



AN OPEN LETTER
TO ENGLISH PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPPORTERS
LIVING IN AREA 3 (Wards 5 & 6)

from

Robert KIRWAN

*Candidate for Trustee of the
 Rainbow District School Board*

Please allow me a few moments of your time to explain why I am asking you to give me the honour of being your school board representative.

I made the decision to run for the school board the moment I saw the picture of my two granddaughters on the right. As I looked at the two of them snuggled up safely in the palms of the giant hands, I realized that the time has come for me to step forward to be the guiding hands for them and all of the other children in our schools.

It was apparent that I would not be able to live with myself if I simply sat back and allowed them to risk their future in an education system that is clearly not meeting the expectations of many parents and grandparents. I have the experience and the knowledge that will enable me to make a significant difference in the lives of all children of the area, therefore it is time for me to accept responsibility for using the talents I have been given in a way which will benefit all children who are currently in our elementary and secondary schools, or who will be enrolling some time in the future. In order to achieve this goal I am coming to you and all other English Public School Supporters in Wards 5 and 6, to humbly ask for your vote in the October 25 election so that I may take my place as a Trustee with the Rainbow District School Board for the next four years.



**If You Always Do What You've Always Done,
 You'll Always Get What You've Always Got!**

The greatest problem with our education system at this time is that the trustees who are responsible for setting policy have been around so long that they have stopped asking the right questions. Policies that were useful 10 or 20 years ago are no longer effective in meeting the realities faced by students and classroom teachers today. The Rainbow District School Board consists of two trustees who have been in office for over 20 years, three who have been in office for 12 years, two who have been there 7 years, and they are all running again. The day-to-day operations are being supervised by people who, in some cases, have been out of the classroom for well over 20 years. It is

no wonder that students, teachers and parents are so frustrated with the state of education today. We need a fresh point of view to bring a new perspective to the table.

It reminds me of the story about the young girl who was watching her mother preparing to cook a roast. The girl asked her mother why she cut the ends off of the roast before putting it into the pan. The mother stated that is how her mother always did it, so they went to the girl's grandmother to ask for an explanation. The grandmother said that was how her mother used to cook her roasts so she just followed her example. So they all took a drive over to see the elderly lady to discover the secret of why she always cut

the ends off her roast before placing it in the pan. When they asked the question, the young girl's great-grandmother smiled and said, "Back in those days I only had a small roast pan. The roasts were always too big to fit into the pan so I had to cut the ends off so the roast would fit."

This story is so indicative of what is happening in our schools today. I intend to be like the little girl in the story above. If something doesn't look right, whether that is a policy of the board or a recommendation by administration, I am not just going to accept it. I intend to ask the right questions so that we stop doing things that no longer make any sense.

It would be an honour for me to be chosen to represent you as trustee.

When you cast your ballot on October 25 I would be extremely grateful if you give me a chance to sit on the school board for the next four years so that I can ask the hard questions to make sure our schools meet the needs of all students and satisfy the expectations of parents and grandparents.

On the next page I will show you that as far as overall experience and knowledge about the realities facing students, parents and teachers is concerned, if you want to ensure a fresh new point of view and perspective in the board room, I am the candidate who has the best chance of making a difference! Please make me your choice when you mark your ballot.

YOUR CHOICE FOR TRUSTEE

EWIN, Gordon

KIRWAN, Robert X

WARD, Ruth

Remember The Name In The Middle...Robert KIRWAN

Robert Kirwan

www.kirwan.ca

CANDIDATE FOR TRUSTEE WITH THE RAINBOW DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

EDUCATION

Attended George Vanier Public School (Lively)
Graduated from Lively High School (Grade 13)
B.A. (Mathematics & Economics) from Laurentian University
M.A. (Education Administration) from Central Michigan University

CAREER EXPERIENCES

Classroom teacher for 28 years (Primary, Junior & Intermediate Grades)
Private practice as an Education Consultant & Tutoring Agent for 9 years
Secondary School Seminar Speaker for a local private career college
Collective bargaining & contract management responsibilities for 20 years
Extensive experience with Education and Labour Relations Legislation

TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

TO PUT THE FOCUS BACK ON ESSENTIAL LEARNING SKILLS FOR STUDENTS

I have a total of 28 years of experience as a "classroom teacher" and I've spent the past four years working with hundreds of students through my tutoring agency. There is no doubt that students today are lacking in some of the fundamental learning skills that

are needed for them to be successful in life. As a trustee I will help my fellow board members better understand how board policies and practices may be hindering the development of these essential skills. None of the existing trustees, or the two people

who are running against me for this position, have the range of experiences I have accumulated over the years. I will bring this knowledge to the board room and will make sure that we put the focus back on the essential basics that our children need!

TO PROVIDE BETTER RESOURCES AND SUPPORT FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Classroom teachers deserve better resources and support. I know the realities of day-to-day teaching and what teachers go through. We are burying classroom teachers in paperwork, testing, and pilot projects. I also spent nine years as President of my local teachers' union, so I understand the concerns

and challenges faced by teachers on the front line of education. I will make sure that the school board provides the resources and support that teachers are able to put to use in their classrooms to deliver more effective instruction. No one on the current board or running for this position has the background

I have when it comes to representing teachers. As a trustee I intend to open the lines of communication between the board and the teachers unions to improve labour relations and help make sure our classroom teachers are able to do their job in meeting the needs of students at all grade levels.

TO DO A BETTER JOB OF MEETING THE EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

In my private practice as an education consultant, hundreds of parents with children in all four school boards have talked to me about how the school system is failing to meet their expectations. Despite the glowing reports and wonderful success stories, too many of our children are falling through the cracks in a system that is not suited to the

students of today. I will share with my fellow trustees the messages I have heard from parents. I will ask the right questions of board administrators when they approach us with their suggestions for policy changes and I will make sure that the Rainbow District School Board meets the needs of all students in our schools. One of the first things I

intend to do is revitalize the school councils and give parents more input into the operation of their school. I will also do what I can to put an end to the practice of charging student activity fees every year and of using students to fund-raise to purchase school supplies. It is time for the school board to realize the realities parents face.

**One Person Can Make A Difference On A School Board.
I Am Asking You To Give Me The Opportunity To Be That Person.**

Fortunately, one person CAN make a difference in the entire school system if he has the background, knowledge and experience to know what questions to ask. I am aware of the realities faced by students, parents and teachers. I understand the true impact policies may have on students, parents and teachers. And I have the self-confidence to stand up and fight for choices that will be in the best interest of all children.

I long for the peace of mind that comes from knowing that my grandson will be able to enjoy all the wonders this life has to offer, like taking his dog on carefree walks along the trail and an education system that will allow him to develop his full potential. If you give me your vote of confidence on October 25, I guarantee that I am ready to take on the job of protecting his future and the future of all children.

If you want to know more about my background and/or my thoughts on key issues in education, please go to my web site at www.kirwan.ca

I sincerely hope that I have been able to earn your vote with this letter. Please share it with others in the household who are registered to vote and also share it with your friends and neighbours. One person CAN make a difference and your vote will make sure of it. Thank you.



**Please Make Sure You
Come Out To Vote For...**

Robert **KIRWAN**

www.kirwan.ca
(705) 969-7215

