

Middlesex Centre Trustee Candidates: Municipal Election – October 22nd 2018 Survey Results (*denotes incumbent)

Candidate Name	School Closure Issue	One Public System	Violence in Schools
<p align="center">Leona Bruijns-Thuss</p>	<p>“I personally believe that we should strive to keep schools open, whenever that is possible. This is especially true in rural communities where the school is a central part of the community, and a school closure could lead to lengthy commutes for students. That being said, here are my thoughts on how the school closure issue should be handled or managed: 1) review the plan that TVDSB trustees had previously made 2)consult with identified schools to see what issues they are having that may factor into school closures/amalgamations etc. 3) make a revised plan for school closures that takes into consideration community feedback and factors in the impact that closing schools will have beyond the financial impact. 4) share the revised plan with communities for feedback and to explain the process 5)ensure that if school closures are necessary, there is lots of communication with parents and that the school is celebrated and honored.”</p>	<p>“I find the idea of One Public System to be very interesting, but something that needs to be explored in much greater detail. I would support an all political party task force to examine the feasibility of this proposal. I would also stress the importance of meaningful community consultation. I believe that having one system could greatly reduce the costs of administration and other duplicate expenses – thus leaving more resources to improve the experience for students, and the working conditions for teachers and support staff. However, I would want to hear all arguments and see what a task force recommends.”</p>	<p>“This is a very important concern. When a violent incident has occurred (sexual assault, physical assault, possession of a weapon, hate-based occurrence etc.), it is paramount that the student who is reporting is believed and treated with compassion and dignity. In order to ensure this, I believe that ALL school personnel should receive training on responding to disclosures, and how to document a disclosure. All disclosures should be documented, although the identity of the victim should be kept confidential unless they say otherwise. The victim should be offered counselling through the school, and other accommodations as needed (modified course work if they need to take time off school, etc.). A policy should be in place to help determine the best course of action for the accused student. All decisions should be documented, as well as all contacts with the victim and the accused.”</p>
	<p align="center">Mental Health</p>	<p align="center">Education Privatization</p>	<p align="center">Why do you want to become a Trustee?</p>
	<p>“The mental health of our students is extremely important and I believe we need to invest in more resources for mental health. I believe there are two ways we should approach this as a board,</p>	<p>“I hesitate to make a blanket statement about privatization, without knowing the specific services or issues that it may encompass. However, in general, I am against privatization in the education system because</p>	<p>Put simply, I want to be a trustee because I care about education, and I care about the well-being of students as they attain their education. I believe I have the skills, the experience, and the motivation to do the best possible job</p>

<p>Leona Bruijns-Thuss</p>	<p>and I would advocate that we utilize both approaches. One – provide access to and awareness of mental health services. This can be done by increasing school support staff such as social workers, partnering with community agencies to coordinate services and deliver support at schools, training teachers and staff about mental health and how to respond to any students who may be struggling, and educating students about mental health and how to access support. Two – evaluate the role of the education system in creating challenges for the mental health and well-being of students, and determining how structural changes can improve mental health. A potential example could be delaying the start of the school day for secondary school students. While IEP’s and other school supports can help alleviate some struggles, addressing system-based issues that cause students to struggle is also important.”</p>	<p>privatization inevitably leads to greater inequities. The students who struggle the most and have the most need for additional services are often the ones who won’t have access if they are privatized.”</p>	<p>as trustee.”</p>
	<p>School Closure Issue</p>	<p>One Public System</p>	<p>Violence In Schools</p>
<p>Arlene Morrell *</p>	<p>“This is a complex issue beyond the framework/guidelines for closing schools. One aspect of the school closure issue relates to the funding model in terms of student funding and capital funding. This funding model places an emphasis on a one-size fits and works-for-all, thus creating disadvantages for small rural schools. Middlesex County has the smallest secondary schools in the TVDSB. For three years, I moved the Board motion realizing</p>	<p>“It is time for school boards to be representative of Ontario’s cultural diversity while maintaining local decision making. The evidence is compelling in terms of potential cost savings that could be re-directed as investments in student programming and supports. One Public System makes sense. In TVDSB some cost savings have already been realized in terms of shared busing. The SDCI and Holy Cross secondary school model demonstrates that school boards can work together, however there is a cost in duplication of</p>	<p>“In my view the process must have an intentional focus on reducing incidents, providing supports for intervention and prevention, responsive to follow up and follow through. Furthermore, data collection provides the evidence base that reinforces increasing school-based social workers and other school staff. The goal for reporting must be to increase positive behaviours.”</p>

	additional staffing lines for the small and rural secondary schools. I heard from teachers, school staff, students and parents how necessary these teaching lines are to meet student needs and reducing the stress on teachers related to teaching multi-level subjects and other factors. School closures must be the last resort.”	services and limitations related to sharing space versus a one school system model.”	
	Mental Health	Education Privatization	Why do you want to become a TVDSB Trustee?
Arlene Morrell*	“I will continue to support through budget allocations, and when necessary year-in budget allocations to increase social workers, child and youth workers, speech and language specialists, and other school-based supports. I am advocating for a system-wide engagement on mental health and well-being. We need to get a clearer picture of how to better serve students, the increase in violence, and school suspensions are indicators that demonstrate the need for increased mental health assistance.”	“I firmly believe that our students are better served by board-employed professionals. Teachers and school support staff make up the fabric of the school and bring professional judgement to their practice. While my children were in school, they were supported by exceptional school staff, the relationship with the classroom teacher and the support staff was instrumental to their success. Community agencies have a role in providing support to families that complement the school-based services provided by our employees, as they together have the common goal in supporting the student and their family.”	“Our children are our greatest resource and our future. As a mother of children who have now graduated, I have witnessed firsthand the accomplishments and struggles as my children navigated public education. In the past, as a school council member, Home and School member, now in my term as a Trustee, I have worked alongside parents, supported teachers and school staff who are as committed to making a difference in the lives of their students as I am. I am seeking re-election as a champion of public education and rural schools. My “why” focuses on communication, consultation and collaboration.”
	School Closure	One Public System	School Violence
Sean Hunt	“Having assisted parents advocating for their schools in recent elementary years to obtain accurate information and navigate the process to have their voices heard and to get local solutions and alternatives on the table for serious discussion and consideration, I know first hand that there are vast improvements needed in the	“I fully support the establishment of such a task force to study this question and the possible benefits of such an initiative. I believe that the ministry needs to immediately incentivize co terminus collaboration in capital funding considerations to promote efficiency; address accommodation challenges in shared geography and to improve local decision-making. The establishment of a	“While not directly involved in day to day operational activities at the school level, elected Trustees have a governance role ensuring that processes are Teachers and staff like any worker have the right to a safe workplace and a reasonable expectation that whole school community including trustees continually discuss and search for ways reduce incidents of violence in our

<p>Sean Hunt</p>	<p>policy and procedure for accommodation reviews. I actively participated in the ministry’s call for input into revising PAR guidelines at events held across the province this spring, following the establishment of the moratorium, and I look forward to finding out how the current government will utilize the valuable input gained through this consultation, prior to the election. I am pleased to see the establishment of dedicated RNEF funding this past year, not because of the amount of funding, but because of the criteria associated with it that recognizes the unique circumstances and challenges faced by some of our smaller schools. When PAR guidelines are finalized from the province I will advocate for the development of a local policy and procedure that prioritizes the seeking of solutions over closures, I will demand accurate information be supplied by board staff to support any decision and will personally communicate regularly and transparently with local municipal officials in a proactive manner to understand the needs of the students and the community. There should be no one size fits all approach, and School closures must be the last resort, only after all the options and solutions have been explored.”</p>	<p>task force to study a substantial merger of competing boards would offer the opportunity for a fulsome discussion and understanding of the matter. There is a considerable body of evidence to suggest significant capital and administrative savings are possible. I look forward to the results of the work of such a task force.</p>	<p>schools and I will listen to input from all stakeholders to learn more about this important issue and seek to learn how we can best provide support for intervention and prevention.”</p>
	<p>Mental Health</p>	<p>Education Privatization</p>	<p>Why do you want to become a TVDSB trustee?</p>
<p>Sean Hunt</p>	<p>“Increased attention to mental health is important to all people in our school communities. We must continue to find ways to</p>	<p>“Services should be delivered by board-employed professionals, complemented by the services of community agencies. Teacher and school staff make up</p>	<p>“I live in Middlesex County. I am proud to be raising my family in the vibrant growing community of Ilderton, where my wife and I are active in our local Lions and</p>

	<p>increase the involvement of social workers, child and youth workers, speech and language specialists and trustees have an important role to play through their deliberation and approval of the budget. We must also endeavor to promote, improve and make available high quality best practices and mental health assistance and resources to all who need them and constantly work to remove the stigma that often prevents individuals from seeking help from their community.”</p>	<p>the fabric of the school and bring professional judgment to their practice.”</p>	<p>Optimist service clubs. I am committed to serving my community and I believe that our rural schools are the very heart of our communities. I have established relationships and developed an in-depth understanding of educational policy, procedure and politics through three years of advocacy on behalf of rural families across the TVDSB. I have earned a reputation with trustees and municipal leaders as a persistent, resourceful and collaborative voice for rural schools and communities. I am running for public school trustee to be a bridge between the board and our local municipalities, to improve collaboration in order to support and enhance strategic plans; for growth and sustainability, in the municipalities of Middlesex County. I trust in, believe in, and want to support the important work our teachers do, and I value access to quality public education in my community. And I want to do my part to ensure the continual improvement of student outcomes and equitable access for all families in Middlesex County.”</p>
	<p>School Closures</p>	<p>One Public System</p>	<p>School Violence</p>
<p>Andrew Carruthers</p>	<p>“There should be an official investigation carried out as to the impact of a school closure on the community in question. Some schools, specifically rural ones, are very important to the communities they serve; they encourage growth, sustainability and stability for many communities. The process of closing a school should be taken very seriously and all impacts of a closure should be assessed in order to appropriately discuss said closure. It is my</p>	<p>“I am interested to see the findings of evaluating a One Public System. I am of the persuasion that merging of the two systems would not be the best course of action for our students, parents or teachers. I believe freedom of expression and religion is important in our province, and when it applies to our education systems. I would be interested to see the details of a greater efficiencies argument and support the concept of making both systems more efficient.”</p>	<p>“This is an area of great concern to me as well. It is very important that we protect our staff and students in our schools. The amount of violent incidences that staff and teachers report is shocking. One of the biggest aspects of this process that I see needs to be addressed better, is encouraging such incidents to be reported. I believe there is an obligation for any violent incident to be reported directly to the principal immediately, along with a written report filled and followed up on by the school board. I have noticed many teachers saying that such reports are</p>

	understanding this process is under review while the moratorium stays in place. In my opinion, closing a school is not just a budgetary decision; there should be more layers of evaluation that take place.”		not encouraged. This is not acceptable, and school boards need to address this issue and ensure reports are encouraged and effectively and prudently dealt with.”
	Mental Health	Education Privatization	Why do you want to become a TVDSB trustee?
Andrew Carruthers	“As a recent student of the TVDSB, mental health is a large concern to me and a key point in my platform. One point I am very strong on is there needs to be greater accessibility to qualified professionals. From personal experience, and trying to help fellow students with their struggles, one major holdup was the wait time to speak with a licensed professional. It was very long, with the circulating psychiatrist often overbooked. For high-risk students going through a very difficult time, this was not good enough. I would actively fight to increase the availability of such resources, and depending on the school and enrollment, support part/full time staff licensed and equipped to deal with students’ mental health needs.”	“I support freedom of choice in education. Parents and students should be able to have freedom to choose what form of education suits their needs best. That being said, I do not have a strong position on the issue of privatization within a publicly funded system one way or the other, and would want to evaluate the issue more in detail to have an official and public position on the matter.”	“It is very important to me that students’, parents’ and teachers’ needs and concerns are listened to and acted upon by our trustees. I do not believe our current school board has done an adequate job in representing their constituencies, and as a graduate from the TVDSB four years ago I believe I have a handle on the issues that are important to students. Many parents believe they are not heard or listened to when it comes to their children’s education. Trustees need to better listen, better communicate and better represent their communities. To better ensure that this representation takes place, I have decided to run for School Board Trustee of the Thames Valley District School Board.”
Rob Campbell* (no response on other questions)	“Thank you for sending your email questionnaire. As one of the trustee candidates for Middlesex County this concern is especially crucial. Although I only received the questionnaire in a read-only format (so was unable to fill in my answers) I wish to respond in this email my very heart-felt feelings for this		

	<p>topic. The two small secondary schools in Middlesex both are schools with very big hearts and are essential parts of their communities. Although their underpopulation in students restricts their abilities to offer a wide variety of courses they are the only schools in their area that are easily available to them. I hope this helps portray my strong feelings on this subject.”</p>		
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