

First Name	Last Name
Justine	Bell
Applicant Interest	
<p>I am a mother, a public servant, a Centretown community leader, and a woman of faith, one who is well equipped to work with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board to implement the Strategic Plan - in service to my community. I have the experience and qualifications to maintain a focus on student achievement, well-being, and equity, and to participate in making decisions that benefit the Board's entire jurisdiction while representing the interests of my constituents.</p> <p>Where I come from</p> <p>I was born into a middle-class family in North Vancouver, surrounded by people dedicated to serving others. My mother worked at a hospital, my father was a city councilor, and my Nana was the founding editor of the first national Indigenous Peoples newspaper. That environment has shaped my life's trajectory.</p> <p>My understanding of how the public education system can serve our society started while I was growing up in Nana's house. My Mom, Dad, my older brother, and I lived in the basement, Nana and Grandpa on the main floor, and my Auntie and cousin lived on the top floor. In the 1980s, my teenage brother was having trouble in school. I remember that my parents worked with the school to deal with his "teenage angst." It wasn't until many years after he dropped out that he was diagnosed with Dyslexia. This experience impacted his contributions to society. My cousin, who has Down syndrome, was well supported throughout his school years. Being a part of a classroom setting allowed him to develop many life skills that he uses today.</p> <p>My experience</p> <p>My upbringing formed a strong foundation to further my studies, volunteer and work in international development. Over the years, I worked as a life skills coach for youth with disabilities, I completed a Masters of Public Policy and Administration, led on Canada's international policy for effectively partnering with civil society, advised the Deputy Minister of International Development on employee empowerment, spoke about the importance of consultation at the United Nations, volunteered with refugees, and served as the Vice President of a faith-based community organization. For the past ten years, I have been a senior advisor at Global Affairs Canada working on poverty reduction - an area that recognizes that social, economic and environmental considerations are inextricably linked.</p> <p>Supporting my community</p> <p>Like many families in Ottawa, my husband Guillermo and I moved here 12 years ago to pursue our careers. Centretown was/is very welcoming. Guillermo, as a permanent resident, started French language classes, and volunteering at the Ottawa School of</p>	

Art, later serving on the boards of other arts institutions. After saving for many years, Guillermo and I bought a house on Cambridge Street North. We have continually worked to strengthen our community by engaging the arts community and organizing gatherings with hubs like Somerset West Community Health Center and the local police.

Our most important milestone took place when our daughter Shanti was born. The hardest and most rewarding job I've ever done! It is because of community support that we have thrived. For example, during the first two years of our daughter's life, we raved about our community's Early Years Learning Centre. This year, Shanti started JK at Cambridge Street Public School. We were very excited about this next step, but our enthusiasm waned with Shanti's stories of physical violence and disruptive behavior in the classroom. We met with the teachers, the principal, and I started attending parent council meetings. I started to read up on policies, programming and where the accountability rested to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students. Navigating the system is challenging. When I tried to reach out to our Trustee, she had already stepped down. Through my investigations, I have learned that instances of these types of behaviours are on the rise and that the Ministry of Education and the Board are developing related strategies. I also learned about system-wide discrepancies in student achievement outcomes between school setting with singular English Stream Programming with Core French and those with French Immersion Programming.

When I came to observe a Committee the Whole meeting, I witnessed thoughtful discussions concerning some of the most pressing issues: the inclusion of indigenous peoples' learners, a mental health strategy...

I am inspired to act. I have seen how a well-functioning education system is a strong pillar of a democratic society. I am committed to the vision and mission of our School Board, to achieving excellence and ensuring equity. I want to ensure that people like my brother and cousin get the support they need; that my daughter, her classmates and all students in the district achieve high levels of academic performance, acquire valuable skills, and demonstrate good citizenship. To make that happen, trustees have an important role in promoting well-being and enhancing public confidence in publically funded education.

My qualifications and interests

I am a systems integrator – A dynamic and reliable professional with effective interpersonal relationship skills, great judgement, and initiative, with a proven record of accomplishments. My entire career has been dedicated to listening, learning and advising on what is needed to make the world more inclusive, prosperous and sustainable. My leadership style is based on empowering others to act, and my qualifications include:

- Working well with others to set the conditions for a high performing organization.
- Conducting evidence-based research, including outreach and consultation with stakeholders.
- I am honest, prepared and proactive.
- I love data, indicators, logic models and performance measurement frameworks!

- Adhering to shared values, ethics and transparency.
- I get comfortable in the uncomfortable.
- I communicate effectively.
- I manage my time well and am committed to self-evaluation.
- I am active in efforts towards reconciliation with indigenous peoples.

I am confident that I will be able to carry out the responsibilities of a trustee as set out in Ontario's Education Act. I am excited to build a brighter future together through creating a culture of innovation, caring and social responsibility for all students, staff and the system.