2014. The nomination must be in the prescribed form and accompanied by the prescribed fee.

Nomination Process

- Obtain nomination papers from the clerk of the municipality or online.
- A nomination paper must be filed in person by the candidate or by an agent on the candidate's behalf.
- The nomination paper must have original signatures.

- The nomination paper may not be faxed, mailed or emailed. Either the candidate or the agent must bring the completed and signed nomination papers to the office of the clerk. The candidate may be required to show proof of identity and qualifications.
- The prescribed nomination filing fee must be paid at the time of filing the nomination. Payment to the municipality must be made by cash, certified cheque, money order or an electronic payment method specified by the clerk.
- The nomination filing fee for the office of school trustee is \$100.

Withdrawal of Candidacy

If a candidate decides to withdraw from the election, he or she must notify the clerk in writing no later than 2 p.m. on nomination day (Friday, September 12, 2014). A candidate who withdraws before nomination day is entitled to a refund of the nomination filing fee. A candidate who withdraws is still required to submit a completed financial disclosure covering all financial transactions made up to the date the nomination was withdrawn.

Elections Finances

All candidates are responsible for acting in accordance with the financial provisions set out in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*. Candidates should become familiar with these provisions.

When it comes to local elections choosing your public school trustee is important because nothing matters more than educating kids – they are the future.

When can I accept contributions and spend funds?

The campaign period defines when a candidate can accept contributions or expend dollars in support of the campaign. The Campaign Period begins on the day when the candidate files a nomination for office, and ends on December 31, 2014. Contributions cannot be made to or accepted by a candidate nor an expense incurred outside of his or her campaign period, and candidates cannot accept campaign contributions before they are nominated. At the end of the campaign period, all candidates are required to file a financial statement with the municipal clerk and should ensure that an accounting system that meets the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* is used.

What are the limits that apply to campaign contributions?

The limit on contributions donated in money, goods or services from any individual, corporation or trade union is \$750 to any one candidate, regardless of the number of offices the candidate was nominated for during the election period. The limitation applies whether the contribution consists of one large donation or is the total of a number of smaller contributions of money, goods or services from the same contributor or from related companies. The maximum total amount a contributor may contribute to candidates in the same jurisdiction is \$5,000. Each municipal council and each school board is a separate jurisdiction. Only a contribution that is \$25 or less can be made in cash. Contributions greater than \$25 (including tickets to a fundraising event) must be made by cheque, money order or other method that clearly shows where the funds came from.

Can I contribute to my own campaign?

A candidate may contribute to his or her own campaign regardless of whether the candidate normally resides in Ontario. There is no limit on contributions from a candidate or his or her spouse to the candidate's campaign, but they are considered to be a contribution and must be reported as such and a receipt must be issued. Contributions to a candidate's (or spouse's) own campaign do not count toward the \$5,000 limit.

If a campaign ends in a surplus, a candidate may withdraw from the campaign surplus the value of the candidate's (and spouse's) contribution(s).

Financial reports must be filed by March 27, 2015.

What rules apply to fundraising events?

Fundraising functions are events or activities held by or on behalf of a candidate for the primary purpose of raising money for the candidate's campaign. Such activities include dinners, dances, barbeques, etc., for which there is an admission charge, as well as auctions, button sales, etc., for which there may not be an admission charge. A campaign event at which incidental fundraising takes place does not qualify as a fundraising function.

Fundraising functions can only be held for a candidate and only during that candidate's campaign period. The gross income (both admission revenue and other revenue) and expenses from each function must be recorded and reported on the candidate's financial disclosure form. The price of admission to a fundraising function is a campaign contribution and a receipt must be issued for the full amount.

Catholic trustees lead an education system that offers to students a distinctive perspective of life that is of benefit not only to them, their families and their church, but to the common good of all citizens.

What are the limits that apply to campaign spending?

There are limits on the amount a candidate may spend on expenses during the candidate's campaign period. Campaign expense limits are based on a formula that corresponds to the number of electors in the jurisdiction or ward in which the candidate is seeking office. There are different expense limits for heads of municipal council and for members of municipal councils and school boards.

The clerk must provide each candidate with an estimated spending limit upon filing of nomination papers. The estimate will be calculated based on the number of electors in the previous election. Within ten days after the close of nominations, the clerk must provide each candidate with a final spending limit. The final campaign spending limit will be calculated based on the number of electors on the voters' list for the current election. If the final limit is lower than the estimate, the higher amount becomes the candidate's official spending limit.

Formula to calculate the candidate's limit:

Member of municipal council or school board:
\$5,000 plus \$0.85 per eligible elector.

Penalties

An individual who is convicted of an offence under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, including contravention of the contribution rules, may be subject to the following penalties:

- a fine of up to \$25,000
- ineligibility to vote or run in the next general election
- up to six months in prison
- forfeiture of the elected office, if the offence was committed knowingly, and ineligibility to run until after the next regular election has taken place.

Candidates who are convicted of exceeding the spending limit, may also be fined the amount by which they exceeded the limit.



SECTION TWO: Education in Ontario

Under Canada's Constitution, education is a provincial responsibility.

Education Funding

Education funding for school boards is determined by the Ministry of Education. For details of the funding formula go to <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policy-funding/funding.html>. The fiscal year for school boards is September 1 to August 31. A financial plan, or budget, which reflects the needs of students and school boards' educational priorities is developed and approved, each year, by the Board. The financial plan, together with program planning, facilities planning and strategic planning assist the Board in managing its total resources.

School boards are responsible for establishing the Board budget – and for operating within it. Boards are legislatively required to plan for balanced budgets. Setting the board's budget is one of the most important policy decisions a trustee participates in as a member of the board because it ensures that available resources are properly allocated to meet provincial and board priorities to achieve the desired student outcomes.

The *Education Act* makes boards accountable to the province for balanced budgets and the effective use of available funds.

Curriculum

Curriculum policy documents from the Ministry of Education describe the overall and specific learning expectations for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12, according to subject area. Curriculum documents can be found on the Ministry of Education website at: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/curriculum.html.

More information

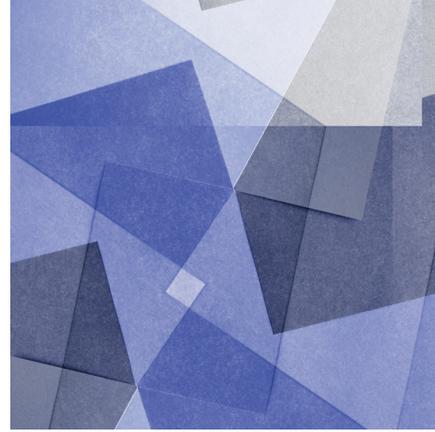
For more information about education in Ontario and how the school system works, visit www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/.

Student Assessment

The Ministry of Education sets policy for student assessment. This is described in the document *Growing Success* (see: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>) which indicates assessment principles that guide the collection of meaningful information to help inform instructional decisions, promote student engagement, and improve student learning. In addition to the ongoing assessment of student progress that occurs in schools and is regularly reported to parents, there are also large-scale assessments such as the standardized testing conducted by the province's Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). Ontario participates as well in national and international assessments such as the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP), the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS).

SECTION THREE:

Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association



OCSTA: One Provincial Voice for Catholic Education

The Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) represents the interests of all English-language Catholic District School Boards in Ontario. Together, Catholic district school boards in this province educate 600,000 students. Catholic schools in Ontario represent the largest jurisdiction of publicly funded Catholic schools in the world.

OCSTA articulates the distinctive needs and perspectives of Catholic school boards to the provincial government and education partners across the province and the country. Catholic schools are part of the rich diversity of this province and an integral part of the foundation of our provincial education system. As the voice for this distinctive system, OCSTA is often called upon by the government to provide insight and advice on education legislation and policy. The insight and advice shared by OCSTA reflects the educational expertise and experience of Catholic schools in Ontario. That experience spans over 150 years and is enhanced by a distinctive approach to education that is focused on the development and well-being of the whole child – mind, body and spirit.

Fulfilling a Call to Service

All of Ontario's schools teach students life skills that prepare them for postsecondary education or the workplace and for their roles as responsible citizens. Trustees on Catholic school boards have the same powers and duties as those on public boards. Although having much in common with the public boards, Catholic school boards have a philosophy of education that is quite distinct. In addition to carrying out the duties that they share with public school trustees, Catholic trustees, as representatives of the Catholic community, must ensure that the mission of Catholic education, as part of the broader mission of the Church, is fulfilled.

The Catholic school is an integral part of the Church's mission to evangelize youth. Catholic parents send their children to Catholic schools expecting them to be

socialized into a faith community in which a Christ-centered approach is central to instruction in all subject areas. Catholic schools provide a complete academic program in an environment that integrates religious instruction, Gospel values, and spiritual formation into all aspects of the curriculum.

The Catholic school is a faith community in which spirituality and the witness and practice of faith are lived out in the daily experiences of staff and students. Religious instruction is not confined to specific periods on a timetable. All subjects that deal with social issues, moral values, ethical decision making, and the impact of technological advances are approached and taught from the distinctive worldview reflected in our Gospel values.

The Mission of OCSTA

Inspired by the Gospel, we provide leadership, service and a provincial voice for Catholic School Boards in promoting and protecting Catholic education.

Roman Catholic trustees, who are elected by Catholic ratepayers, carry out their role in alignment with the convictions and commitments of the Catholic faith. The same distinct role guides OCSTA in providing services to its members.

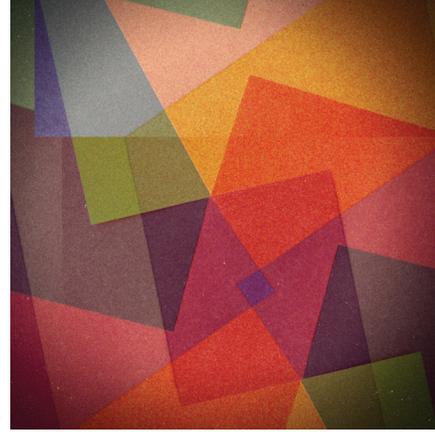
Services

OCSTA provides opportunities for member boards and local Catholic school communities to enhance their professional and faith development goals through the following services:

- Regular faith formation opportunities at OCSTA events
- Labour relations support and coordination services;
- Finance reform leadership and support;
- Analyses of legislation;
- Educational resources and training opportunities developed specifically for Catholic trustees

More information is available at www.ocsta.on.ca. You can also follow OCSTA on Twitter @CatholicEdu.

SECTION FOUR: The Ontario Public School Boards' Association



What Is OPSBA?

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) represents public district school boards and public school authorities across Ontario, which together serve more than 1.2 million public elementary and secondary students. The Association advocates on behalf of the best interests and needs of the public school system in Ontario. OPSBA is seen as the credible voice of public education in Ontario and is routinely called upon by the provincial government for input and advice on legislation and the impact of government policy decisions.

Statement of Mission and Beliefs

The mission of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association is to promote and enhance public education by:

- helping member boards to fulfil their mandates
- developing effective partnerships with other groups interested in public education
- providing a strong and effective voice on behalf of public education in Ontario.

OPSBA believes that the role of public education is to provide universally accessible education opportunities for all students regardless of their ethnic, racial or cultural backgrounds, social or economic status, individual exceptionality or religious preference.

Local democratically elected school boards play a key role in ensuring that schools remain responsive to both provincial program requirements and local needs and resources.

Excellence in education is achieved by:

- promoting high standards of individual achievement
- providing the understanding and basic skills required for active, compassionate participation in the life of the family, the community, the province, the nation, and a global society
- cultivating a love of learning
- recognizing the value of diversity among learners and communities; and
- exploring creative educational alternatives.

To maintain excellence, the public school system must be accountable to the community it serves and work to fulfill its mandate through building strong community partnerships.

More information about OPSBA is available at www.opsba.org.

You can also follow OPSBA on Twitter [@OPSBA_Official](https://twitter.com/OPSBA_Official).



Education that Connects

Global Achievement
with Local Accountability



Ontario Education
Services Corporation
La corporation des
services en éducation
de l'Ontario

Funding provided by the Ministry of Education of Ontario. The views in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry.



The Ontario Education Services Corporation represents:

Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)



Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA)



Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario (ACÉPO)



Association franco-ontarienne des conseils scolaires catholiques (AFOCSC)



Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)

