



February 13, 2026

Paul Dubé, Ombudsman
The Office of the Ontario Ombudsman
483 Bay Street
10th floor, South Tower
Toronto, ON M5G 2C9

Formal Request for Review: Proposed Removal of English Public School Board Trustees

Dear Ombudsman Dubé,

On behalf of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB), I am writing to formally request that your office review the process being used to remove English Public School Board Trustees as well as the potential impacts of their removal.

As an independent officer to help keep the government and public services accountable and protect the rights of Ontarians, your oversight is essential in evaluating whether this proposed transition aligns with the principles of accountability and transparency.

The role of the trustee is fundamental to Ontario Education, serving as a direct link between local families and the provincial education system. We hold significant concerns regarding the following:

- **Fairness:** The Minister of Education has stated the intention to remove the role of democratically elected English Public School Board Trustees and has stated that French and Catholic Trustees will not be removed.
- **Accountability:** Removal of democratically elected Trustees at some supervised Boards has resulted in less open and transparent, public meetings.
- **Truth and Reconciliation:** The removal of English Public School Board Trustees would result in the loss of Indigenous Trustees representation where it currently exists.
- **Student Voice:** The removal of English Public School Board Trustees would also result in the loss of Student Trustees, which is the sole legislated role giving voice to Ontario students in English Public Schools.
- **Public Support:** There has been no formal public consultation on the proposal to remove the role of English Public School Board Trustees and polls have shown



support for the role of Trustees and scepticism that the proposed governance changes will improve public education. According to one poll, “[Support for elected trustees climbs to 59 per cent among parents with school-aged children](#)” and according to another poll Ontarians “[believe the \[proposed\] changes would either make no difference for students or actively make things worse.](#)”

Given your office's mandate to investigate the administrative conduct of school boards and the provincial government, we believe a systemic review is necessary to ensure that efficiency is not prioritized at the expense of procedural fairness.

The WRDSB remains committed to ensuring that any changes to educational governance are rooted in evidence and maintain the highest standards of transparency for the people of Ontario.

The Minister of Education has indicated that a decision regarding the future of English Public Trustees is imminent. Therefore, we request that this review be considered a priority.

We look forward to your guidance on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maedith Radlein'.

Maedith Radlein
Chair, Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board

cc: WRDSB Trustees
The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
The Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Education
Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs) for Waterloo Region
Members of Parliament (MPs) for Waterloo Region
Local Mayors and the Regional Chair
Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) and Member Boards
WRDSB Parent Involvement Committee
WRDSB Special Education Advisory Committee
Waterloo Region Assembly of Public School Councils