

Full Questions of the 2018 Municipal Election

This document is broken in to 2 parts. The Barrie council candidate questionnaire, and the trustee questionnaire for SCDSB, SMCDSB trustees, as well as trustees for this region in the French school boards.

2018 Simcoe County Trustee Candidate Survey

Thank you for running for trustee in Simcoe County. We believe it is a civic duty to participate in the democratic process. One way is to run in elections, and another is to make an informed vote.

The Central Ontario Humanists "are concerned for the well being of all, are committed to diversity, and respect those of differing yet humane views. We work to uphold the equal enjoyment of human rights and civil liberties" for all.

We have some questions for you to answer. We plan to post the results no later than Thursday, October 18, and send it to the newspapers. We may disagree on some points as individuals. But our report will not endorse any candidate, and is meant to inform people on all sides of these issues.

As a trustee you will affect board policy, which can affect all aspects of education outside of the curriculum. As a result, it's very important to understand how you might use the power your voters may choose to put in your hands.

Thank you for participating.

There are 10 questions. Please review the questions. You can of course use the link as many times as you want to view the questions before you submit your answers. You may edit your answers after you have submitted them. If you have any questions or comment, you can email info@cohumanists.ca and we will get back to you.

***Required**

Please enter your name, as it will be shown on the election ballot: *

Your answer

We believe that students should be free to follow their conscience, and get unbiased information.

Should teachers, administrators and staff be free to inform students about their rights and school policy, especially as it affects their freedom of conscience? *

On September 2, 2014 the Globe and Mail reported that a teacher was officially reprimanded by his school board for informing his students that even in Catholic school students are not required to take religious courses or programs after being told by his principle to never discuss this fact with students. As trustee, you would control board policy. Read more: <http://bit.ly/HonestTeacherReprimanded>

Policies should allow and require that teachers honestly and fully inform students about their rights and school policies. Teachers should not be reprimanded for doing so.

Policies should allow teachers to be reprimanded for telling the truth, or require them to remain silent.

Other:

Board policy should require that students should be equally free to form groups or clubs that express their conscience, whether religious or non-religious? *

Examples include groups for and by: Christians, Muslims, Jews, atheists, Humanists, Lesbians, Gays and allies. Administration, teachers and staff should not be disciplined for working with or helping such groups, regardless if they personally agree with the group or club.

Yes, students should freely form clubs that express their beliefs or conscience, and teachers should be free to support them.

No, some of these club types should be off limits, or teachers should be able to be reprimanded if they support them.

Other:

As both public and Catholic school boards accept non-Catholic, non-Christian and non-religious students, should board policy declare students be free to choose to participate or not in religious rituals, including school-led or teacher-led prayer, or school sponsored events that include a religious component? *

Recently, elementary schools have been allowing students of all faiths to enter Catholic schools, and since the late 80s Catholic high schools have been required to accept all students. Read More: <http://bit.ly/CatholicSchoolsAllFaiths>

Students should be free to follow their conscience and not be pressured otherwise.

Students should be required to participate in events that may conflict with their beliefs, or the beliefs of their family.

Other:

Should the Ontario curriculum, including science and health, be presented without religious or political interference? *

Recently in Manitoba, a candidate for school board trustee indicated that she was against the comprehensive, age-appropriate curriculum for sex education. A decade ago a school board in the United States made waves when it instituted a policy of reading a statement meant to denigrate the teaching of evolution, while not actually affecting the curriculum being taught. While we believe that freedom of conscience is important to a democracy, we also believe in the teaching of the Ontario curriculum. Should board policies interfere with the teaching the curriculum in anyway? Should teachers be required to not undermine the curriculum with their personal beliefs? Read more: <http://bit.ly/TrusteeSexEd> and <http://bit.ly/EvolutionStatement>

Yes, teachers should be required to present the curriculum as is, and the curriculum should not be second guessed by board policy.

No, the teachers should be free to express any and all beliefs contrary to the Ontario curriculum, or board policy should be allowed to present additional information to students on religiously or politically controversial topics.

Other:

As a trustee you will meet regularly with other trustees to decide issues. Should these meetings represent all Simcoe County residents by not having an opening prayer? Likewise, all official school board meetings should be free of mandated religious ritual? *

Trustees may or may not have faith. But as representatives of the people of Simcoe County, they should represent all people of Simcoe County with different faiths and no faith. Having a

prayer, even a non-denominational one, breaks this democratic spirit of representing all of your voters.

Trustee meetings should be inclusive, and not include prayer on the agenda.

Trustee meetings may open with prayer on the agenda, if they choose.

Other:

Humanism aims for the full development of all people, including all students. Sometimes this means extra support for people.

Should board policy allow students to have access to calming rooms that meet the needs of students? *

Recently Portage View was in the news for having a calming room. Should children be allowed to enter calming rooms in accordance to the safety plan and through the individual education plan which is provided to the parent ahead of time? Read more:

<http://bit.ly/BarrieCalmingRoom>

Yes, board policy should include calming rooms when called for by safety plans and individual education plans for students, which are shared with parents.

No, special consideration should not be given to student who may request or require calming rooms.

Other:

Should board policy protect students and employees by allowing the use of blockers? *

Some students occasionally require the use of blockers, especially a minority of students with autism. Blockers can prevent students from hurting themselves, other students, or employees and help students succeed when used properly. Read more: <http://bit.ly/SchoolBlockers>

Yes, blocker pads are sometimes required, and when used properly allow for the best educational experience for students and employees.

No, block pads should never be used to protect students or employees.

Other:

Humanism is an evolving and democratic lifestance. We believe that informed voters make the best choices in democracy.

Should board decisions and reasons be easily accessible by the public on controversial issues? *

Recently the only high school in the downtown area of Barrie was closed by the school board. No reason was given, though cost is assumed to be a major issue. To help, the City of Barrie offered to support the school being maintained in the hopes of maintaining a downtown high school. Barrie residents are left wondering what issues forced the closing of the historic high school in Barrie and the only high school in the downtown area. Read more:

<http://bit.ly/BarrieCentralFate>

Yes, the board should be more transparent or easier to access, especially on controversial issues.

No, board decisions should be made private, and only results made publicly.

Board decisions and minutes are already easily accessible.

Other:

Should politics and democracy override expertise?

Humanists value expertise. Elected officials should base their decisions on experts. The Ontario health education curriculum was developed with a large number of experts. As well as with consultation of parents across Ontario. The current government has overturned that work for political reasons. It is rewriting the curriculum to their preferences. Not to the knowledge and expertise of relevant authorities. Read more: <http://bit.ly/SexEdPopulism> and <http://bit.ly/SexEdPolitics>

No, relevant experts should outweigh politics.

Yes, politics and people's opinions should outweigh expertise.

Other:

Will you as a trustee work to protect accurate teaching?

Trustees should support what is right in turbulent times. Will you do what you can to support students who will be let down by political decisions? To support teachers and administrators who may be targeted by politicians for valuing compassion and expertise over political meddling?

Yes, I will try to support accurate education when possible.

No, it's more important that officials elected by the people.

Other:

You can use this section to clarify what was said in any questions above.

If you have any comments you would like to add, please add them below.

Your answer

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As a mayor or councilor you will affect city policy and planning. As a result, it's very important to understand how you might use the power your voters may choose to put in your hands.

Thank you for participating.

There are 3 questions. Please review the questions. You can of course use the link as many times as you want to view the questions before you submit your answers. You may edit your answers after you have submitted them. If you have any questions or comment, you can email info@cohumanists.ca and we will get back to you.

***Required**

Please enter your name, as it will be shown on the election ballot: *

Your answer

We believe that residents, councillors and the mayor should be free to follow their conscience, and feel equal with all other residents of Barrie.

As mayor or a councilor you will meet regularly in city hall to decide issues. Should these meetings represent all Barrie residents by not having an opening prayer? *

Members of city council may or may not have faith. But as representatives of the people of Barrie, they should represent all people of Barrie with different faiths and no faith. Having a prayer, even a non-denominational one, breaks this democratic spirit of representing all of your voters.

Council meetings should be inclusive, and not include prayer on the agenda.

Council meetings may open with prayer on the agenda, if they choose.

Other:

Humanism is an evolving and democratic lifestance. We believe that informed voters make the best choices in democracy.

Should council's decisions and reasons be easily accessible by the public? *

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<http://bit.ly/BarrieCentralFate>

Yes, more council decisions should be more transparent and easy to access online

No, many council decisions should be made privately, and only results made publicly.

Decisions and minutes are already easily accessible.

Other:

Should politics and democracy override expertise?

Humanists value expertise. Elected officials should base their decisions on experts. Example: The Ontario health education curriculum was developed with a large number of experts. As well as with consultation of parents across Ontario. The current government has overturned that work for political reasons. It is rewriting the curriculum to their preferences. Not to the knowledge and expertise of relevant authorities. Read more: <http://bit.ly/SexEdPopulism> and <http://bit.ly/SexEdPolitics>

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