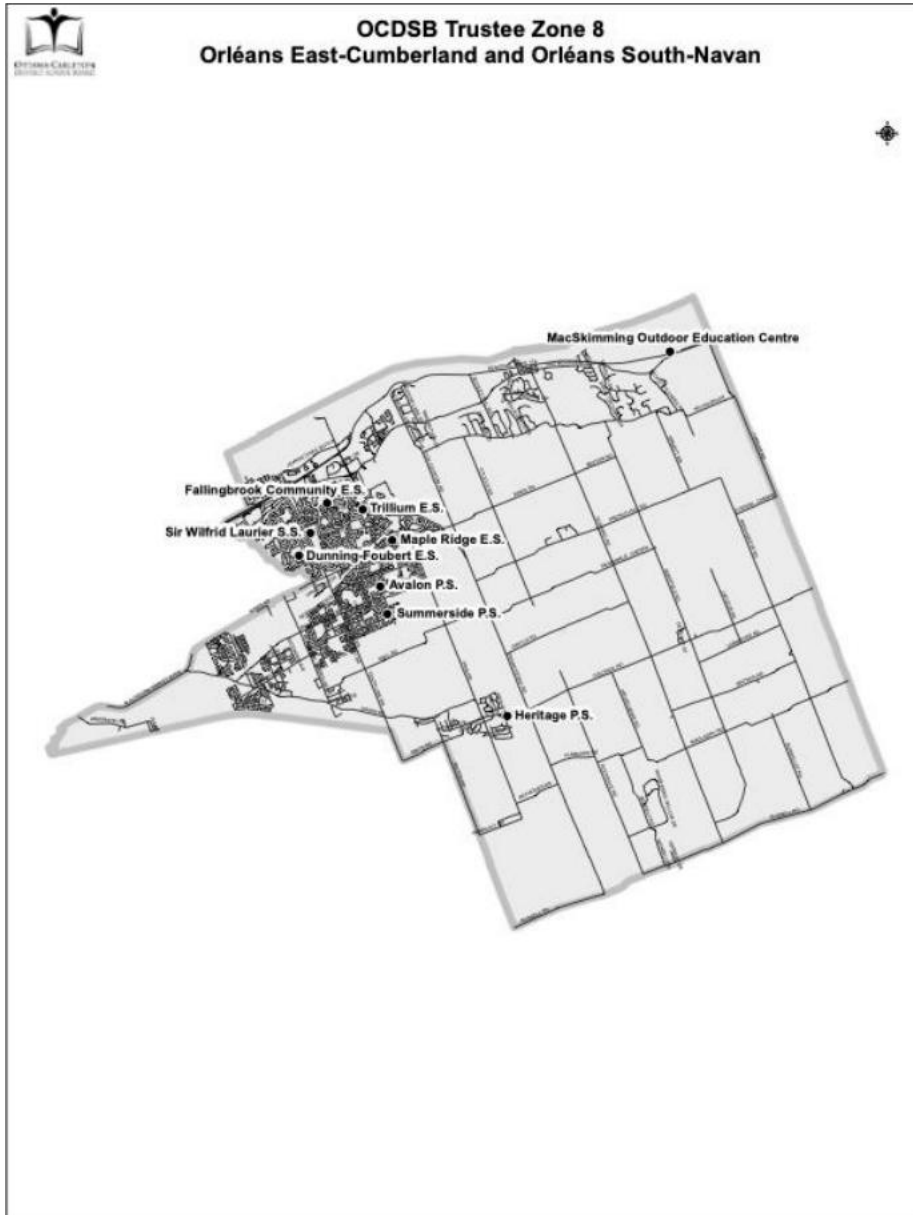


ZONE 8

Orléans East–Cumberland / Orléans South–Navan

Wards 1 and 19



Rick Bédard

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1. How would you ensure that Jewish parents and community organizations, including the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, are meaningfully consulted about antisemitism and the experiences of Jewish students in our schools?

I condemn the hateful, bullying environment that many of our Jewish students face in our schools. Some students have even changed their home address of record in order to switch to

a school they can feel safe in. Totally unacceptable. As Trustee, I will first recognize and name this antisemitism - if we can't name it, we can't defeat it. This will signal the legitimacy of the problem and the need for input from the community. Next, I will insist on an empathetic, open-door process for students, parents, the Jewish Federation and other community organizations to easily report and document events. Technology including AI can help gather these reports and documents into an organized database. Because a Jewish Equity Coach was hired in 2024, for two years, I will ensure we take full advantage of the information already gathered in that function. Third, I will communicate the data to parents and Jewish organizations and ask for their input to shape OCDSB corrective measures. They are the ones on the receiving end of the abuse and are regrettably well-placed to advise on robust responses. Implicit in my answer is that public meetings of the Trustees are absolutely not sufficient or effective in conducting this important consultation.

2. What steps would you support to strengthen education about antisemitism and Jewish culture for trustees, staff and students, guided by the provincially adopted IHRA working definition of antisemitism?

The IHRA definition of antisemitism is an invaluable tool. It is recognized internationally and by the City of Ottawa. It is clear and specific. I will support the requirement for each Trustee, OCDSB staff, and every Principal and Vice-Principal, to learn and formally acknowledge this definition. From there, every teacher and EA needs to receive a copy and formally acknowledge that they have read it. Racism in any form is unacceptable. With the IHRA definition, we have the tool to ensure all staff are crystal-clear on the definition of antisemitism. As to education around Jewish culture, which is wonderfully rich in celebration and commemoration, I would invite the Jewish Federation and/or Jewish community schools to share an appropriate cultural education module or tutorial that they endorse, for deployment to our schools.

3. How will you ensure no policies or actions of the school board, including teacher activity, contradict that definition (e.g. by delegitimizing Israel)?

I understand that the Jewish Equity Coach found not only that there were a certain number of bad apples among school administrators and teachers, but that their identities and bad behaviour were well-known - there was no secret about these individuals. So clearly we are not starting from scratch here. I will inquire as to what consequences - if any - bad actors have faced. I believe in accountability, whether it's around academic results, financial management, or racism. With the IHRA tool, we have clarity on antisemitism. Any antisemitic actions by the Board staff, including teachers, must result in a formal response, which can include censure, discipline, inclusion on the personnel record, and/or dismissal.

4. How can the board follow the provincial mandate to reduce divisive geopolitical activism in our schools?

I will become familiar with the provincial mandate your question references. But it's common sense that schools are places to learn and to grow, based on the provincially-mandated curriculum. Schools are not taxpayer-funded places for political activism. Aggressive

demonstrations/marches, placing or wearing symbols from organizations linked to terror or hate, and intimidating speeches/sloganeering about foreign conflicts, have zero place in our schools. They are an obstacle to the mandate of our schools and contribute to dysfunction instead of success. The vast majority of teachers want their students to succeed and to feel safe. They cannot do this alone. They need the active, unequivocal involvement of the Principal and Vice-Principal in each school, to support them. The Principal/Vice-Principal, in turn, need the active support of the Trustees and OCDSB staff, to successfully remove geopolitical activism from our places of learning.

Anthony Wong

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1. How would you ensure that Jewish parents and community organizations, including the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, are meaningfully consulted about antisemitism and the experiences of Jewish students in our schools?

Under the Education Act, school board trustees have a statutory obligation to promote student achievement and well-being, maintain safe learning environments, and uphold public trust through transparent governance. Meaningful consultation with affected communities is essential to fulfilling these duties.

I support utilizing the Board's established community advisory channels and stakeholder engagement frameworks to ensure that Jewish parents and recognized representative organizations, including the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, have structured, formal opportunities to communicate directly with board administration regarding student safety, human rights concerns, and school climate. Regular, objective monitoring of reported hate incidents and transparent reporting mechanisms ensure that community feedback is integrated into actionable administrative oversight.

2. What steps would you support to strengthen education about antisemitism and Jewish culture for trustees, staff and students, guided by the provincially adopted IHRA working definition of antisemitism?

I support strict alignment with the curriculum frameworks, standards, and definitions established by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Where the Province of Ontario has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, the board's duty is to ensure its administrative standards, anti-hate initiatives, and staff professional development accurately reflect provincial direction and applicable Ontario Human Rights Code protections.

Educational efforts should focus on mandatory curriculum delivery (such as Holocaust education and historical awareness), ensuring age-appropriate delivery, factual accuracy, and compliance with provincial standards that mandate safe, respectful, and non-discriminatory learning environments for all students.

3. How will you ensure no policies or actions of the school board, including teacher activity, contradict that definition (e.g. by delegitimizing Israel)?

The role of a school board trustee is governance and policy oversight, ensuring that board operations adhere to provincial law, board bylaws, and professional codes of conduct. All staff, including educators, are bound by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Professional Standards, the Education Act, board employment policies, and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

I support enforcing strict policy compliance regarding professional neutrality in the classroom. Staff activity, instruction, or board actions that introduce unauthorized materials, violate non-discrimination policies, or breach professional neutrality standards must be addressed strictly through established, formal administrative accountability and disciplinary processes. The board's responsibility is to ensure clear policy boundaries exist and that administration enforces them consistently without exception.

4. How can the board follow the provincial mandate to reduce divisive geopolitical activism in our schools?

Public schools are institutions dedicated to academic achievement, foundational learning, and student well-being. They are not venues for personal political activism or the importation of foreign geopolitical conflicts into the classroom.

To adhere strictly to provincial directives, the board must enforce curriculum fidelity, ensuring that classroom instruction remains grounded strictly in Ministry-approved curricula. I support clear guidelines that prohibit the use of board resources, instructional time, or official roles for political advocacy or partisan commentary. By maintaining strict political neutrality, adherence to provincial learning standards, and zero tolerance for intimidation or harassment, the board ensures schools remain safe, focused, and orderly environments dedicated to core educational outcomes.