



**Manitoba Child Care
Association**

Municipal and School Board Elections 2018

The next general municipal and school board elections will be held on October 24, 2018. Although child care is under the jurisdiction of the provincial government, the municipal leaders and school trustees have important roles to play in the availability, affordability, and quality of early learning and child care services.

School Board Elections:

There are 689 schools located in 37 school divisions, each division led by around 10 school trustees elected by the public. Here is a link to information on what school boards do and how they are elected:

<http://www.mbschoolboards.ca/schoolBoards.php>

The terms, conditions, and relationships between the child care centre and the school/school division vary between each division and are very important. Informed and supportive trustees are more likely to vote in favor of policies and practices favorable to the early learning and child care programs in their school division. There will be many new candidates for school trustee this year, and that presents an opportunity to educate and mold opinions right from the start.

School trustee candidates should know that:

- as of December 31, 2017, 42.5% of child care spaces were located in schools or on school property (this is about 15,074 spaces)
- that most parents rely on full or part time child care
- that parents often choose a school based on the availability of child care
- for many children, a quality early learning and child care program is the first tier of education
- as of June 30, 2018, there were 16,605 children on the Online Child Care Registry (OCCR)
- child care programs feel vulnerable about the prospect of being asked to relocate their program with very little notice
- that good education cares and good child care educates

Before deciding which school trustee candidate is worthy of your vote, here are some sample questions to ask:

1. Are there child care programs located in any of the schools in your division/ward?
2. What is your opinion about schools sharing space with a child care centre?

3. How will you ensure that school division administrative personnel (such as the school board, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer etc.) are informed about early learning & child care legislation and funding infrastructure?
4. What will you do to ensure the staff in schools (Principal, classroom teachers, secretary, custodians etc.) understand how they can partner with the child care centre to establish relationships based on consistency, collaboration and communication.
5. Will you ensure the school division has a process to include child care administration in decisions of shared interest?

Municipal Elections:

Municipal candidates may not be aware that there is a critical shortage of licensed child care in Manitoba and more than 16,500 children are listed on the online registry and in need of a space: http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/occr/pubs/stats_june2018.pdf

They may also not know that in 2007, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) passed a resolution, Policy 1607, supporting rural and northern child care for its positive economic impact to the community. <http://childcaremanitoba.org/images/stories/docs/other/1607.pdf>

The lack of affordable child care is a barrier for parents that are seeking employment, engaged in the workforce, in school or job training. The health and well-being of children during the important early years is everyone's issue, regardless of jurisdiction. "If you get it right for the kids, you get it right for everyone".

Municipalities are not responsible for funding or licensing but there are child care centres co-located in municipally owned buildings such as community centres. Here are questions you can ask municipal candidates:

1. If elected, will you lobby the Province of Manitoba to provide more capital funding and operating grants to establish more high quality, licensed child care services and incentives to attract, train, and retain a skilled, well compensated early learning and child care workforce?
2. If elected, will you work to ensure that early learning and child care programs, in your municipality, have access to reasonable rent, along with financial assistance to renovate and/or pay for equipment?

Click on this link to for general information on municipal and school board elections in Manitoba. https://www.gov.mb.ca/mr/mfas/election_faq.html