

2SLGBTQIA+ Questionnaire for Waterloo Region Municipal Candidates

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

Yes

What role are you running for?

Trustee, Conseil Scolaire Catholique MonAvenir

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?

I believe the most critical issue for the local 2SLGBTQIA+ community is the lack of support for students in our schools. Opposition to supports for queer students has caused our youth to suffer in silence while exclusionary policies are continuously implemented by the school board with the explicit goal of erasing queer voices in the school board. I will work with queer students, community leaders, families and other stakeholders to ensure that policies that address the intersection of race, gender, sexuality and class are implemented to make our schools a safe place for all.

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

I have participated in 2SLGBTQ+ cultural competency training a few years ago. I learned the importance of understanding other's lived experiences as not all queer folks experience the same levels of oppression. As a queer man, I personally have lived experience with homophobia in the school board and I hope to bring my experiences to the table while taking into account the intersectionality of different identities.

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?

If elected, I will combat systemic discrimination by ensuring that all student, staff and their families feel safe in our schools. CSC MonAvenir should ensure that specific plans are put in place to prevent discrimination in hiring and retention as well as to ensure that students are given the necessary tools to practice inclusivity every day.

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

As a school board trustee, I will ensure that students have all the necessary tools to succeed in their education and lives. I will propose a plan to provide students with a meal at the beginning of their school day so that no student goes throughout their day on an empty stomach. Furthermore, I will work with community services to find housing for students experiencing homelessness.

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

Human rights are rights that are inherent to all living people. Trans rights seek to affirm the humanity of trans folks and seek equitable outcomes for those that identify as such. Therefore, yes, I agree with the statement.

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 would propose a motion that would require all school board staff to undergo sensitivity training and training to prevent discrimination in our schools.

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?

I believe that age-specific materials touch on queer representation are important for our students.