

School Board Trustees

Upper Grand District School Board – Ward 1 & 5

| Martha MacNeil | Juanita Burnett | Malcolm Bell |
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| 1. What role do you think schools and school boards can play in addressing and responding to issues related to poverty? | | |
| <p>Schools and school boards have a role to play in addressing and responding to issues related to poverty because it has such a profound effect on a child's learning. It is difficult to be successful in school if you are hungry or tired or don't have proper clothes. Schools and school boards can help by being aware of the issues within their communities and by addressing them in a kind and sensitive manner. They can also help by looking at things through a lens that takes poverty into account and works to prevent issues rather than trying to put together solutions after the fact.</p> | <p>Awareness of poverty as an issue is a big start. As someone who lives in housing, at a part-time job (at not quite the 'living wage'), I can be a reminder that our decisions affect those living in poverty more directly.</p> | <p>Schools need to be educating a modern and progressive youth because the students of today will grow to be mayors, ward candidates and business people, all whose decisions have profound affects on wider society. The current actions of the school board have far reaching and long term consequences that cannot be taken lightly.</p> |
| 2. How would you rate poverty as an issue for schools and the school board over the next four years? Top priority, medium priority, or low priority? | | |
| <p>Medium priority</p> <p>While I feel that poverty is an extremely important issue, I cannot list it as a *top* priority for schools and the school board as that implies that it is the most important and, at the end of the day, their primary function is education.</p> | <p>Top priority</p> <p>We need to be aware of how our decisions affect those living with lower incomes - student fees and other added costs, for example. Income inequality is getting worse, which makes a lot of budget decisions challenging. We need to be pushing for</p> | <p>Top priority</p> <p>I believe that if you can solve poverty, you will make huge strides in creating a successful public school system, since you can often predict a school's performance by the local poverty level and attendance rates.</p> |

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| | <p>sufficient needs-based funding for our schools. We need to be aware that living with little money is stressful, and can affect health and well-being (and ability to learn.)</p> | |
| <p>3. What programs, supports & policy decisions would you promote for students/families living in poverty?</p> | | |
| <p>There are many programs, supports, and policy decisions that I would promote for students/families living in poverty but one of the main ones would be finding an equitable solution to the issue of Internet and computer access. It is an inescapable fact in our modern education system that use of computers and access to the Internet is essential for student success. As a Board, we must find a way to ensure that all students have this access, regardless of personal circumstances.</p> | <p>Some sort of breakfast or lunch program (that's open to all in the hope that it would reduce any stigma), no student fees, a way to make funds available to students who need it for trips, supplies, university applications ... Any other programs that I believe would help families living in poverty.</p> | <p>Education isn't the best way to solve poverty, because poverty isn't a problem of laziness or lack of knowledge. Though I lack the power as a trustee, I would support a negative income tax or a universal basic income. These programs have worked all over the world and I feel Guelph is a progressive enough place to give such an economic system a try.</p> |
| <p>4. Affordable after school programming space is hard to find. Would you support the use of schools between 4 to 6pm, particularly in low-income neighbourhoods?</p> | | |
| <p>While acknowledging that the use of schools between 4 and 6pm can be tricky with regards to after school care that takes place in the buildings as well as any school activities, I fully support finding ways to share the space. This would be an excellent opportunity to partner with the Neighbourhood Groups to provide services for kids (which already occurs in some schools, but not in all).</p> | <p>Our schools are community hubs, and should be open and affordable for community use, especially in low-income neighbourhoods.</p> | <p>Getting students engaged in their learning requires allowing them to find applicable hobbies and interests to use their knowledge in. Gyms, workshops and classrooms are great places for students to gather to participate in their passions.</p> |