

Pembina Trails School Division Trustee Candidate Answers

---Answers from Ward **ONE** Candidates provided to PTTA by cut-off date---

When navigating this large document, consider:

- > Jumping to the questions that are highest on your list and/or
- > to candidates about whom you need more information

ANSWERS Ward ONE Candidates

QUESTION 1

1. Violence in Schools / School Safety

Ensuring safe learning and working environments in public education is a growing challenge.

- a. What is your approach to addressing violence in schools?
- b. How will you help protect the safety and well-being of students and staff?

Craig Stahlke

1a. Violence in school directed towards students, staff or school visitors is not to be tolerated. I support the measures which the Division has adopted to combat violence in schools. Without going into detail about each of these measures as they would be well understood by teachers. These measures include the Standard of Behaviour, Board Policy GBG, Student Threat Assessment protocol, applicable labour/management committees which part of their mandates is a focus on safety issues, and the use of School Resource Officers. Periodic reports are submitted to the Board of Trustees relating to suspensions so that we are aware of the quantity, frequency, and nature of suspensions including those related to violence. The Board has, when necessary taken necessary action when related to specific incidences of violence are reported to us.

1b. The Board is conscious of the need to ensure that our schools are safe, in a physical sense, and committed to ensuring that our schools are physically and environmentally healthy and safe. I have addressed the violence issue in 1(a) above this response will focus on our non-violent safety efforts. The Division adheres to our legal obligations to ensure that all of our operations are safe and healthy. As part of the process we engage a Safety, Health and Environment Officer whose focus is on ensuring that our workplaces meet the necessary standards. Our Facilities and Operations Department management is also keenly aware of these needs in the Division where environmental factors (whether fresh air, heating, cooling, air conditioning where applicable,

energy usage, etc.) are monitored and adjusted as required. The Board approves an Operations and Maintenance budget which is sufficient to ensure that our facilities and operations activities are adequately funded. With respect to transportation of students is concerned, the Transportation Department works to ensure that our buses are properly maintained and replaced at the end of life, ensure that our operational transportation practices promote safety of students and that our bus drivers receive the training that they need to focus on effective and safe transportation of our students.

Janet Belluk

1a. 1b. Schools are to be safe and caring places where we all feel welcome. A consistent well trained and compassionate school and staff are needed to help at times when students and families experience difficult situations. Investing in training and professional development for staff to proactively engage with families and students to establish support systems are essential. Access to clinical services, community services (MATC, ANCR, Fort Gary Resource Centre) along with Winnipeg Police service will allow collaboratively to support students and families.

Linda Karn

1a. I would like to see more police officer presence in the schools. Perhaps we should have four instead of the current two. Seeing an officer in uniform could be a deterrent to some violent behaviour, but not all. There are special needs students and an increasing number of students with mental health issues. We should increase resources to deal with those students. Many may react violently as a result of frustration when their needs are not being addressed or met.

1b. I would do my best to encourage, the creation of an overall calm and peaceful environment that can help protect the safety and well-being of all staff and students. Regular emphasis on the Golden Rule, which is the principle of treating others the way you would want to be treated, should be practised. Teaching children to love one another, to speak kindly to each other and to respect each other should be taught regularly at all levels.

Samantha Pope

1a. Teachers working conditions are students learning conditions. We need to support teachers and staff in our schools so they have the resources they need to respond to increasingly complex student needs. They need to have manageable class sizes, adequate EA support, and resources and professional supports needed to create safe and effective learning environments. When violence does occur, it is important for it to be reported, taken seriously, and addressed right away by school administration. We also need to look at the circumstances contributing to incidents and make sure schools have the supports and strategies they need to prevent them where possible.

1b. How will you help protect the safety and well-being of students and staff?

As trustee, I help set the direction of the division in its policy, budget, and governance decisions. I will continue to advocate for the resources and supports that teachers and schools need to address complex student needs and maintain safe learning environments. I will bring my perspective as a teacher, guidance counsellor, and resource teacher to board discussions and will reflect these priorities in my voting and decision-making.

Sharon Esau

1a. I believe every child deserves to walk into school knowing they are safe, and they belong. Building strong communities within our schools is not just an idea, it is essential to help our students succeed. I would like to see stronger student mentoring programs, where older students can check in on and support younger students. A simple connection can make a tremendous difference. Mentoring can build confidence, encourage accountability, strengthen relationships and give students someone they can turn to when they need help solving a problem. No student should feel like they are facing life alone. We also must recognize the incredible importance of relationships. For some students, school is their safe place, the one place they feel seen and supported. When a student has one caring adult who believes in them, listens to them and helps guide them through difficult choices, it can change the trajectory of that student's life. When students feel safe, heard, respected and valued, they have the opportunity to thrive. When students feel connected and plugged in, I believe this would alleviate violence in our schools. When we invest in our teachers and staff, we invest in our children. When we strengthen relationships, we strengthen our schools. When we build a strong school community where every student feels they belong, we give our children something incredibly powerful, the confidence to believe in themselves and the opportunity to succeed. That is the kind of community I want to help build.

1b. I will always listen to the concerns of our teachers and support staff, work alongside them to find solutions, and advocate for the best possible outcomes for our students, staff and schools. But listening is only the start, I will listen, I will act and I will follow through and report back. Our educators deserve to know that when they raise a concern, their voices are not only being heard, but they are also being taken seriously. Our teachers and support staff do extraordinary work every day. You are on the front lines, building relationships, supporting students, solving problems and helping our children reach their full potential. You know what is happening in our schools because you live it every day. We need a school board that respects that experience and listens to you not when there is a problem, but when there are decisions to be made. I will stand with teachers and staff as we work together to make our schools safe for all.

Terri MacLeod

1a. 1b. Pembina Trails, like most divisions, has experienced incidences of interpersonal and physical violence, digital violence and misconduct as well as sexual abuse and exploitation. The province, along with school divisions, have developed practices and policies to initiate during these incidents as well as education and training programs to help staff and students recognize, prevent, and protect themselves from, specific types of violence. These include lock-down procedures, risk assessments, Commit to Kids training and partnerships with the Winnipeg Police, to name a few. My role as school trustee would be to listen to teachers, students and parents about any violence they continue to experience, check with all stakeholders if they feel the current protections are sufficient, and discuss with them what more could be done.

-----end answers for questions #1-----

Question 2

2. Budget and Fiscal Responsibility

- a. From your perspective, are there long-term community economic benefits to early programming for young people through public education?
- b. How would you determine your budget priorities?
- c. As a trustee, where would you look to make budget enhancements in line with student needs?
- d. For the 2026 – 2027 Budget, the Pembina Trails School Board approved a mill rate increase of 9.61%. This decision was an important start to matching resources to the growing needs of our students in our classrooms and schools.

As Trustee, what will you do to uphold the momentum of matching resources to the needs of students?

Craig Stahlke

2a. I presume that this question refers to K-6 programming and I will respond accordingly. I believe that the foundational years of a student's education is critical to their success as they proceed through their school careers. Students who are well grounded in literacy and numeracy, who have developed a love of learning, exhibit a desire to participate on other aspects of school including the arts, music, sports, and who can work with other students positively, will benefit the most from school.

2b. My budget priorities, or rather approach, is, essentially the same as it has been for the last 50 years. We need to understand what resources students need and how they should be employed. The Senior Administrators are key in assisting the Board in this process. The Board needs to balance the desired resources with the financial burden it imposes on the local taxpayer who directly fund a significant portion of the Division operations. An appropriate balance between these two aspects is one of most important annual undertakings of the Board.

2c. The answer to this question will depend on the circumstances that exist in any given year. Currently, the Division is looking to increase the number of schools due to increasing enrolment (primarily in Waverley West). New schools or new programs add additional costs which must be funded. There are also changes to support services whether there need to be funds directed to changes in operational services, capital expansion or system upgrades. Needless to say, the Division will always be spending the lion's share of its budget on direct educational and supporting pedagogical services for students.

2d. A 9.61% increase in the mill rat for 2026 was certainly higher than anyone would have wanted to impose on our taxpayers. What drove us to that level was the perceived needs of our

students, including continuing growth, and the more limited Provincial funding. I would expect that for the next budget (2027/28) with tax levels for 2027 being the result, the Board will consider the needs of our students and the respect for our taxpayers. That balance will need to be found.

Janet Belluk

2a. 2b. 2c. 2d.

Manitoba Education has implemented policy for early screening and support. As a division, having trained staff to assess and action supports for young learners as soon as possible is an impactful strategy.

Budget and fiscal responsibility is probably one of the most challenging roles of the Board. Decisions should only be made after very detailed discussion with all the players. It is no secret that there is never enough money to go around to the point that everyone is happy. The board must consider reliable divisional data, lived experiences and experts in various fields to contribute valuable information to this process. As trustees it is our responsibility that whatever decisions are made (staffing, programming or tax increases); these all need to be done with one goal in mind. We as a division need to be able to offer each and every student an educational experience where they are encouraged to be the best person they can be.

Linda Karn

2a. Overall, I would have to say “no”. Our division trialled all day kindergarten a few years ago, but it was determined that most children weren't up to a full day of programming. Early programming would amount to daycare really and at this point in time, daycare is not the mandate of the public education system. Small numbers of children are capable of handling early years programming. Some are ready to read at age four. Others at age six and still others are not ready until age seven or eight. We can't or shouldn't paint all children with the same brush.

2b. I would determine budget priorities in a number of ways including by listening to teachers, listening to parents, listening to students, listening to the community and using common sense.

2c. There seems to be an increasing number of students with mental health concerns so I would attempt to increase the budget for mental health professionals, however, I understand that they are in high demand and short supply across the nation.

2d. As a current trustee, I realize that we have an increasing number of incoming students with special needs. I will do my best to ensure that the corresponding resources are budgeted for.

Samantha Pope

2a. Absolutely. The children in our schools are the future members of our communities, and investing in them is investing in our future. When we direct resources to where they are most needed, particularly student achievement and well-being, we are helping students develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to be successful in school and beyond. Strong public education benefits not only individual students and families, but also the broader community.

2b. I listen to the people who are closest to the work. That includes teachers, school staff, families, students, and our superintendent and her team. I also look at data and community feedback to help determine where resources are most needed. Ultimately I believe budget decisions should be student-centred while also recognizing we have a responsibility to use public dollars carefully and effectively.

2c. I voted in favour of the 2026-27 budget, which included funding for 40 additional teachers, 83 EAs, and 15 rehab assistants. About 94% of this year's budget was spent on staffing, which reflects how important people are to supporting students. As a trustee, I would continue to look at where student needs are greatest and where additional staffing resources can have the greatest impact.

2d. Pembina Trails is a growing division, and as a board we felt the 9.61% mill rate increase was necessary to help meet the growing needs of our students and schools. Setting a budget worth hundreds of millions of dollars is not something I take lightly. These are public dollars, and every decision needs to be able to stand up to public scrutiny. What I can say is that each budget season, I will look carefully at what the needs are of our students, schools, and staff, listen to information brought forward, and make decisions that will be best for the students of Pembina Trails, while at the same time being accountable to taxpayers.

Sharon Esau

2a. From your perspective, are there long-term community economic benefits to early programming for young people through public education? The early years are when children begin learning how to communicate, share, build relationships, solve problems and become positive members of a classroom community. These skills are so important as they create a foundation for success throughout their education. Quality early childhood programming can help children develop both social and academically while giving them the confidence and skills they need to succeed. When we invest in our youngest learners, we invest in the future of our community. Every child deserves the opportunity to start school feeling supported, confident, connected and ready to learn.

2b. Every budget decision should begin with one question; how will this impact on our students and our staff? Our priorities must be clear. Classroom support, manageable class sizes, student

needs and the wellbeing of the people who make our schools work every day. These cannot be secondary considerations. This must be the heart of every budget decision. Before decisions are made, we need to get into our schools and listen to the people who know them best. Every school community's needs are different. Every school has unique challenges, needs and opportunities. I believe every school should have a clear need and wants list, and those voices must be heard before decisions are made. As a trustee, I will push for a school board that is transparent and accountable to the communities we serve. Taxpayers deserve to know that their dollars are being used responsibly and our students and staff deserve to know that their needs are being met first. Our budget should reflect our values. If we say students and staff are top priority, then our spending must prove it.

2c. If elected as your trustee, my promise is simple. I will listen, I will show up and I will take action. Teachers and support staff know what our schools need because they see those needs every single day. I will meet with them, listen to their concerns and work with them to find solutions, and follow through. Our educators should never feel like they are not being listened to. You deserve to be heard, respected and acted on. A hungry child cannot be expected to focus on a lesson when they are worried about where their next meal is coming from. In my school food insecurity is a very real concern. I brought food for students every day. I wanted to do more, so I approached our student services team about providing food for our students. We were then able to secure a grant from our local grocery store. This allowed us to provide hot lunches for 85 students. What made this especially meaningful was involving the students themselves. They helped create a menu, make a shopping list, work within a budget, grocery shop and prepare a meal for the school community. It wasn't just about providing food, it was about building skills, dignity, leadership and community. That experience reinforced skills that I will carry with me as a trustee. Whether it is food, safety, belonging, mental well-being, classroom support or the resources our teachers need, I will advocate for meeting those needs first. This is what leadership should be about. Listening to our schools, identifying what our staff and students need and doing everything we can to make it happen. Staff and students deserve nothing less.

2d. I can't believe how much our schools have changed over the past 23 years. Our schools are changing and we need to change with them. The needs of our students, staff and school communities are not the same as they were years ago and our funding and resources need to reflect this reality. One issue I feel strongly about is the loss of support staff in our schools. When I started at Oak Park in 2017, we had more than 20 support staff. Today, we have less than half. Yet the needs of our students have not decreased. When support staff are taken away, teachers are left carrying more and more. This is not sustainable. Support staff provide critical assistance to students and teachers, help with classroom management and provide students with the listening ear and individual support they deserve. Supporting our teachers, staff and students must be a top priority. I believe we need to put our resources where they will make the greatest difference. Into our classrooms our students and the staff that support them. We also need to recognize that one solution will not work for all schools. Every school community is different.

Some schools may be dealing with food insecurity while others may be facing safety concerns or totally different challenges. We cannot make blanket decisions from behind a desk and assume every school has the same needs. We must listen to each school, understand their reality and provide the resources needed to address those specific needs. As a trustee I will advocate for a school board that listens before it acts, invest where the needs are greatest and make sure our staff and students have the support they need to succeed. Our students are changing, Our schools are changing, Our approach needs to change with them.

Terri MacLeod

2b. and 2c.

As a newly retired teacher, most recently working at the primary level as a classroom teacher and early literacy specialist, I see the importance of early programming and intervention. There are exciting things happening in this area which will hopefully increase student success. Statistically however, we know there will continue to be the need for intervention for 5-20% of students. Coupled with the increasing need for behavioural support, school support staff are spread thin. The situation is further complicated by the limited availability of professionals qualified to make the required diagnoses to secure support for students with educational and behavioural needs.

In my opinion, schools need more literacy support personnel especially in the primary grades. As our literacy teaching practice evolves, there may be a need to replace outdated materials but I do believe a quality versus quantity approach, combined with a more targeted and sequential approach teachers will be better able to share resources rather than have bins and bins of levelled books which aren't appealing to kids. I will inquire if funds dedicated to resource purchases could be decreased to increase staffing. It will be important for me to learn about how the budget is currently dispersed and work with the board and the school division to help them scrutinize traditional spending and find additional ways to increase allocation for staffing.

2a. Early programming will address student needs at the optimal time, hopefully decreasing the need for additional supports throughout the rest of the student's academic career. Programming and assessments done within the system relieves the financial burden for parents who would otherwise need to seek outside help. Staying in-house, helps all stakeholders be involved in the team approach to supporting students.

2d. To uphold the momentum of matching resources to student needs, I will stress the importance of looking at data being collected not only to ensure the efficacy of these resources but also to celebrate the benefits of the increased funding.

-----end question 2-----

QUESTION 3

3. Equity, Inclusion, and Student Safety

Students and staff deserve to feel safe, welcomed, and respected at school.

What specific steps will you take to promote adequate funding to support equity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging for all students and staff?

Asim Nawaz

Craig Stahlke

3 Equity, inclusion and sense of belonging is a commitment by the Board through policy and action. I can tell you that it is in the forefront of the Board's collective mind. Policy and specific actions have been taken by the Board to achieve these ends. We have an obligation to all of our students and strive to meet their needs in these areas.

Janet Belluk

3. At a divisional level to continue the role of the Equity and Inclusion consultant would be a priority. The divisional Anti-racism policy, and Respect for Human Diversity policies are important, but again continued professional learning is key to successfully implementing these policies.

Linda Karn

3. Pembina Trails SD has already budgeted for programs and services in this area. At this point in time, we need to maintain the current programming making sure that all staff and students are adequately educated on the new policies.

Samantha Pope

3. As a high school guidance counsellor, I understand how important it is for students to have a sense of belonging at school and feel like they are safe. It is equally important for staff to feel safe in school. I would continue to support policies and budget decisions that provide schools with the resources to meet the diverse needs of their students. Inclusion needs to be more than a statement of values. It needs to be supported with appropriate staffing, resources, and professional learning so that schools can put those values into practice. I will also continue to listen to students, families, and staff about what they are experiencing in schools.

Sharon Esau

3. We need open, honest communication with every school community. We know that every school is different and every school faces its own challenges. That means we cannot take a one

size that fits all approach. We need to sit down with each school and ask, what do you need? What is working? What does not work? What can I do to help? Creating schools where every student feels safe, included, valued and that they belong must be our priority. But we cannot achieve that without listening to the people who are in our schools every day. We must listen, act and provide the support our schools need. That includes looking honestly at class sizes and workloads. We must ask ourselves, is it realistic to expect every student's needs to be met when a teacher is overwhelmed and trying to manage too many competing demands? When we support our teachers and students, we create stronger classes. When people feel supported and valued, we can reduce conflict, improve the climate of the school and create an environment where students learn and grow. I will always listen without judgement. If a teacher is struggling because they don't have the supplies or resources, they need to prepare their classroom, that matters. If staff need access to counselling, mental health resources, or additional programming and support for that matters! Teaching students with multiple needs is hard work. Supporting students is hard work. Our staff deserve to know that we have their backs. When we take care of the people that are taking care of our children, everyone benefits. Listen. Support. Act. Follow through. That is the kind of leadership I believe our schools deserve.

Terri MacLeod

3. The key perhaps, is not only to dedicate funding to support equity, inclusion and belonging initiatives but to take these into consideration at all times when acquiring resources or adopting new practices. Will this purchase promote equity, inclusion and belonging? How does this new initiative support equity, inclusion and belonging?

-----end question 3-----

QUESTION 4

4. Support for Educators and Staff

Teachers and school staff are essential to building safe and caring learning environments.

- a. How will you support educators in creating optimal learning and growing classroom conditions?
- b. What actions will you take to ensure reasonable workloads, adequate resources, and staff well-being?

Craig Stahlke

4a. To me, achieving this manifests itself through the budget process where the quantum of resources to be applied is determined by the Board. The Board also receives input from the PTTA and parents, primarily and, sometimes from other groups. All of these inform the Board as it deliberates the annual budget.

4b. My answer is the same as in 4(a) above.

Janet Belluk

4a. 4b. All school staff are essential to a building's safe and caring environment. Likewise all staff need to be recognized and supported while attempting to create that optimal learning and growing opportunity for our students. Regulating class sizes, recognizing challenges and supporting day to day learning is vital.

Linda Karn

4a. There are specific targets for the ratios of students to staff for all age groups. Every year at budget time, I check those ratios to make sure that they are maintained and if possible, improved. This could mean bringing in more EA classroom support or a second teacher for all or part of the day. Simply decreasing class size isn't always an option because of overcrowding in many of our schools, but increasing the staff should have the same result.

4b. This sounds more like an operational issue than a governance issue. As a trustee, I can help direct budget money in those areas that may be brought to us by the HR department.

Samantha Pope

4a. I will advocate for teachers having the resources they need to teach effectively, including manageable class sizes, adequate EA support, professional development, and resources to support increasingly complex student needs. As a teacher myself, I know that when educators are

supported, students benefit. I also believe we need to listen to teachers about what is actually happening in classrooms and use that knowledge to help inform our decisions.

4b. I will listen to staff and seek feedback about what they are experiencing in their schools and classrooms and bring those concerns to the board room. I understand that workload and staff well-being directly affect the learning environment for students. I will bring the perspective as a teacher and also a parent with a child in our school division, to the board table to advocate for reasonable workloads, appropriate resources and supports that allow staff to do their jobs effectively.

Sharon Esau

4a. My promise to you, if elected, is simple. I will listen to your needs, your experiences and your concerns and I will act. Our classes are at the heart of everything we do. Teachers and students are what our schools are all about. Every dollar we invest in the classroom is an investment in our children and their future. That is why I am deeply concerned when we see support staff being cut while other areas are receiving funding. We need to make sure our priorities are in the right place. Our resources should be focused on where they have the greatest impact. That is in our classes and directly supporting students and educators. We need more classroom support, not less. When class size continues to grow while support decreases, we have to ask ourselves, what are we doing to our teachers? The result is increased stress and teacher burnout. I believe this is unacceptable. When we have a manageable teacher student ratio, everyone benefits. Teachers have the time and capacity to deliver quality lessons. Support staff can work alongside teachers to provide students with the individual assistance they need. Students have a better opportunity to learn, participate and succeed.

4b. Our staff deserve to feel heard, respected and included in the decisions that affect their work and their students. Before making decisions that impact our school communities, I believe we need to talk to the people who will be affected. Being blindsided by a decision creates confusion, unnecessary stress and misunderstandings. Open communication builds trust. It gives people an opportunity to share experiences, raise concerns and be part of finding solutions. We also need to take a serious look at the sizes of our classes. In many schools' classrooms are simply too full. Space matters. It affects how students learn, how teachers teach and how supported everyone feels throughout the day. When teachers and staff ask for resources, we need to listen and work hard to make sure they have the tools and support they need to assist students to succeed. Teaching is more than a job; it is a job of the heart. Our educators pour their time, energy and compassion into our children every day. They deserve a school board that listens to them, respects their experience and stands behind them. I will always listen first, communicate openly, act and follow through. This is the leadership I will always bring to the table.

Terri MacLeod

4a. 4b. One key area that needs to be addressed is the availability of substitute teachers. When there is no sub to fill an absence, teachers lose prep time covering for their colleagues. Perhaps in future budgets, sub pay might need to be reconsidered. When I taught in Newfoundland from 2013-2015 the rate was significantly higher than it is in Manitoba. Manitobas rates are still lower than rates were then. They also get 1/195th after 3 consecutive days. Another way to address this is to compensate teachers for not using their accrued days before they retire.

I would advocate for small class sizes and increased prep time. I support increasing elementary and middle school teacher prep time to match the prep time of high school teachers. I would bring forward my ideas for ways increased prep time could be supported such as ensuring students are getting the daily physical education classes mandated by the province, and the 144 to 188 minutes of arts education recommended by Manitoba Education and hire teacher librarians rather than library technicians.

In addition to being able to free up teachers for prep time, teacher librarians can also help support teachers in the myriad of things they are responsible for. They can work collaboratively with teachers, if not take responsibility for media literacy and online safety, research skills, special interest projects and literacy promotion. They are better equipped to maintain library inventory that matches curriculum and encourages all kids to read which in turn supports teachers.

QUESTION 5

5. Working with Unions and Collective Agreements

As a school trustee, you will help make decisions that affect unionized staff.

- a. How will you ensure that collective agreements are respected?
- b. How do you see your role in maintaining a collaborative, respectful and productive relationship with unions?

Craig Stahlke

5a. Both unions and the Board are bound by their respective collective agreement. I have spent many years participating in the negotiating of collective agreements, including teacher collective agreements when that was still a divisional responsibility and believe that both parties to each agreement needs to honour the terms and act accordingly. There are occasions when the two parties disagree on the meaning or administration of one article or another but those disagreements should be worked through to their resolution and not taint the relationship between the union and the Division.

5b. I believe in an open, direct and honest relationship with all of our unions.

Janet Belluk

5a. 5b. Staff who are unionized within the division have clear and detailed collective agreements. Being respectful of these agreements goes without question. Should clarification be required, our inhouse specialist Lorraine Farmer would be a great resource to help the board balance the 'people' with the 'rules'.

Linda Karn

5a. Currently, the HR department informs the board when there is a decision to be made that affects a union agreement and that information is kept in mind during the decision-making process.

5b. Generally speaking, trustees only deal directly with the unions during union negotiations. During the negotiation process, trustees should listen carefully to all concerns of the staff and ensure that each item is fully, fairly and respectfully deliberated in private committee meetings.

Samantha Pope

5a. As a union member myself through the Manitoba Teachers' Society, I understand the importance of collective agreements and the rights and responsibilities they lay out. I will

continue to work to make sure all divisional collective agreements are respected. This means making sure board decisions are consistent with terms that have been negotiated such as workload, working conditions, compensation, as well as the collective bargaining process.

5b. I have received the endorsement of The Winnipeg Labour Council, and I am proud of that support. I believe that a positive relationship with employees and their unions starts with listening and treating others with respect. Workers' rights are important to me, and as trustee I will work collaboratively with others, while recognizing the different roles that trustees, administration, and unions have.

Sharon Esau

5a. 5b. I will always work to keep open and honest communication between the school board and our teachers and support staff. As a retired educational assistant, I understand firsthand how demanding and rewarding this work can be. Staff is working with students whose needs are constantly changing, while also dealing with staff pressures, classroom challenges, and the many responsibilities that come with caring for someone else's child. That is a tremendous responsibility, and it is stressful at times. Our staff need to know their concerns matter. When they identify a need, the board should listen carefully and work with them toward a solution and provide the support they are asking for or get as close to it as possible. We cannot expect our staff to give everything they have while leaving them without the support they need. As a board, we must follow the policies and procedures set out in the collective agreements. I believe in listening before deciding, communicating before implementing and working together to find solutions. Our staff show up every day for our children. As a trustee, I will show up for you!

Terri MacLeod

5a. 5b. I would help foster and maintain open and respectful communication as well as a collaborative approach before bargaining even begins. Mandates set with all stakeholders will have everyone pulling in the same direction. Regular temperature checks would be helpful in keeping stakeholders on track to meet the goals they set together. Trustees should monitor the number and type of grievances to see if areas of the agreement are being misunderstood.

-----end question 5-----

QUESTION 6

6. Experience and Accountability

- a. What experiences or skills have prepared you to serve as a school trustee?
- b. Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the school board?
- c. Have you received any donations or endorsements from any group(s)?
If so, which group(s)?

Craig Stahlke

6a. As you know, I am a CPA and was Secretary-Treasurer in Pembina Trails (and legacy Fort Garry) for over 43 years. I have skills and the experience to be a contributing member of the Board of Trustees.

6b. My time working at the Division as a Senior Administrator makes it easy for me to understand the value and need for high quality public education for our students.

6c. I am funding my own campaign and am not receiving any financial support from any other group or individual. I have received endorsements from individual, primarily from those who know of my work for the Division both as Secretary-Treasurer and as Trustee. These individuals are mostly current or former Trustees, retired Senior Administrators. Please see my website at www.stahlkefortrustee.com to see the full list.

Janet Belluk

6a. 6b. 6c. My experience has been being built on pretty much my entire working life. Schools in various capacities have been a focal point of my life. I believe whole heartedly in Public Education. That statement really means I believe whole heartedly in kids, all of them! At times we must see past the surface and seek a deeper understanding of what is really going on behind the scenes. The best part is being part of the team working together towards successful solutions. I have worked with a variety of school populations, divisional departments, staffs and support people in various roles throughout the division for 25+ years. I have a broad understanding of the overall division and feel this will be of great use in my new role as Trustee. I have not received any donations or endorsements from any groups.

Linda Karn

6a. Well, my first four year term has prepared me incredibly well to keep on serving. It has been a wonderful learning experience. Previously, I have been on many boards over my lifetime. I follow issues in education in the media. I love public speaking and have no problem taking an active part in our current board discussions. I am very organized and pay attention to detail

which is critical in making board level decisions. I have participated in many professional development opportunities over my first term including conferences put on by the Manitoba School Board Association, the Canadian School Board Association, the Canadian Association for the Practical Study of Law in Education as well as sessions put on by Pembina Trails SD.

6b. I simply love children, love education and want the best in education for all children.

6c. No.

Samantha Pope

6a. I bring a combination of personal, professional, community, and board experience to the role. I am a parent with young children entering the school system so I care deeply about what their public education experience will be like. I am a teacher and guidance counsellor, and I also have experience as a resource teacher, so I understand how schools operate and the types of resources and supports that teachers and students need. I serve as Mini Convenor with the Charleswood Youth Soccer Association, which has given me experience volunteering and working on a community board. I also manage the boys' hockey team at my high school, including managing a budget of over \$100,000 last year while planning a large international trip. I have played hockey all my life so I understand the importance of teamwork, listening to others, and working toward a common goal.

6b. There is not one single issue that motivates me, rather I have several priorities that guide me. As a teacher, I know I can bring valuable perspective to the board table about what is happening in classrooms and help support **all** students. As a parent, I want to help create the best possible education for my children and for all students in Pembina Trails. As a community volunteer, I enjoy giving back to the community that has given so much to me.

6c. I have not received any donations from groups. I have received the endorsement of The Winnipeg Labour Council.

Sharon Esau

6a. I am deeply rooted in Ward 1. My parents immigrated to Canada in 1966. We have been in the ward since. I attended Beaverlodge, Westdale and Oak Park. Our children also went to those schools. I have had the privilege of working as an Educational Assistant for 23 years with Pembina Trails School Division. My experience working directly with students, families, teachers and administrators and school communities has given me valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities students and staff face. I believe the knowledge and experience I have gained throughout my career have equipped me with the understanding needed to advocate for our students and staff and ensure their needs are heard and met.

6b. What motivates me is our school community. Our children, families and staff deserve to be heard, respected and supported. I want to make sure their needs are not only discussed but acted upon. If elected, I will be a voice of reason, a voice of experience and most importantly, a voice for you. I will listen to your concerns, bring them forward, and work collaboratively to find meaningful solutions. I believe that when we come together with parents, students, educators and staff and our communities, we can make a real difference in the lives of our children. Our children deserve nothing less than our very best.

6c. I have not asked for or received any donations. The support I have received has come in a different and much more meaningful form. The trust and endorsements of staff I have worked alongside and students I have had the privilege of supporting. Those relationships have been built over many years of service, commitment and caring. They mean the world to me, and they are a reminder of why I am stepping forward to serve.

Terri MacLeod

6a. 6b. 6c. I have just retired from a 33-year teaching career, which has given me a very good understanding of our school system from the perspective of an educator. My husband and I also raised our two children in Pembina Trails, so I have experienced the system from a parent's perspective as well.

I am very passionate about quality education, so the opportunity to contribute at the board level is right up my alley. I am prepared to speak up and advocate for parents, teachers and students. I am also a good communicator and work well as part of a team, which I believe will be important in being an effective trustee.

One area where I feel I could contribute right away is literacy. The Manitoba government has passed Bill 255, which mandates a universal reading and disability screener. I see this as a positive step, but there may be concerns from stakeholders about whether schools have the staffing and funding needed to respond appropriately to the results. I have experience using the screener and providing intervention for students who are identified as needing additional support. I would therefore be able to bring some practical experience to discussions and planning around how we support those students.

I also understand the concerns and priorities of this community. Having grown up and raised my children in Pembina Trails, I have a long connection to the area. More recently, I have been talking with people in the community and listening to what they value and what concerns them. I am committed to working with the board to address those concerns while maintaining the things that make our schools strong.

Some of the concerns I have been hearing include:

- People in River West Park are concerned about the viability of their school as populations change.

- The population of Dieppe and Charleswood continue to increase. Should River West Park once again be considered to be a dual track school? This would also allow many children to access French Immersion closer to home.
- Many parents want to ensure that, while more programs are geared toward career preparation, rich arts programs continue to be available. These programs are an important part of helping students enjoy school and develop into well-rounded individuals.
- Children from low income families need equal access to extra-curricular activities. Sometimes fees, though usually small, and transportation to before and after school activities as well as away games can be barriers to participation.
- Families want their children to feel welcome, accepted and safe at school.
- Like me, many people want to ensure that our schools have the resources and funding they need to support student achievement.

I have not received any funding or endorsement.

-----end question 6-----

QUESTION 7

7. Vision and Priorities for Public Education

- a. What is your vision for public education in this division?
- b. What is the most important responsibility of a school board?
- c. What are the current challenges facing public education in our division?
- d. Which three areas of public education require immediate action in this division?
What are your plans for addressing these three issues?

Craig Stahlke

7a. My vision is reflected on my website, the address which is disclosed in my answer to 6(b).

7b. Without diminishing the importance of any activity, I believe the most important responsibility is the development of and decisions with respect to our annual budget.

7c. Currently, the annual budget process is always a challenge, while managing the growth of the Division and advancing the acquisition of additional schools, and expanding the capacity of certain support activities, in particular capacity to operate and maintain our transportation system.

7d. I believe that I have responded to this in 7(c) above.

The preliminary budget process will begin soon and the substantive deliberations on budget development will start in January and conclude in early March.

Janet Belluk

7a. 7b. 7c. 7d. My vision and priorities for public education in Pembina Trails are varied. Firstly, the money discussion. Like everyone, having more money is always seen as desirable, and I cannot disagree. Having said that, the immediate focus in ensuring that the funds we do have are expended in the most responsible and targeted areas. We need to continue to offer professional development to ensure we have quality, well trained staff. Allow teachers to spend time with each learner by monitoring class sizes and needs. We need to ensure facilities are in good repair and are welcoming to all people (wheelchair accessible, science labs, libraries, band & drama rooms)

As a board we need to assist in guiding the role of technology and AI as a learning-tools but not to replace thinking.

Linda Karn

7a. My vision for public education in Pembina Trails is that all children will graduate from high school and be adequately prepared for the post secondary stream of their choice or for direct entry into the workforce. All staff and students will be respected and treated equally regardless of their religion or background. The standards of education will increase and Manitoba students will have the highest standardized test scores in the country.

7b. In my opinion, our most important responsibility is to ensure that our division provides as high a quality education that we can within our budgetary constraint in a safe and caring manner to all students and staff.

7c. The current challenges in our division include overcrowding in many schools, difficulty acquiring and maintaining bus drivers, difficulty hiring French Immersion teachers, classroom complexity and student mental health.

7d. Classroom complexity is the biggest issue in my opinion. We need to look at creative ways to address this concern that don't always involve money. Perhaps students should be grouped together by ability as opposed to simply by age and grade.

Overcrowded classrooms require immediate action, but our hands are tied waiting for government approval to build more new schools.

Having an adequate number of teachers especially for French Immersion. It seems that often schools run out of substitutes and scramble for class supervision at times. We need ensure that the teaching profession is attractive by providing a safe, caring and supportive environment. We need more graduates from the teaching programs so ensure we have a sufficient pool of candidates to fill all positions.

Samantha Pope

7a. I have three priorities for Pembina Trails: student success and well-being, supporting educators and staff, and responsible stewardship of public resources. First of all, students need to be at the centre of our decisions. I want students to have safe, welcoming schools where they can learn, build relationships, and reach their potential. Supporting that means making sure staff have the resources they need to do their jobs well. At the same time, we have a responsibility to be thoughtful and responsible with public dollars and make sure resources are directed to where they can have the greatest impact.

7b. I believe the most important responsibility of a school board is to support student achievement and well-being. That means setting a clear direction for the division, creating policies and approving budgets that support students and schools. It also means listening to students, families, and staff for making informed decisions to best support our students.

7c. We are seeing increasingly complex needs among our students, and our schools need the appropriate resources and supports to meet those needs. When we talk about inclusion and supporting every student, we also need to talk about the staffing and resources required to make that possible. At the same time, Pembina Trails is a growing division and there will always be difficult choices when it comes to budgeting and prioritizing needs. With the cost of living constantly increasing, we need to make sure we are both meeting student needs and being responsible stewards of public dollars.

7d.

- **Student success and well-being:** We need to continue looking at student achievement and well-being data and ensure resources are being directed to areas where students need the most support.
- **Supporting educators and staff:** Increasingly complex student needs put pressure on teachers and school staff. We need to listen to educators and ensure they have manageable class sizes, adequate staffing, and the resources they need to support students effectively.
- **Responsible stewardship of resources:** Pembina Trails is growing. We need to make sure our resources grow with our students. I will continue to carefully review budgets, ask questions, listen to staff and administration, and make decisions that balance the needs of students with accountability to taxpayers.

Sharon Esau

7a. My vision is simple: every student should feel like they belong, that they matter, and that they have the opportunity to succeed. I believe strongly in the importance of core academics, I also believe we need to recognize that not every student learns in the same way. Life skills programs and hands-on learning can be incredibly valuable for students who may struggle in a traditional classroom but thrive when they can learn by doing. Every student deserves the tools, support and opportunities they need to be successful, and every teacher deserves the resources necessary to help their students reach their potential. We cannot focus only on the curriculum; we must also focus on the child sitting in front of us. Students may be dealing with poverty, food insecurity, and mental health challenges. Isolation or just feeling like they don't belong. These barriers can make it difficult for a student to be present, focused and ready to learn. When we meet students' basic needs, support their wellbeing and make them feel safe and valued, we create the conditions where real learning can happen.

7b. In my opinion, the most important responsibility of the board is to listen, act and follow through. We need to make sure our schools have the resources and support they need to help every student succeed. The board should foster a true team approach because we all want the same outcome, successful students and strong schools. Building trust between the board and our schools requires more than making decisions, it requires following through on our commitments.

I also believe the board must be a strong sounding board for school staff and communities. Most importantly, there must be transparency and accountability. When decisions are made that affect a school, students, families or staff, people deserve to understand what was decided, why it was decided and how the board will support them moving forward.

7c. Our schools are facing some big challenges, understaffing, aging and buildings that are falling apart, racism, economic and social inequality, absenteeism, and supporting newcomers as they come and become part of our community. These challenges are real; we cannot pretend that one solution will fix it all. I believe in the strength of our community. We can work together to make our schools places where every staff and student feel safe, respected and welcomed. No child or staff should walk through our doors feeling like they don't belong. Every staff and student deserves a safe place to learn, a community to belong to and the opportunity to believe in their own future. That's the kind of school system I want to continue to help build.

7d. There are three areas that I believe deserve immediate attention. Classroom sizes and staffing, absenteeism and the impact of artificial intelligence in our classes.

1. Our classes are becoming increasingly complex. Students have different learning needs, life experiences and challenges, yet teachers and support staff are being asked to do more with fewer resources. We need to make sure our schools have the staff they need to support every student. That means more education and support for staff in classes. As well as increased access to clinical support for students dealing with difficult experiences. Teachers should be able to focus on teaching, not spend their entire day trying to manage challenges they do not have the resources to address. When teachers are stretched to their limits, students feel it too. Students deserve individual attention when they need it. Teachers deserve the support necessary to provide it. Our schools deserve the resources to create classrooms where everyone can learn. Supporting our teachers is supporting our students.

2. Student absenteeism is a complicated issue. I don't believe we can solve it simply by telling students they need to come to school. Some of our high school students are working to help support their families. Some are caring for younger siblings. Others may be dealing with addictions, mental health challenges, food insecurity or difficult circumstances at home. Before we can address why a student is absent, we need to understand why they aren't there. I have spoken with students about this, some have suggested later school start times, such as 10-2. We need to be willing to listen to those voices and look at creative solutions. We can also connect students and families with community support, grants and other opportunities. Sometimes the difference can be as simple as having a caring adult sit down with a student, offer something warm to eat and drink, listen without judgment, and help them start their day. I have personally seen how something as simple as toast, tea and a quiet conversation can help a student reset and make it into the classroom. That is what our support staff bring to our schools. Relationships, compassion and the ability to meet students where they are.

3. Artificial Intelligence is here, and our schools cannot simply ignore it. Students are already using AI to do their schoolwork. We need to make sure technology does not replace the ability to think for themselves, creativity and everyday learning. At the same time, we should not approach AI with fear. Technology is moving fast. Our students need to use it responsibly. We need to teach students how to think with technology and not allow it to think for them. I also believe we need to remember that learning with meaning doesn't always require a device. I have seen students become excited about reading, connecting with others and engaging with their teachers without having their phones in their hands. Our classes should be where students are curious, connected and engaged, not just places where they look at their screen. We need to find a balance between technology and human interaction. These three challenges are connected by one fundamental principle. We have to put students first. Whether we are talking about staffing, absenteeism or AI, our decisions should always come back to one thing. What will help our students learn, grow and succeed? That is the question I will continue to ask, and that is the kind of advocate for our students, families, staff and school communities.

Terri MacLeod

7a. 7b. 7c. 7d. I believe public education should be accessible, safe, and welcoming for all students. It should teach core literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking skills. Programming should not only prepare students for life in the workforce but also prepare them to live a healthy, rich and fulfilling life. Students should learn about human diversity, how to live and work harmoniously with others and how to be a good citizen.

The most important responsibility of the school board is to set division priorities and work collaboratively with the division to set policy and budget. Due to the number of challenges being faced by the division, it will be crucial for the board and school division to collaborate closely to prioritize what needs immediate attention and develop a long term plan to address all needs.

I have read that the significant challenges being faced by Pembina Trails are rapid population growth, stagnant provincial funding, a deficit budget, and taxation pressure. The division is having trouble keeping up with the demand for French Immersion, the need for new schools and hiring bus drivers.

The funding difficulties affect every challenge the division faces. My plans in addressing these issues is to start attending board meetings as soon as possible to hear what the board has already prioritized and what they have been doing to address the needs. The 2026-2027 budget was developed with the funding challenge and tax pressures in mind. I have a lot to learn about the issues the board has been facing for quite some time. What I can offer is fresh energy and a fresh perspective and the willingness to roll up my sleeves and get to work.

One area I have ideas is how to address the need for French Immersion teachers, I will see if the board has considered incentives and early recruitment to entice French speaking teachers to come to Pembina Trails. How have immigration and organizations like Destination Manitoba

been leveraged to attract French speaking teachers from outside of Canada? How have Franco-Manitobans been encouraged to enter the teaching profession? Do organizations such as Canadian Parents for French offer financial incentives for entering the Education program at St. Boniface University?

The bus driver shortage was not on my radar when I decided to run. While it is a problem, it may just be part of a larger work force issue beyond the school division. Coach buses lines and logistics companies are having difficulty recruiting drivers. Are there organizations, driver training schools and licensing offices that could be contacted to enlist in addressing the challenges for all industries?

-----end question 7-----

QUESTION 8

8. Governance and Decision-Making

- a. How would you describe an effective school trustee?
- b. Could you support a board decision you did not vote in favor of?
Why or why not?
- c. Do you believe that Educators should have greater input/voice in division decisions that impact their work and their students?

If so, what would you support?

Craig Stahlke

8a. A trustee who is effective will read Board reports form their own opinions and views, learn as much about the operations of the Division, and come to meetings informed and ready to make decisions.

8b. Trustees should argue their views, vigorously, as part of the Board when an issue is being considered but once a decision of the Board is taken, each Trustee should be supportive of it.

8c. Currently, under the current structure, Educators have significant input/voice into decisions of the Division. Most of our Senior Administrative Team are Educators. We have several elected Trustees are or have been Educators. The PTTA has access and input into decisions through a number of vehicles. We take the views and input of Educators seriously. It would not be prudent to reduce the authority or influence of Trustees elected by the public.

Janet Belluk

8a. 8b. 8c. An effective school trustee is someone who is a team player. They are committed, open minded, present and connected. They make themselves accessible and get involved in the divisional community. They are ready to learn and attend professional development. If a decision was voted in by the board and I had voted against it, I would as a team member accept it and move forward. There is always room for change and improvement. A senior admin team should be in touch with the realities of educators in the division. The board could lean on this senior admin team seeking information by asking them pointed questions directed at the teachers and have that senior admin team report back to the board. An option that I am inclined to make happen, is being in the schools myself as welcomed.

Linda Karn

8a. An effective school trustee is one who listens to their constituents, takes the time to get to know the schools in their wards, does all the required reading before board meetings so they come to meetings ready, asks a lot of questions so they can be prepared to make the best possible decisions, involves themselves in professional development opportunities, and speaks up at all board and committee meetings.

8b. Yes. Trustees do not work on their own nor have any authority on their own. All decisions are made democratically. While we don't have to agree with all decisions, we must be respectful of the outcome of all votes.

8c. I do not know what input or voice that educators currently have, however, I assume that they have to work with their union to bring concerns to the appropriate level of management. There is a union representative who attends all board meetings, asks good questions and presents information to us to aid in decision making. Educators also have the opportunity to do presentations to the board on issues. Usually, there are educators that bring forth their opinions on the annual budget to the board and we appreciate their feedback.

Samantha Pope

8a. Someone who works well with others, listens to other points of view, and shares their own perspectives. Someone who connects with the community and brings concerns forward to the board when appropriate. Someone who prepares for meetings and takes the time to understand issues before making decisions. Most importantly, someone who has student-centred thinking and makes decisions based on what is best for student achievement and well-being.

8b. Yes. As a board member, I am one of nine trustees. We are elected to work together and make decisions as a board, not to make unilateral decisions. I will continue to make sure my thoughts and perspectives are heard during discussions and will advocate for what I believe is best for students. Once a decision has been made, however, I will respect the democratic process and support the board's decision and its implementation.

8c. I believe we need to listen to and respect the professional judgement of teachers. Teachers work every day with our students and have valuable insight into what is happening in our classrooms. I would support gathering meaningful feedback from teachers about their experiences and use that information to help inform decisions at the board table. I would also support opportunities for teachers to share directly with trustees about their experiences and the work they are doing in their classrooms.

Sharon Esau

8a. An effective school trustee is someone who builds relationships, listens, and acts. Our students, staff and families must come first. A trustee needs to be present in our schools, not just in meetings talking about them. Walk through the halls. Talk to the teachers. Listen to students. Hearing from families. See firsthand what is happening in our schools. An effective trustee needs to understand the day-to-day realities our school communities are facing and bring those concerns forward to the board. Being a team player is essential. Everyone deserves a voice, and everyone deserves to be treated with respect. We need trustees who are willing to listen to different perspectives, ask hard questions and be willing to hear difficult answers. My goal is to build bridges between our schools and the board not walls. When we bring different experiences, perspectives and voices together, we become stronger. The best decisions happen when people work together, listen to one another and keep students at the center of every conversation.

8b. Absolutely. This isn't about one person. It is about a team working together for the good of our staff and students and families. For me, good decision making starts with having all the information. I believe in full transparency, open communication and respectful collaboration. I will always advocate strongly for the schools and communities in my ward. I will bring their concerns to the table, but I will also bring their successes and celebrations. If someone asks me a question and I don't know the answer, I will not pretend that I do. I will find the answer, follow up and get back to you. That is accountability. That's respect, and that is the kind of trustee I want to be.

8c. Absolutely without question. Educators should have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their schools, their classrooms and their students. We should never make decisions about educators and students without listening to the people that work with them every day. When people feel that decisions are being made without their input, it creates frustration, misunderstanding and a loss of trust. If a decision affects someone, they deserve a seat at the table. We need to get into our schools and talk directly with the people doing the work. Sometimes something can look perfect on paper but the reality inside a classroom can be totally different. Knowledge matters. Experience matters. The human side of education matters. Teachers and school staff should feel empowered to speak up when things are working well and when they are not. Their voices should not only be welcomed when there is a problem, they should be part of the conversation from the beginning. Our educators bring expertise, experience and passion that cannot be replaced by a report or spread sheet. If we truly want better decisions for our students, we need to listen to the people that know our students best. Their voices belong at the table.

Terri MacLeod

8a. 8b. 8c. An effective school trustee is a good listener and a good collaborator.

I can accept that people have different views on how to approach goals and problems. As long as the decision are made for the good of the students, I will work to ensure the success of their initiatives.

I believe that the front line educators should have a voice in division decisions. They are committed to their students' success and know what they need. Teacher's working conditions affect how well they can meet student needs. I would support regular consultation with teachers on what they need to be as effective as possible for the students in front of them.

-----end question 8-----

QUESTION 9

9. Motivation and Values

- a. What inspired you to run for school trustee?
- b. What experiences or core principles will guide your decision-making on the board?

Craig Stahlke

9a. Please see my response to question 6(a). I believe that I could make a contribution to the work of the Division.

9b. I believe that students need to be provided the best possible education to make them successful in the future. We need to respect the taxpayer and be mindful and careful with respect to the tax burden placed upon them. We also need to ensure that we are meeting our corporate and legal responsibilities and are treating our staff fairly.

Janet Belluk

9a. 9b. I have a wealth of information and experience that I bring to the Board. I am passionate about public education and ensuring that each and every student in our division does in fact have the opportunity to ‘Accomplish Anything’. I am ready to pour myself into this role and know that I can be a valuable member of the ‘team’.

Linda Karn

9a. Initially, I became an empty nester and was looking for something worthwhile to do with my time. Since I love children, have grandchildren, love education and want the best in education for all of them, I felt it was my duty to do my part. I also enjoy following politics and have worked at many federal, provincial and local elections so running as a trustee seemed a natural fit for me. It is as if everything I have done in my life up until now has prepared me to work as a trustee.

9b. My core values of honesty, application of common sense, integrity and always wanting what is best for children will be my guide in decision-making.

Samantha Pope

9a. When there was talk of eliminating school boards altogether in 2021 I took a closer look at what it means to be a trustee and what school boards do. I saw the value in having local voice local choice. In 2022 I had two kids under the age of two so that was not the right time to run.

When the opportunity came up to run in the 2025 by-election, I decided to put my name forward. I have really enjoyed my time on the board for the past year and I have learned a lot. I want to continue serving as trustee because I feel the combination of my experience as a teacher and guidance counsellor, my perspective as a parent with children growing up in Pembina Trails, and my involvement in the community, allows me to bring a valuable perspective to the board table.

9b. I am a teacher, a parent, a community volunteer, and a trustee. Each of those experiences shapes how I approach decisions. I believe in listening before making decisions, asking questions, looking at the information available and considering different perspectives. I also believe students should be at the centre of our decisions. My first year as a trustee has given me a much better understanding of the work to the board, and I will continue to bring that experience, along with my personal and professional perspectives, to the board table.

Sharon Esau

9a. I had been talking with a colleague for quite some time about running for school trustee. He ran in the 2022 election, and those conversations made me seriously consider stepping forward. My decision goes much deeper than that. I made a promise to students from grade 1-6. When they graduated, I would wait for them at Oak Park. When they graduated, I would retire. Now I am ready to take the next step. I believe strongly that our students and staff need a voice at the table. I would love to be that voice. I will advocate for you who are in our schools every day. I will make sure your needs are heard, understood and acted upon. I also want to celebrate the incredible things that are happening in our schools and recognize the people that make those successes possible. I know how hard our staff work because I have lived it. I want to be part of the change that makes things better, not just talk about change. I see you. I appreciate you. I know how much you give of yourselves every day. I'm running because I deeply care about our schools, our students and you, the people who make our schools what they are. I will listen. I will advocate and work together. I want to help make our schools even better. I am always open to discussions, collaboration and problem solving. I would welcome the opportunity to serve you! Thank you never feels enough!

9b. My 23 years working for Pembina Trails as an educational assistant have given me a wide range of experiences. I have worked alongside students, teachers, administrators, and families and I have witnessed firsthand how much our schools have changed. Those experiences have shaped the values that I would bring to the role every day. Integrity. Honestly. Trust. Hard work. Accountability. Compassion. I will be honest with you even when the answer is difficult. I will own my decisions and stand behind my words. I will work respectfully with others, even when we don't always agree. I will always be fair, approachable and available. Most importantly, I will treat people with kindness and respect. Education is more than a job. Education is a job of the heart. I will always lead with my heart while making decisions based on what is best for our

students and staff. I will always put students and staff first, I will never forget who I am there to serve.

Terri MacLeod

9a. 9b. I was inspired to run for school trustee because I have the passion, communication and advocacy skills and the strong work ethic required to be an effective member of the board. I have heard the concerns of people in the community for several years now and want to help them ensure the continued success and improvement of their community schools.

Whenever faced with a decision I will ask, "Is it equitable? Is it inclusive? Is it good for kids?"

-----end question 9-----