



Creating a Culture... of Innovation, Caring and Social Responsibility.



REGISTER TO BECOME A DELEGATE

Fostering a Culture of Caring

(Reference: [Ottawa-Carleton District School Board By-Laws and Standing Rules](#))

Individuals or groups are welcome to appear as a delegation to express their concerns, provide comments or ask questions on any matter within the mandate of the Board or Committee. In accordance with the Board's bylaws, delegations shall be permitted up to four (4) minutes to address the Board where the delegation has provided a written submission no later than 4:00 p.m. on the Thursday prior to the meeting. Delegations registering after the cutoff shall be granted two (2) minutes. All interested delegates must complete and submit the following form.

Once you have submitted your request, a member of the Board Services team will be in touch with you to confirm the delegation and provide the necessary meeting details and instructions.

If you have any questions regarding the delegation process please contact Nicole Guthrie, Manager of Board Services at nicole.guthrie@ocdsb.ca

Also, please note that the Board and Committee of the Whole meetings are video and audio recorded.

Contact Information

First Name: *

Sharon

Last Name: *

Brez

Address: *

[REDACTED]

Address 2:

City: *

Ottawa

Province or Territory: *

Ontario

Postal Code: *

[REDACTED]

(S0S 0S0)

Phone Number: *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Confirm Email Address: *

Please re-enter your email address.

[REDACTED]

Delegation issue information

Fields marked with an * are required

Meeting Type: *

Board

Meeting Date: *

8/24/2021

Please provide a brief summary of main points for the issue/concern: *

Use of schools as voting sites for the federal election is concerning for many reasons identified below. It appears incongruent with OCDSB policies/directives to reduce COVID 19 exposure/ transmission in schools and it does not support Board responsibilities to set priorities for student wellbeing and ensure a safe environment for students & staff.

- Prevalence of the highly communicable COVID Delta variant is increasing in Ottawa and is predicted to rise over the next weeks as the 4th wave of cases progresses.
- Children, unvaccinated due to age or health status, are at risk for significant illness. They may be exposed directly through school attendance or indirectly via siblings or parents who are staff.
- Hundreds of additional individuals in the school to vote increases potential exposure risk, especially from asymptomatic carriers.
- Board policy requires careful, daily screening, isolation for symptoms or exposure and strict, timely cleaning of potentially exposed areas. Appropriate masking and distancing are taught and monitored. This policy cannot be reliably applied to masses of voters. Despite instruction and oversight, accurate screening, appropriate mask wearing, distancing and hand washing are inconsistently undertaken in public spaces or events.
- Voters, students, and staff are commonly in proximity on voting day as they travel through shared hallways to the voting areas in gyms
- Students and members of the public donning and removing masks at exterior doorways will result in more frequent, unprotected close contacts.
- As not all retrofits are completed, capacity of HVAC, and other ventilation and air cleaning systems may not be sufficient to fully address potential additional circulating viral load in all schools being used as voting sites.
- Schools may not have sufficient, trained manpower or time to fully clean exposed surfaces at entrances, in gyms, hallways and washrooms etc. before classes resume.

Recommendation(s) for resolution of issue: *

Some possible suggestions for addressing these concerns might include the following.

- Exerting responsibility for student wellbeing, the Board Chair and Members will commit to timely communication of their concerns, related to the use of schools as voting sites during an pandemic, with appropriate decision making authorities. This could include, but is not limited to, Ottawa's Medical Officer of Health, Elections Canada authorities, the Ontario Ministries of Health and Education. Alternate venues for voting should be encouraged, despite short timelines.
- The status quo regarding the relationship between School Boards and Elections Canada should not be assumed to apply without further consultation and discussion during the unique context of an increasingly communicable and virulent, Delta driven pandemic.
- If schools must be used as election sites, Board staff will be consulted to further assess and address measures and readiness to deal with the impact of the election on school infrastructure and occupants.
- As other Boards of Education in Ontario may shared similar concerns there may be benefit to working together to communicate and address shared concerns.
- To maintain constituent trust, the Board should communicate it's position and plans related to this issue broadly through multiple means, including through local media. We are already hearing concerns and fears of parents related to decisions of the Province related to lack of mandatory school staff vaccination, having masses of voters in their children's schools will likely be very unsettling as well.

Date: *

8/23/2021

Personal Information as defined by the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) is collected under the authority of the Education Act and the Municipal Act, in accordance with

the provisions of MFIPPA. Please be aware that your name and the summary of concern and remedies sought are subject to disclosure by way of publication of the agenda on the Board's website.