

DR NILI KAPLAN-MYRTH, MD, CCFP, FCFP, PHD
TRUSTEE, ZONE 9
OTTAWA CARLETON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

June 3, 2025

Lynn Scott
Chair, Ottawa Carleton District School Board
133 Greenbank Rd, Ottawa, ON K2H 6L3
lynn.scott@ocdsb.ca

Pino Buffone
Director, Ottawa Carleton District School Board
133 Greenbank Rd, Ottawa, ON K2H 6L3
pino.buffone@ocdsb.ca

RE: Resignation

Dear Chair Scott and Director Buffone,

I am writing to tender my resignation, effective today, as OCDSB Trustee for Zone 9.

It has been an honour to represent Capital and Alta Vista as an OCDSB Trustee. I was tasked by my constituents with the responsibility to advocate for academic supports for students with disabilities, neurodiverse students, 2SLGBTQ+ students, Indigenous and racialized students, and other marginalized groups.

I have done everything that I said I would, to the best of my ability, in the face of vile harassment, defamation, death threats, and disrespect to me and my family. My advocacy for public health measures, my unwavering support for transgender rights, and my outspokenness about being targeted as a Jew and Israeli, made me a particular focus of hate.

This is a very difficult time to run a Board of Education, with chronic under-funding from the Ministry of Education, staff shortages, over-crowding of classrooms, unprecedented dysregulation of students, and the concomitant challenge of increasingly radicalized groups that seek to influence us through an avalanche of emails, petitions, and disruptions of our Board rooms and our schools.

I thank Director Buffone, senior staff, support staff, educators, committee representatives, school councils, and families across the District for their dedication to public education. I thank fellow trustees and student trustees who have stood up for marginalized and vulnerable student populations. Thank you, also, to those who have had the decency to acknowledge the vile Jew hate that my family and I have been subjected to.

Ultimately, I am resigning because of the combination of the toxicity *from outside* of the Board and from *within* the Board. Within the first weeks of our work as trustees we had to evacuate our boardroom because of unwieldy protesters against public health measures. I was disappointed then, and I have been

disappointed since then by the inability or unwillingness of this Board to acknowledge how organized disinformation campaigns and populist movements shape our policy and program decisions.

The dysfunction within the Board is not as well known and harder to describe. It is not mere “cliqishness,” or even partisanship. The OCDSB has a longstanding pattern of profound dysfunction and lack of leadership. Trustees repeatedly weaponize Code of Conduct complaints to attempt to silence or punish fellow trustees. The Board of Trustees expends inordinate time and money rehashing issues—and defending itself in legal matters—that ultimately cause harm to students and staff as well as the reputation of the District.

Indeed, we are told not to criticize the Board because the OCDSB does not want to lose the trust of the Ottawa public. Yet a true relationship of trust is based on transparency.

I am not the first trustee to leave, nor will I likely be the last to do so, either by resigning or by declining to run for the next term because of this toxicity and dysfunction.

By stepping down, I leave Zone 9 of Ottawa without a representative elected by the community, vulnerable to whoever fellow trustees choose to replace me prior to the next municipal elections in 2026.

As I have said before, I hope that someone holds the OCDSB’s feet to the fire, holds the District and the Board accountable. The Ministry of Education, as you know, is investigating our Board’s failure to meet its fiduciary obligations. I suggest that the Board should also be investigated on the grounds of poor governance.

I end with a final note of caution: What is happening in Ottawa is particularly problematic, but it is not unique to Ottawa. We need people to stand up for public education, but nobody should have to do so in the face of the kind of harassment I have experienced.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. Kaplan-Myrth', written in a cursive style.

Trustee Nili Kaplan-Myrth

cc: Associate Directors
Superintendents of Services
Board of Trustees