Responses to Youth Voice Questions in the Municipal and School Board Election 2026

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This document is posted at *thecountyfoundation.ca/youthvoice*

The County FOUNDATION Compiled by The County Foundation

Name	**Ernie, Margetson**
Office sought:	**Mayor**
Affordable housing	This issue remains the most complex global and national issue affecting all levels of government. There is no easy and immediate solution without the participation of all levels of government as well as the private sector. This will initially happen by small increments by bringing together government, industry and volunteer-based community organizations. As a Municipality, within the land use planning review and approval process, high density development such as rental accommodation can be encouraged and also utilizing the flexibility within the comprehensive zoning by-law to facilitate construction of secondary suites, accessory building conversion to housing, and infill opportunities. Also, the Municipality can leverage its land assets or ability to have preferred access to certain lands to facilitate the building of affordable housing.
Youth employment	First, the Municipality can ensure timely and efficient review and approvals of business ventures to ensure employment opportunities are available. The Municipality can also encourage new businesses to supply staff housing (especially in rural areas) by fast-tracking approvals/permits. Providing space and facilitating job fairs and other programs that connect young people with industry needs can connect youth to employment opportunities.
Recreation and social spaces	Ensure that the recreational facilities the Municipality operates are available and accessible to youth, and facilitate specific youth programs and services. Make available spaces that are not traditional recreation spaces available for social gathering or entertainment.
Affordable activities for families	I believe Service Groups could sponsor certain activities such as sports memberships, day camps, or other enrollment costs for those that may have limited accessibility. The Municipal role is to acknowledge that there are those with limitations on participation, and ensure that through the network of organizations, programs are available to ensure participation.
Child care	Investigate the use of underused Municipal facilities to use as child care facilitates, or after school locations for working parents to have options post school adjournment. Consult with service groups, volunteer organizations, parents and existing resources to take inventory of the opportunities for child care that exist in our community. Work with places such as The Hub, to come up with solutions that could lead to the development of programs that fit the needs of the community.
Mental health and well-being	The Municipality can use its public voice to ensure the community knows what resources are available to them, in particular resources that are available to children and their parents coping with mental health issues.
Youth voice	Ensure that Council Youth Engagement Strategy is followed and updated periodically to assess the involvement of youth in municipal affairs. Initiate a specific outreach program to encourage youth to participate in Municipal committees.
Supporting families	Continue the community grant program administered by the County Foundation.
A community for all ages	Govern with the credo that all Municipal services and programs are Welcome to All, and ensure there is no bias in delivering said programs.

Name	**Brad, Nieman**
Office sought:	**Mayor**
Affordable housing	what the county should be doing is for any new development a percentage has to be affordable. That way we will be getting affordable housing . Which is 20% below market value for apartments. A affordable home is - it can't be more than 30% of your montly income.
Youth employment	We can work with the businesses to see what they can offer for the youth. We can work with the schools to and school board to have programs in place to prepare youths to enter the work place.
Recreation and social spaces	I am looking to address recreation for everyone , the county don't have a rec department, and we should have one to offer programs for youths to seniors, invest in the facilities to create interest and increase the use of these. It will unite the community, and make it a healthier community.
Affordable activities for families	This ties into the previous question, we would have to wait to put the rec department in place to see how we move forward with costing, and what processes we can put in place.
Child care	There is a pilot project to have child care in off hours Weekends not sure how that program is attended at this time.
Mental health and well-being	To ensure that programs are available in the county and accessible.
Youth voice	Engage them by having them come to council meetings, and explaining ways that they are able to participate, and getting their voices heard.
Supporting families	Provide them with agencies that possibly could provide assistance to them, and through policies that we put in place could assist them.

Name	**Terry, Shortt**
Office sought:	Mayor
Affordable housing	I would promote contractors to include affordable housing in their construction of sub-divisions as well take inventory of surplus housing under the community structure to be converted into affordable units.
Youth employment	Supporting local businesses is the key to youth employment
Recreation and social spaces	Locating areas where young people can congregate and supporting agencies like Rock
Affordable activities for families	Supporting agencies like Rock
Child care	Establishing a fund to help start daycare facilities in the county
Mental health and well-being	Support a call centre and real time help centres
Youth voice	Start a committee made up of youth and councillors to get their feed back on current issues
Supporting families	Provide limited funding for communitee support groups
A community for all ages	I plan to make all services more accessible to the general public

Name	**Jane, Lesslie**
Office sought	**Councillor for Picton Ward 1**
Affordable housing	We can target municipally owned land for affordable housing but with firm detailed commitments as to what is "affordable", how long would it be maintained as affordable, and making sure we don't lose profoundly scarce rental accommodation in the County. I'm glad to see the County is currently updating its rental accommodation survey as this hasn't been done in 8 years. I think it should be done annually. Can we find ways to streamline secondary suites and smaller suites in the development process? Although to be truthful the province really constrains us. I would also like to see us focusing on ways to help people lower their water, heating and electricity costs - perhaps subsidizing audits for lower income families, introducing water audits since that is such a big cost to people. A PACE program would allow people to access loans to pay for green energy solutions that would be paid back gradually through their property taxes. I renovated a 100 year old property several years ago and was staggered at how much heat pumps and intensive insulation lowered my heating and cooling costs. Can we help people on lower incomes get access to air conditioning through our municipal financial relief grants program?
Youth employment	I believe we have an opportunity to develop business opportunities in the community with our new hospital and the doubling in size of the long term care home. What can we do to help young people in our community train for the additional jobs that will be available? And what are the related businesses that our young entrepreneurs might be able to build out? Can we find out from our employers what skills are needed and can we work with Loyalist College to get skills training for our young people. I believe enhancing public transit to Belleville and perhaps even Kingston would also help young people get not just to jobs but also to needed training and education. I also want to see the half of the Municipal Accommodation Tax that the province demands we spend on tourism promotion go to building out shoulder seasons and targeting potential markets (eg. birders, cyclists) in those shoulder seasons so those working in the hospitality sector see higher annual income. But I also want to see our young people complete their high school education as without it access to future training and education that will lead them to good income opportunities is very limited. So my focus when people are approaching the municipality for grants will be on those helping to address this issue in concrete measurable ways. I would like to target extra financial help to young people facing the greatest barriers.
Recreation and social spaces	We need to make sure we are making the most of existing resources and access to municipal spaces. Can we improve schedules? I want to see transportation improved to get our young people not just to education and jobs, but also to help them access these spaces given how spread out our county is.
Affordable activities for families	I know that the Baxter Art Centre, the Library, the Regent theatre, the local arenas offer low cost alternatives. Frankly I need more information on what is needed and what any related barriers are to using them - eg. transportation?

Jane, Lesslie	
Child care	This to me is a key lynch pin to keeping young families in our community and - by offering flexible hours for those on shift work or working odd hours (which is only going to increase with the doubling of the long term care home and the new hospital) - we can help raise household incomes. And we need to provide transit to these sites. There was a proposal from the HUB childcare group to use a municipal recreation building for child care a couple of years ago, and they were willing to make building improvements to do it. They were made to feel extremely unwelcome by those already using this public space. This is a public asset and is there to benefit the entire community. This must never happen again. I am wondering if we can't make use of less used municipally owned spaces in the community to offer inexpensive rent to child care groups like the hub which would help lower the costs. Many of these buildings are in severe disrepair. Some of them should be sold off and the money plowed back in to more promising buildings that could meet the childcare requirements. Any major development in the community should be required to include definitive plans for this. We do this for park and green space, we should do it for child care.
Mental health and well-being	I would like to see collaboration between our schools, the Prince Edward Lennox and Addington Social Services, and the Community Safety and Well Being committee to advise on where we should be targeting municipal funds. And ensuring our existing grants target the highest needs in our community.
Youth voice	This is an interesting question for me as we worked hard to get youth participation on the Environmental Advisory Committee for the County that I am on. This was surprising and a bit frustrating for me as I feel younger voices are the ones most needed at this table given the climate change challenges we face will have the greatest impact on their lives. Perhaps no one wants to be the lone youth rep on a committee? A young woman from a local high school civics class recently reached out to me doing a survey for the municipal election. Could students in these civic classes act as a youth council advising the municipality on issues - and get school credit for it! People can attend meetings remotely now but again I wonder if transportation is a barrier? You need to tell me! Council and committees don't know what they don't know. The County's various advisory committees each make an annual report to Council in the spring of each year. Perhaps these youth councils could similarly make a report to council on their findings about key barriers and issues for young people in the community? Or maybe these civics classes could also work on making a deputation to Council on key needs in the youth community. I think this would be complementary to civics classes as I presume those classes would prep students for what is under municipal control, what is under provincial control and what is under federal control. However if we were hearing presentations that related to provincial or federal issues the municipality can then add our voice to those of our students when talking to provincial or federal representatives. Please don't leave me guessing at solutions and then wasting funds on the wrong ideas. You have to tell us what is needed, specifically.

Jane, Lesslie	
Supporting families	There's not much the municipality can do with food costs, although I'm looking forward to seeing the ideas and initiatives that come out of this year's Vital Impact grants being coordinated with the various group's working on food insecurity. I have mentioned a few ways under housing above that discuss ideas for trying to lower housing costs. And I do believe affordable child care in the community offered at all times of day can help families in the community working non standard workdays. If we can help deliver affordable childcare this frees people up to raise their family income.
A community for all ages	I greatly admired former US congressman John Lewis, one of the original civil rights leaders in the southern US in the 1960s. He used to talk about getting into "good trouble". To me that means making one's voice heard and rocking the boat (verbally!) when called for, and trying out new ideas and solutions. I'm trying to do that by campaigning to join council. But I would be useless in that role without input and ideas for those who need and want the services. So see my comments above about a youth council. Please channel your inner squeaky wheel! I just realized I accidentally answered one of the questions below meant for candidates for school trustees. But I stand by what I proposed - I want to hear from schools and educators in the community about what is needed. Maybe the youth council will let them contribute.
Support for teachers	I love this question!! Tell me more. If we need a youth council I also want an education advisory council. Much of the funding responsibility rests with the province but are there targeted ways the municipality can help? And how often do issues we pay for say in community safety, reflect a lack of commitment in other areas

Name	Kate, MacNaughton
Office sought:	**Councillor for Picton ward 1**
Affordable housing	Everyone's success depends on having a place to call home but the real estate market isn't designed to respect safe, stable housing as a right! This leaves a gap. A lack of affordable housing is forcing people to move away. We have lost thousands of households due to ever-growing interest in the region, rising costs and a lack of affordable options. I am firmly committed to explore practical local initiatives to provide non-market housing. I also believe in implementing a vacancy tax for any residential building that is not a primary residence. Generated funds plus a dedicated portion of the municipal accommodation tax could be channeled into purpose built housing and housing retention/rent subsidies programs. Protecting existing rental buildings and ensuring our planning processes aren't creating barriers for affordable infill is also on my list of goals! Our policies and practices are improving but years too slow for lots of people. After years of trying, I was finally able to get appointed to the Housing Corporation and have worked with other members to create long missing avenues for community participation in housing creation. Stay tuned for that!! I hope to get reappointed again and continue this work ongoing. There are some noisy nay-sayers out there who fight against publicly driven affordable housing and retention programs. I suspect they have never felt the gnawing fear of precarious housing or maybe they've just forgotten. With the growing economic disparity we see in the County (and elsewhere too) non-market housing solutions are only going to be more necessary. We HAVE to invest in the future if we want young people to invest their time, energy, work days and lives here in the County and that means housing!!! It's part of a feedback loop that drives economic health! We also have to consider seniors, some of whom are stuck with houses they can no longer manage, because there is no where to downsize close to home. This can open up market housing opportunities for people who want more space.
Youth employment	The municipality can support youth employment as well as education and training opportunities in many ways, both direct and indirect. We already do some direct job creation, for example through Canada Summer Jobs and through co-ops with colleges and, more and more, through high school. H.J. McFarlane Residence hosts a hands-on training program in conjunction with Loyalist called the Living Classroom (you can look it up online). It's been a real win-win; students get to develop high-demand skills and the Long term care home gets to develop and retain new staff. The municipality hopes to do more of the same in other high demand areas as well. The more we engage in this type of skills development, the more exposure local young people can explore career paths and gain the types of skills that lead to great four season jobs right here at home. We also have a small but mighty economic development department. I've heard people refer to economic development as a municipal frill but it is one small way the municipality can invest in the future. Just like homes, young people in PEC will need jobs. Our economic development goals can help us support small business, help navigate red tape, incubate new business ideas, take advantage of grant opportunities, attract new businesses and help build relationships, and connect with education programs in regionally important areas such as value-added farm marketing etc. Our economic developer can also identify emerging trends. All of these functions can attract resources and help us invest in our local economy and foster opportunities for employment and self-employment down the road to keep our economy strong now but also in the future. I know this answer is getting a little long but I also want to crow about a great recent success!! After a long, long wait, we have just moved forward with our youth engagement plan that includes Municipal Mondays at PECI. This is an initiative which, while not a job fair, will sometimes expose students from all over the County to opportunities, inspirations and ideas for career paths they can explore as they hear about different aspects of ongoing projects.

	Also, if you are a young person reading this, apply for one of our committees, work with and shadow a councillor for volunteer hours (please!!! If I get reelected, email me!!! Or, if we get some exciting new councillors, email them too!) or explore co-op opportunities. I've had a chance to connect with young people in all three capacities and they've left with reference letters, lines on resumes and, above all, some great new experiences!
Kate, MacNaughton	
Recreation and social spaces	One of the key findings of our recently approved Youth Engagement Strategy is that young people across the county are in need of that critical "third space". This wasn't a surprise for those of us who have worked with young people and teens in particular. And it's not always just a lack physical space, it's also a vibe—a distrust teens sense that begins around the time you find yourself to be considered too old for trick or treating. There is no right of passage welcoming you to a next level of development, only a prohibition from your precious childhood spaces. Recreational planning can help fill this gap. The municipality has begun to make a cultural shift to improve service for youth and we've seen a sea change in how recreational planning has been undertaken over many years that intensified when a couple of us at council rejected a park/playground redesign due to it's gap in consideration for teens and young adults—not even something cheap and simple like a basketball net. They took the note and ran with it and undertook an ambitious engagement effort. It's been a challenge to get the needs of young people on the front burner but they are now!! Since then, we have expanded our youth consultation efforts—I've worked on or been present for several and I have worked with young people directly and have seen a strengthening feedback loop. The result is a new consultation plan, free transit, a strengthened relationship with the school board. We've also make space free for certain types of events. I would love to enable more opportunities to make the connections with other organizations, recreation committees, or directly with young people. There are some amazing "third space" ideas and initiatives floating around in sports, open social events like meals, karaoke and trivia, outdoor activities, and hands-on craft. It's only going to get better. We'll be recruiting for Recreation committees in a couple of months and young people, if you are reading this, you should flood the zone with your applications. Keep and eye on @PECyouth for notification about recruitment. It will say 16plus but younger people can still connect with our recreation committees even if you aren't 16. As a councillor, I have an open door and would love to hear from you or help if I'm able and will always watch for gaps in engagement or opportunity.

Kate, MacNaughton	
Affordable activities for families	I will always support reducing barriers to public amenities. There is constant pressure to implement service charges and user fees for things like family skate to keep non-essential services off of the tax levy but we should be doing the opposite as the community becomes more economically disparate. Lower income families have already lost hassle-free access at provincial parks and conservation authority parks through parking fees. This caused a real sense of loss for some households in Picton and throughout the County. We have to ensure we preserve or increase access to other amenities and programs that people value. These programs are often low-cost but have a high community value. I support providing free access to quality programs similar to what you might find at a community centre. Some organized sports and culture organizations already do this in their own clubs where you pay a little extra to make sure no-one is excluded but we can do it too. Municipal departments can seek private sponsors for some activities and expensive programs like our museum day camps could develop a dedicated endowment if they don't have one already or switch to a recommended amount plus a pay what you can option to ensure equity for families with less means. My child attended the museum's extraordinary camp as a small and medium child and her experiences helped formed her career goals years later. I would hate for kids to be excluded from something so enriching due to an unaffordable pay barrier.
Mental health and well-being	Honestly, we shouldn't be providing any direct mental health support. There are much better organizations who do this. However, everyone's well-being is built on predictors of health like safe and secure housing, food security and meaningful community connection. The municipality can help with THOSE pieces. We might not be able to solve every problem but the more we build compassion and connection into our processes and our amenities, the more connected the community could become. At a time when housing is inaccessible, when the economy is under pressure, when our seasonal economy leaves some with less and where we've seen the province restrict programs that provide protection, we need to step in and invest where we can. This can be through ambitious programs like directing MAT funds to the housing corporation (which is overdue) or something tiny like a great idea I heard from Erryn Ahern, running in Hallowell, to build a gathering place around a bread oven in one of our public parks for community use and community gatherings. I have seen the community-building impacts of this in big city communities. I've toured parks in both Montreal and Toronto when food security and social well being agencies have done exactly that and the outcomes have grown well-beyond a community pizza night. In a region where, according to Vital Signs reporting, belonging is becoming more of a struggle each year, this type of seemingly small public visions could have a large public benefit.

Kate, MacNaughton	
Youth voice	This is one of my areas of passion and I have worked to empower young people within our civic space before I ever ran for council. I have frequently heard the voice that says, “why bother because you won’t listen anyway.” It is up to us representatives to rewrite that narrative so that teens and young adults understand that their voice matters. I have co-led workshops on school trustee and council candidacy to young people and adult allies; I have advised and trained young people—both school aged and adult—on how to engage with council, how to make deputations, send effective emails etc.; I have attended and will attend any class visit I am invited to, I have built relationships and provided info and connections for teachers; made connections for potential co-op students; provided volunteer opportunities for students; I have mentored youth committee members and interns and oversaw the creation of our environmental committee’s school outreach challenge and supported our staff and interns who designed our youth climate action plan consultations and more. Being able to do this has been the most personally gratifying part of being a councillor. If I’m elected again, I will not let up. I especially consider young voices who don’t get to vote for their leaders. We need to serve them too. I believe it is a duty to consider their needs for today and for their lives. I also believe that, if we encourage and empower them to participate in civic life, we could benefit from their energy, ingenuity and passion. It’s also a bit of a succession plan; what we do today could help spark their passion for public service down the road. Several organizations recently worked with County staff to develop an official youth engagement strategy to identify and activate more opportunities for young people but also in order to establish a direct line of communication for public input. I’ve been on council for almost eight years and have seen a vast improvement in how we engage driven by several passionate members of our staff and a few key members of council including myself. We’re on the cusp of activating this exciting new tool to connect, include and empower young people and I plan to involve myself in any way I can. You can look it up on this agenda: https://princeedwardcounty.civicweb.net/document/357995/ I think our staff and the organizations that participated did an amazing job.

Kate, MacNaughton	
Supporting families	My greatest pride as a councillor is the success of our municipal relief program. This is also my civic engagement sales pitch for young people and for equity deserving groups, one person can make a difference that improves lives. This was a goal for me when I first ran last term. I advocated for a rate/tax relief program to help struggling households. It took me a couple of years and three CAOs to make the case to staff and I finally put a motion on the floor that succeeded. Staff designed it in a way I had not envisioned and it works! It is a good program and it gets stronger every year. This year, it even included a small disconnection prevention pilot program. Life is more expensive for the people who can least afford it. Not only is municipal taxation the least equitable type of taxation as it is based on market property assessments rather than household capacity, as well lower income households often pay a premium on their taxes and rates through late fees and interest. Far beyond what it costs to manage the costs associated to the tune of close to three quarters of a million each year. The program got a bit of pushback back then but it is also good policy as our costs increase. As rates and taxes go up, we will need to be more vigilant for lower-income households to ensure they aren't placed in further economic jeopardy as prices rise. In the future, I want to find a way to end water disconnections. I understand it is a financial management tool to keep the water system and municipality solvent but disconnections are unsafe and can create humiliation and harm—particularly for vulnerable residents, the very young and the very old. I have witnessed these harms including in school settings and believe that if people saw the personal impacts on a local kid or a local senior, they would wish to consider alternatives too. No one defaults on water bills just for kicks. It's because they don't have the means. We should address this somehow before we remove their means of survival. I think we should continue to provide direct funding and communication support for the amazing organizations that are doing work that helps our community members with financial empowerment and food security. I will always support smart programs that have a direct and uplifting impact on the lives of our neighbours. I think we might also have an opportunity to consider our planning policies and housing affordability. I am interested in how we empower local residents seeking alternative models to create affordable housing. I've heard of three recently that were desperately seeking affordable infill solutions but were confounded by the price and complexity of our building and planning permit processes.

Kate, MacNaughton	
A community for all ages	I think I've covered quite a bit. There's more. One I'm interested in right now is a program Foundation Staff and I discussed with municipal staff in the winter to protect vulnerable, lower income residents especially seniors get some protection for rising summer temperatures. We've taken some steps forward toward securing funds but there are more steps to come. We all, as councillors, have the opportunity to place lens on every policy and program: who does this help? Who is left behind? Who is confounded? Is this program/piece of equipment/opportunity accessible to everyone? I have tried to do this throughout and have tried to support others at the table who have done so too. It takes a village.
Dealing with AI	I know this is question for trustee candidates but the municipality also has to be responsible in its AI usage. Municipal staff and some candidate's campaigns have been utilizing AI for many different types of tasks. Non-vested Global experts predict that there are profound risks to the future of jobs, data security, the globe's climate, and human capacities that will likely come from using AI without legislated controls. We have has several conversations about AI usage at the council table. Without a better understanding of these dangers, I believe AI should be used with extraordinary caution and only when the job cannot be performed by a skilled worker and that large language model usage should be discouraged due to unreliability underpinned by its negative climate impact. While it's important for young people to understand AI tools as they appear to be here to stay, it is vastly more critical to ensure their future jobs aren't rendered obsolete by a workplace 'robot apocalypse' or any hastening of global climate change due to impacts of energy hungry data centres.

Name	**Phil St-Jean**
Office sought	**councillor, Ward 1 Picton**
Affordable housing	Through my work and leadership role on the Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation I have been a strong advocate for the creation of attainable rental housing projects. The AHC has made considerable strides during this term of council to achieving its mandate despite facing considerable site specific environmental challenges and unavoidable costs (Niles St, Wellington), non-expert opinions including inaccurate and intentionally misleading information, the absence of reliable, sustainable municipal, provincial and federal funding programs not to mention unpredictable economic challenges locally and internationally. It is my intention to continue our efforts to complete the Disraeli St project (currently 90% funded) with construction to start in early 2027 and keys in doors by late summer. While this is a first project and is relatively small in size it will provide 8 below market affordable rental units for young people in search of a clean, safe reasonably priced place to call home. The units will ensure at least a few PEC residents, our young people have access to healthy housing options. In my time as chair of PECAHC and generally as a council member I have worked directly with local developers doggedly encouraging them to be creative, to incorporate a variety of housing options in their applications. I have also worked directly with our MP, MPP and upper level government agencies and granting bodies to further the cause. I will continue to advocate with all potential housing providers, public and private and anyone who will listen to me with the goal of maximizing the availability of housing opportunities for our youth and young families.
Youth employment	I have long been a strong advocate for enhancing our very limited, almost non-existent supply of employment lands and the economic benefits for all residents, in particular creating greater opportunities for the youth of our community. Currently there is an industrial and employment lands survey underway, study is seeking input from all employment and business sectors including the public/residents. Once we have a more complete understanding of the employment lands currently available, where we can and should develop or create more we will be in a better place to support growth in employment opportunities. There is no simple, quick fix to address the lack of opportunities in our county. We must be realistic, this will take time, money and effort to build a balanced local economy that provides lasting and sustainable opportunities. We must also provide our support to existing businesses through a solid business retention and expansion program. A program that exists and needs to be encouraged to continue working with current employers to be creative in their approach and considerate of the needs of young people entering the workforce locally.
Recreation and social spaces	A community is not just a place on a map. A community is made up of people, residents of all ages. During the recent pandemic it has become more clear than ever the importance social and recreation spaces and opportunities play in a person’s and a community’s well being. I will continue to encourage investment in and support for community based designed, funded and driven projects that bring residents of all ages together. Community spaces are for all residents to enjoy, they are the centre pieces of a healthy community.

Phil St-Jean	
Affordable activities for families	Municipal programs and services for children and youth should always be considered as an investment in the future of our community. A community that values its youth and the contributions they make and will make in our community is an investment in the future health of our community. I support exploring ways to provide some form of financial support for programs that encourage equitable access to youth and family programs and activities.
Child care	Subsidized day care is governed by the provincial government. It is not a core service intended to be provided by the municipality. Having said that local elected officials need to be actively advocating for the creation and financial support for the allocation of additional child care spaces. We can and should encourage greater opportunities to create more spaces. During this term additional permitted uses were added to a number planning files, generally commercial re-zonings, that will allow as of right a commercial property owner to offer child care opportunities for our young families. I support continuing to advocate for and make relevant changes to plans, procedures and programs within our municipal control that will create opportunities to reduce the lengthy waiting lists and the lack of affordable child care services in the county.
Mental health and well-being	I believe that by encouraging support for and creating socially interactive opportunities, by partnering with existing social service agencies currently providing mental health and well being supports for youth we can be better assured of positive outcomes for our community.
Youth voice	I proudly supporters the most recent staff report (Sept. 22/26 COTW) and wholeheartedly support the direction council provided to staff and the recommendations included in the Youth Engagement Strategy. We must continue to engage with our youth, listen to their voices, hear directly from them about their needs, their desires and their aspirations for our community.
Supporting families	Providing attainable housing options, plentiful economic opportunities combined with in particular year round employment choices we can provide relief for those struggling to maintain a life here. Ensuring appropriate supports through direct relief from living costs like our costly municipal utilities for residents in greatest need is essential to helping everyone in our community thrive here.
A community for all ages	Consistent public consultation, regular targeted communication with ALL demographics in the county with an eye to not just our current needs giving special attention to being future focussed is the most effective way to ensure the county provides equitable and inclusive services for residents.

Name	**Erynn Ahern**
Office sought:	**Ward 2 councillor**
Affordable housing	As a renter raising my family here, who also works in the retail/tourism sector I know first hand how hard the struggle to find an affordable and safe place to live can be. To that end, I spearheaded a community support campaign in 2025 via The Radiator Collective (I'm one of the co-founders) to help pass the sale of Queen Elizabeth school for an affordable housing project that will bring us just over 100 affordable rentals to the community upon completion alongside another 100 market rates units. This campaign was run over three weeks and collected the support of dozens of residents and community organizations like The Chamber, Pictons BIA and Prince Edward County Learning Centre to counter act the narrative that this housing was neither needed or wanted by the community that had been pushed forth by a small group of residents. It remains one of the most important peices of community advocacy I have run over the last twenty years. As a councillor, I would seek to set hard lines on any new development requiring a minimum of 30% affordable rentals before approval is considered. Additionally, I would like to see an expansion of a grant program we run that provides partial funding to private home owners who would like to build secondary units to be rented at affordable rates. After conversations with several wineries and larger business, they expressed interest in removing the moratorium on new Sta's with the new regulations allowing them to build a small (under 5) sta's on site which they beleive would create less demand on the current sta stock, and hopefully lead to more homes returning to long rentals. This is an interesting idea I would be interested in exploring further, as well as exploring a re-allocation of some of the municipalities portion of the minicamp accommodation tax to to affordable housing corporations current projects to compete these units faster. There is no single, immediate solution to the housing crisis but as a councillor I would use my voice and position to continue to advocate for housing options at the local level as well as advocating at the province and federal level for more funding for local housing projects.
Youth employment	The best thing the municipality can do for youth employment is to continue to support the funding and granting programs for organizations like The ROC, greater than youth and PELC who provide support promgrams and mentorship for youth in PEC. Outside of continuing to support these fantastic organizations, the work that Visit The County and Economic Development are doing around the expansion of our seasonal economy into a four season economy is something I would actively support, while bringing some ideas around the development of tourism adjacent industries like film, expansion and exporting of locally made products etc to create jobs that do not strictly depend on tourism. In terms of my history prior to running for council, I run a two day musical festival in Picton taking place the last week of a December, with the direct intention of bringing more people to the community outside the main season, so the need for a four season economy is some I have a first hand knowledge of the importance as well as community work making it happen.

Erynn Ahern	
Recreation and social spaces	We have so many natural spaces, parks and third spaces in Prince Edward county for folks to enjoy and participate in activity. One of the larger barriers outside of cost is access. To that end I will advocate for the expansion of our bourgeoning transit system to reach more locations and help connect youth to these areas and rec centres.
Affordable activities for families	I would like to see a grant program created, much like the PEC Art Fund, dedicated to creating low cost activities or subsides for sports programs for low income families.
Child care	While the county struggles with chikd care, this is an area we have made some good steps forward in in the last year. The new Hub spaces located at Base 31 and the newly created after school program being facilitated by Reaching for Rainbow are fantastic examples of some of the gains we have made in regards to child care and I would contiune to support this work and would work to see these options expanded to communities outside of Picton.
Mental health and well-being	This is a tricky question, as the municipalities ability to support health care is limited. I believe by addressing concerns like housing, lack of low cost activities and food insecurity we can make huge strides within the area of mental health as well.
Youth voice	The County has many boards and committees that are run by a combination of counsellors and community members, which often contain a spot for a youth representative. I would like to see a dedicated committee created for young people that would give them a direct and meaningful way to communicate their needs with council as well giving them the tools to understand what is happening day to day at Shire Hall and share that inflation with the youth community in PEC
Supporting families	As mentioned a few times, we are so blessed here to have so many orgs doing the hard and meaningful work of supporting low income families (PELC Fresh Food Box is a great example) - I would like to see a portion of the MAT deadicated to supporting these orgs so they can expand their services to wider reaches of the county. Specifically in Ward 2, the proposed community space in MaCauley village to be shared by the ROC, PELC and the Department of Illuminations Art Kitchen would be at the top of my first year priories to see it through to completion.
A community for all ages	With the establishment of a youth committee, we would give a direct voice to the younger folks in PEC. I would also like to see greater community outreach in terms of social media and other communication methods preceded by the under 25 crowd :)

Name	**Joanne Fralick**
Office sought:	**Councillor, Ward 2 Bloomfield/Hallowell**
Affordable housing	County Council can stop making the current problems worse and better use the tools it has. I will focus on building and protecting genuinely affordable housing, encouraging small-scale options such as tiny-home villages and secondary suites, making sure new development contributes fairly to the infrastructure it requires, and looking for efficiencies before increasing taxes and user fees. Most importantly, I will ask the hard questions about where our money is going and whether residents are getting good value for it. Affordability is about whether a young family, a worker or a senior can afford to live here and still feel that this is their home.
Youth employment	We need to support a year-round local economy where people can earn a living, not continue to create more low-wage seasonal jobs. A County-based community college satellite building would go a long way to encourage our youth to take post-secondary education, particularly if the programs offered can be translated into full time, above minimum wage jobs.
Recreation and social spaces	There are financial programs already in place to subsidize some of these activities. I would look at lobbying the Quinte Conservation Authority to offer either free or half-price passes to the County conservation areas for under-16 residents who are in school. Likewise, a similar program could be offered at the Sandbanks.
Affordable activities for families	There are already multiple charitable organizations, local and national, who look after these activities. I would look into which ones Council could make donations to.
Child care	The most critical issue with childcare in the County, and in fact this is province-wide, is the lack of trained ECE staff. I would advocate Loyalist College to establish a satellite teaching centre in the County specifically to train ECEs and offer some sort of bonus if the student signs an agreement to stay and work in the County for at least 2 years after graduation.
Mental health and well-being	Mental health support for all ages is severely lacking in the County. Quinte Health must be lobbied by Council and organized citizens groups to improve access to mental health services across the board. Once a week or month for six sessions is not enough, and the waitlist is unacceptable. Mental health professionals cannot help our youth if they are not physically or virtually available to them.
Youth voice	Interested youth should be offered a meeting with Council twice a year to present their concerns. A high school student could also be elected by their peers to attend County council meetings as an observer.
Supporting families	Council must address the crises in affordable housing. Mental health support and food security. Housing is the largest financial strain on the County's young families. Council needs to enforce and tighten STA restrictions, make surplus municipal land available to non-profit housing developers, and create an expedited zoning and permit process for deeply affordable housing.
A community for all ages	The County recently endorsed a 10-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This puts them in a position to transition from standard single-use spaces to adaptive multi-generational community infrastructure. Council should prioritize safe and enjoyable public spaces for all ages – children to seniors. For example, more public seating and shade structures particularly for seniors and pregnant mothers in Picton, Bloomfield and Wellington.

Name	**Geoff, Heinricks**
Office sought:	Councillor Ward 2 Bloomfield-Hallowell
Affordable housing	We either decide as a community that safe and affordable housing is a GENUINE priority in this municipality, and learn if and how it successfully works in other municipalities and work along those lines, or we throw up our hands and let developers offer crumbs of what they define as "affordable units". We might consider actual smaller scale communities and buildings, working with those who see more than just high profits.
Youth employment	Encouragement and recognition of those businesses that employ and train young people would go a long way; such commitment and community can be an important example. There are some policies that seem to be working against this, at other levels of government, which are difficult to counter at the municipal level.
Recreation and social spaces	I do not believe in selling off County facilities as temporary ways to bring in a one-time hit of cash. I think public spaces and facilities greatly benefit and build the health and happiness of a community.
Affordable activities for families	County facilities should be fully used to help the health and well being of our children and youth. I do not know what financial supports are provided to some organizations by the County, if any. Personally, I think that is a far better direction of County resources that infrastructure spending, as it profits our youth and families, and not primarily developers.
Child care	It seems a complicated issue with both the federal an provincial governments having determined goals, policies, and shortcomings. If more flexible zoning to allow more home based child care options is a possible help, I could see examining and supporting that.
Mental health and well-being	That would require fully understanding the resources and deployment of the various departments and agencies who provide these, and learning where shortfalls or waiting lists exist. I am not fully familiar with the file, and where municipal action might influence needed change or bolstering.
Youth voice	Certainly the best way would be for parents or organizations to have young people attend some council meetings as part of their education and upbringing, and/or to make deputations on issues that concern them, or on which they want to have a voice in shaping.

Geoff, Heinricks	
Supporting families	It is an economic truth that we are all hard pressed, the municipality included. Primarily I would like to reconfigure our expenses and infrastructure plans, and redirect the changes and savings into areas that best serve and help the lives our our residents.
A community for all ages	I would hope and encourage the Director of Recreation & Community Facilities to maintain conversations with County residences on what might be considered and needed for the health and happiness of the people who live here. I would also like to see a lower rate for community rate fees for genuine County residents and functions, to encourage greater use.

Name	**Mark Henry**
Office sought:	**Councillor Ward 2**
Affordable housing	Looking for innovative answers, stackable, factory built homes is where my thinking currently is. Building on land already approved for housing will be key as well.
Youth employment	Making it known to the Ontario marketplace that Prince Edward County is open for business is probably something every community in the province already offers. Highlighting our site specific attractions might give us a bit of an advantage. Our past, in the food processing world - canning tomatoes, pumpkin, and frozen vegetables played on competitive advantage that farmers here wanted more from their produce than the fresh market could offer. We need to refresh that thinking.
Recreation and social spaces	Our parks offer amazing opportunities especially in the off seasons. Developing more activities within the facilities we already have might be a start. Bringing young voices to the table through youth engagement strategies such as the PECYouth Instragram page is a great start.
Affordable activities for families	We have a number of entities in the County - The Department of Illumination comes to mind. They had plans to bring activities to the Heights - we need to encourage them and remove roadblocks. They aren't the only group doing this work - I am amazed at what is available through our libraries. We need to champion efforts/entities that are here already but perhaps not celebrated as much as they should be.
Child care	The Economic Development Action Plan presented in late January of 2025 noted the shortage of childcare options in the County especially outside regular hours. The Childcare Action Plan offers options to deal with the shortages we clearly have. I would like to continue following the recommendations within the plan while looking for ongoing community input from parents and youth.
Mental health and well-being	I value what simply putting on a pair of running shoes and running does for me. Beyond what we can do for ourselves on our own, we do have services available through the Canadian Mental Health Association Hastings Prince Edward, The Prince Edward Family Health Team and such library facilities as SMART Recovery drop-in sessions. But I'm probably not listing all of the options - we need to remain open and sensitive to the needs of young people. Hopefully Council will strive to be highly receptive to the challenges of mental health and well-being
Youth voice	I like the County Youth Engagement strategy with its five priorities of career paths and mentoring, services and activities, engagement and recognition, adult allies and community mobilization. I confess to not fully understanding the full implications of these priorities but they do suggest , with some funding in place (as proposed) that we will learn more and engage more in addressing local youth issues.
Supporting families	There are community entities striving to assist - we need to champion what they are trying to address.
A community for all ages	We do have the wonderful (or not depending on your vantage) reality that the County is a very geographically defined area. You are either in the County or you have to cross so water to leave it. We are as a result one family of County residents. I suspect this is already the approach taken but I like the idea of reminding ourselves that as a family we need to take care over everyone here - to the best of our abilities.

Name	**Victor Lind**
Office sought:	**Councillor Bloomfield/Hallowell**
Affordable housing	This is a very difficult question which successive governments at all levels have been trying to solve. I don't have a silver bullet but I believe County Council should be petitioning Province to raise the minimum wage to a livable standard and focus on incentives to private sector to build more rental housing. Much of the stress in housing comes from the removal of almost 1000 homes from the long term rental pool into short term STA's
Youth employment	We have employers who can't find workers and young people anxious to get that first job just to get experience working with others. I'm not versed on what the Provincial student summer programs entail but what if the County provided financial incentive top ups not thru taxes but using some of the tourism MAT taxes to encourage local restaurants/wineries/hotels etc to take on students/non- student youth to train and employ them?
Recreation and social spaces	Not that long ago, church halls and basements served this purpose. Not everyone lives close to a rec centre but many have a church or so in their area, many of which are struggling to find alternate uses for their properties. These are usually large enough to support all types of recreation activities (table tennis, billiards, game tables) that augment recreation programs put on by local recreation committees. It might be well worthwhile to bring church elders together with parents, youth and community groups to spark a solution here.
Affordable activities for families	I believe there could be more that can be done by volunteers to sponsor individual children in need who can't afford the equipment or fees associated with sports. I would want to ask my friends active in service clubs like Rotary, Kinsmen etc to see how they might fold additional targeted sponsorships into their programs for example.
Child care	I honestly don't have a quick answer here but I would hazard a guess that one of the biggest input costs to any childcare support outside of family is the cost of renting space in a suitable building. Perhaps as the County completes its' asset review the need for child care space could be considered when a town hall or firehall etc that has been orphaned and ready for disposal is debated.
Mental health and well-being	This ties into my comments earlier about recreation/ socialization activities for young people. PEC has limited resources but I see recreation programs as one area that would be beneficial to mental health and confidence building.
Youth voice	How does a Councillor ensure that everyone's voice is reflected in municipal decisions? Sometimes we can't expect our constituents to come to Shire Hall- we have to go to them. As it relates to young citizens I would focus on going to forums, perhaps in conjunction with the High School, to hear their views on issues coming to the County before it happens. County Council held meetings at the Regent theatre during covid. Perhaps there would be opportunities to hold a special Council Mtg at the High School on a targeted issue basis that concerns youth and let them be deputants in their own environment!
Supporting families	I reiterate that we need as a country to ensure that people willing to work hard can make a living wage. Many are living at or below the poverty line especially with rising food and utility costs. We should as a County Municipal government with limited tax resources, be pushing the Provincial leaders to raise the minimum wage. The existing Ford government has resisted this for years.
A community for all ages	All in all, I think our recreation and community spaces have done a pretty good job. Our municipal planning and enforcement of our by-laws has a lot of room for improvement. I have a particular expertise in this area and intend to focus my energies in better land use planning which would ultimately benefit all age groups.

Name	Kyle Mayne
Office sought:	councillor ward 2
Affordable housing	we need this how is the big question there a movement in Bloomfield that working hard on this we need to support ken howe.
Youth employment	we need bring wood working back into grade 6 7 8 and other studies that would help the girls.
Recreation and social spaces	we need this to the old Pinecrest welcomes this idea talk to ken howe.
Affordable activities for families	there has to be a way to help with this.
Child care	that a hard one but it could be looked at.
Mental health and well-being	happiness is very important
Youth voice	yes i support scouts and cadets porgram
Supporting families	meaningful employment
A community for all ages	were all important and need to respect each other
Classroom size	when can we reduce class size and bring back the trades
Support for teachers	not really i know there doing there best
Mental health	its very important
Support for different learning needs	this is important we need to have funding for it
Dealing with AI	this is hard as a scout leader i could not compete with game boy years ago

Name	**Kane, Rutgers**
Office sought:	**Councillor Ward 2 Bloomfield/Hallowell**
Affordable housing	I would work to make existing programs known and accessible. Work along side groups like the PELC to help facilitate filling out forms and registrations to help make a daunting task more achievable. I would work hard to keep proposed ideas rolling and come to life. I think it is important to make developing these projects an easy task in order to keep the plan rolling. It shouldn't take more time to build affordable housing than for developers to build other projects.
Youth employment	I have been so fortunate to learn about the programs we currently have during this campaign. Having 4 kids of my own and knowing the importance of giving them the best chance of success falls on these important programs. I would work to ensure programs like PELC and The ROC have the proper means to operate as they are a vital tool in helping youth prepare for life ahead of them. I think there is room to add to these programs, the County currently employs summer students at the secondary level. I would explore the Idea of including high school ages.
Recreation and social spaces	Youth recreation and youth sports are one of the most important things in my life. My wife and I are heavily involved in our children's activities. Coaching and volunteering in majority of the activities they participate in. I am currently the president of PECMBA helping to facilitate affordable baseball to almost 400 children. It will be my goal to bring back more activities and clubs to my ward and the County as a whole. It will be important for me to work with others to be able to offer these programs at no cost. These programs once existed and went away due to lack of participation. I believe that would not be the case and youth are yearning for things to do! Working with county staff to maximize the use of our spaces available to us will be key in offering these programs. Another hurdle can be transportation, fortunately we have a program like County Transit and I believe we can work with them to help facilitate transportation to events.
Affordable activities for families	I have had the privilege in working to offer programs to help families afford registration for baseball. There are programs out there and available to families in need. Unfortunately they can be hard to find and navigate. I would work to help bring these programs to light and make them accessible to all who need them. It will be crucial to promote these programs.
Child care	Child care should never cause stress and anxiety, but it is the reality. To sit here and say I have an answer would be wrong. I would need to learn and gain a better understanding in order to help come up with a solution. I would work hard to find solutions that could be made available to the ones in need.

Kane, Rutgers	
Mental health and well-being	What I can do to help the well-being and mental of our youth in my role as potential councillor has been on my mind from the beginning. Being able to address ones mental and health and well being should be available to everyone but the reality is that it can be unobtainable. I think the most practical and sustainable option for me to be able to offer would be peer/support groups. Times to be offered to different groups struggling to find or afford help. I also believe the initiatives I intend to take on in order to bring sports and recreational programs back will have a direct impact in individuals mental health.
Youth voice	Youths voice is the most important voice. Decisions made today at council will be felt most by the youth now. Clearly youth have the ambition to be include based on the questions laid out in this survey. I would work with my contacts at PECI to give opportunities to groups to be able to come to council meetings. As well work to make sure the information needed is provided to the school for the youth to stay involved.
Supporting families	My biggest goal to support families with the struggles of rising living cost is to make sure we as council are not the reason for higher expenses. The expenses we control are water, sewer and taxes. We need to work within our means to ensure we take care of these without causing a rise. Now it is necessary for these expenses to rise at some point but with the rise of the expenses the benefits need to be felt.
A community for all ages	I would approach these decisions with a clear and open mind. I think for a community to grow and stay connected, a space needs to facilitate the needs for everyone. I would work hard to remind people that one space is never just specifically designated for one group and that people need to coexist with everyone. Sometimes this can be uncomfortable at first but over time the benefits of multiple groups growing together shows huge benefits.

Name	**Paul Boyd**
Office sought:	Councillor Ward 4
Affordable housing	I am not sure how to address this problem The county has spent tons with no success Costs are the same for any type of home and who will pay to provide
Youth employment	Encourage businesses to hire and get the federal government to offer tax incentives to do so
Recreation and social spaces	Offer the same opportunity to all youth regardless of their ability to pay Offer equipment to participate on loan so their costs are minimal
Affordable activities for families	Offer free entry to those who can't afford it regardless This is so important
Child care	Hard to say It's a business now and how do we get these businesses to work longer Child care should be 100 percent tax deductible Municipal government increase pay to providers
Mental health and well-being	If we can identify a problem it should get instant attention We had a problem at my daughters school and the school did nothing
Youth voice	I would not tell a young person anything I would listen intently to what they have to say and I don't think we do it
Supporting families	Give the organizations providing the essential support better funding
A community for all ages	Listen to what they have to say

Name	**Doug Villeneuve**
Office sought:	**Councillor Ward 4**
Affordable housing	We need to approach both the Provincial and Federal government for funding for more geared to income housing units. We should require all new developments and buildings to set aside a certain number of units to be a geared to income units.
Youth employment	We should scale back the number of temporary foreign worker positions allowed per workplace, this would allow spaces for the Yourh of the county. We should also have a local data base to match employers with prospective candidates or apprenticeship positions that both the employers and job hunters can connect with each other
Recreation and social spaces	Utilize our existing Municipal buildings to be used on a regular base by the residents of the community. Establish events geared to the different age groups. We need to go back to the basics like when we were young. Community centers had community activities. Let's go back to what worked.
Affordable activities for families	We should have a slush fund from tax dollars, do community fundraisers and advocate for a sponsor a child program allowing underprivileged children to participate. There should be a committee to ensure that this system will not be abused and all requirements are met for funding applications.
Child care	Make it less strenuous and cut some of the red tape for home daycares to open and operate . Encourge employer based facilities to meet the requirements of shift work. Employers need to look at a work/ life balance plan to ensure staffing is available
Mental health and well-being	Encorage a peer council and provide safe municipal buildings to allow a space for activities, peer workshops and peer based support group for all of our youth.
Youth voice	A few times a year, the Councillors should meet with the youth in their respective wards and allow them to air their concerns and what they need within their community. Create a mini council allowing the youth to feel they are engaged and can bring their ideas and solutions forward to the councillors to be presented to the County Council. That would be my suggestion to allow the youth to be engaged and see how the process works
Supporting families	I am being totally honest here, I have no answer to this question. The rising costs have hit all residents with no relief in sight by both federal and provincial governments. I am not sure how the Municipality can help. If any candidate has an answer to this I would love to hear your suggestions.
A community for all ages	Fund programs and facilities where youth teach older residents digital literacy, while seniors mentor youth in trades, cooking, or arts. Look at an adopt a grandparent program for our seniors. Some are alone with no families around and would appreciate the company. This is a community looking after community the way things used to be.

Name	**Emily Jane Pickstock**
Office sought:	**Councillor-Athol**
Affordable housing	I think affordable housing includes thinking about jobs and affordability at scale. Specific to the County, jobs to afford housing is lacking. Also, affordable housing is not always attainable for low income families. I would like to support projects that keep this gap in mind.
Youth employment	One thing that I would like to continue supporting Living Classroom style learning to create more learning oppourtunities and direct pathways into employment. Such as, what is taking place at the H.J. McFarland Memorial Home in partnership with Loyalist College.
Recreation and social spaces	I would love to see an expansion of County Recreation programs including sports, arts, and clubs. Many families travel to Belleville or neighbouring towns to play sports or participate in clubs. I think creating more variety and doing what we can to keep it affordable to encourage more participation locally would be great.
Affordable activities for families	Community Partnerships are wonderful resources for families to aid with bridging financial barriers to participating in the community. I think creating strong relationships and pathways for residents to connect with those community hubs is a start to aiding in the affordability crisis.
Child care	I would like to see more support of childcare programs here. Especially, ones with spaces for disabled or medically fragile youth.
Mental health and well-being	Again, continuing with those community partnerships is vital to help people access the resources available.
Youth voice	I want to continue to interacting with my community especially young people and parents. Creating a supportive community for our future. I want to stay connected and up to date so I can know how to best represent the interests of all the community members.
Supporting families	I want to promote the accomplishments of our community resources, continue educating people on their services, and support how we can with the expanding scope of many of these community organizations.
A community for all ages	I think keeping youth in mind is a start. Questioning how we can adapt something to include our youth. Or asking the right questions how does this effect our youth. If it is already a youth specific program, making them as accessible as possible, including oppourtunities of youth of all ages and abilities to participate. Keeping these things in mind, staying connected to the needs of the community and being an advocate around the horseshoe are all my values if elected.

Name	**Haley Woods**
Office sought:	**Councillor - Ward 5**
Affordable housing	I think when we define affordable housing as less than 30% of a persons income it still leaves a lot of gaps on what could truly make a difference in a persons life and keep single individuals from becoming homeless. This amount still leaves people in the scenario where they have to choose between rent and other bill payments or groceries and necessities to feed themselves and their families We need to do more than the bare minimum amount of affordable units in new developments. We need to have creative solutions to the homeless crisis that is growing in the county and consider more community based living scenarios as well. If affordable homes are truly to make a difference we need more and it can't be based on our local median rents that are in my opinion obscenely high. I would put pressure on local landlords and new developments to set a precedent of going above and beyond what is expectant for lower income residents as well as looking at communal ways of living in a shared space that could lower the rent for all involved wo live in the space with out having a major loss to the landlord. A single resident who works to the most of their ability with or without government assistances (ODSP , DTC, etc.) deserve the opportunity to live as independently as they wish to and shouldn't have to resort to living with roommates or moving back in with family because they are left with no other options.
Youth employment	The Municipality can help support youth by creating paid opportunities with local businesses in a co-op format that during the summer / non school times could be full-time once they get their volunteer hours covered. We are an amazing community support by so many business owners who care deeply about our community that if we got together and brain stormed we may be able to help graduates get into a job right out of school. I think part of our issue is a lot of decisions exist in an echo-chamber and we miss out on vital feedback from the people these opportunities would benefit the most. In this scenarios it would also be vital to include the young people entering the work force in the decision making and feedback scenarios. Teaching the youth how to work as a team and cooperate is a vital skill that could stem from these scenarios.

Haley, Woods	
Recreation and social spaces	Something that feels important to me is making sure programs like PELC , The ROC , department of illuminations continue to get the County's support. Making sure we maintain core locations like these + more will help keep the youth informed about what is available to them, services that can assist them in multiple areas of their lives and support them through any personal struggles that come. We already have amazing spaces here in the county and helping them grow and bloom into bigger things that can have more reach is a large goal for me.
Affordable activities for families	I would partner with groups mentioned previously (PELC , The ROC, and more etc) as well as look into grants to help support families who have needs and wants outside of their financial capabilities. If we hit a road block I would happily help fundraise and hold events that could benefit the families who need our help. Working as a community can solve more than most people think but so many people are scared to ask for help until they have no other options and I think if we can get to a space where people don't feel shame about needing help we can make more of a difference in more people's lives
Child care	Looking for more creative solutions especially as we live in a time where people are working multiple jobs I think we could start by building a list of certified child care individuals who could use more income. The list would require back ground checks but could ultimately help pair together the need of a caretaker to a family member if the certified child care individuals were interested in doing private care. If there were financial barriers for the family looking for child care the municipality could look at grants and look into creating a fund specifically for families in need of child care in the 'off' hours.
Mental health and well-being	I am an outspoken advocate for disabilities and mental health awareness since I live with both types of scenarios myself. Creating safe spaces for people to share their needs with out shame would be my starting point and working with the county and first responders to have more people trained in mental crisis support would be mandatory. There is an existing stigma surrounding people who are vulnerable about how they may be struggling and the wait lists they have to endure to get the help they need are too long. Looking at community driven solutions I believe we could create support groups while the wait lists time frames pass and hopefully help the individuals pass the time until they are able to get the professional help they're seeking out

Haley, Woods	
Youth voice	Something I hope to do if elected is to have more community oriented meetings. Not just at shire hall but potentially PELC, PECI and other spaces where it is easier for me to go to the youth vs expecting them to figure out how to be where and when I am available. The youth are our future and when I was younger I continuously felt like my thoughts and feelings about our community was overlooked and ignored. I would work hard to be accessible to the youth on their terms and include them as often as possible when and where THEY feel its needed not just where I or other council members deemed it worthy.
Supporting families	As we face more food insecurity in the County making sure our foodbanks are stocked is essential. We also need to let residents know what is available to them before they get to the point of desperation. For a lot of people this has been a very hard time where they are scraping by (myself included) and asking for help before you are drowning needs to be more common. I do not expect anyone to announce their needs in front of a crowd but having safe people who can direct them to resources that will make their lives easier feels like a good start. Making sure these community organizations do not get cut as we focus on lessening our debt is essential. I believe we can save money in places that don't directly affect the well being of our residents in terms of their shelter , vital necessities , mental and physical health.
A community for all ages	I believe as a disabled young adult accessibility and affordability need to be at the center of planning when services , spaces and events that are being planned. Asking questions that are typically seen as an afterthought or oversight is one of my specialties, and making sure they are answered thoroughly with understanding of the diverse community spaces we wish to see is essential. I would continuously engage with all members of the community about what they want to see in these spaces , what would stop them from coming and what could make them more comfortable. Listening to the community and connecting is the best way to make sure the municipality are aware of the complete range of needs that exist.

Name	**Megan Hutton**
Office sought	**Councillor of Ward 6 - Sophiasburgh**
Affordable housing	To improve access to safe, affordable housing I would vote in favour of responsible development that offers affordable housing. I would also support and research income geared housing initiatives in the form of apartment buildings and rental units.
Youth employment	The Municipality can help connect young people with local employers, schools and organizations such as Career Edge and the Prince Edward Learning Centre to create more co-op placements, apprenticeships, mentorships and pathways into year-round employment. As an employer itself, the County can also provide meaningful summer, co-op and entry-level opportunities that help young people gain experience. We also need to address barriers like transportation and affordable housing that can make it difficult for young people to accept jobs or stay in the County. Most importantly, we should include youth in these conversations and encourage workplaces where young employees feel respected, supported and have opportunities to learn and grow.
Recreation and social spaces	I would work to make better use of the community spaces and facilities we already have while supporting organizations that provide affordable recreation and programming for young people. Cost should not prevent a young person from participating, so I would support partnerships, grants and programs that help keep activities affordable or free. In a rural community, accessibility also means considering transportation and making sure opportunities aren't concentrated only in our larger centres. Most importantly, I would involve young people in deciding what activities and spaces they actually want. We should be creating opportunities with youth, not just for them.
Affordable activities for families	I would support partnerships with local organizations, service clubs and community groups that help subsidize registration fees, equipment and day camps for families who need assistance. I would also look for opportunities to expand affordable or free municipal programming and make sure families know what financial assistance is available. Investing in opportunities for children and youth is an investment in the health and strength of our entire community.
Child care	Affordable child care is essential for both families and our local workforce. I would look at ways the Municipality can help create more options by making municipal or community spaces available to qualified child-care providers, reducing unnecessary barriers to opening new home or centre-based spaces, and partnering with employers and community organizations on creative solutions. I would also like to explore pilot programs for evening, weekend or flexible-hour care for families working outside a traditional 9–5 schedule. While the Municipality cannot solve the childcare shortage alone, we can advocate for provincial funding, help providers access available programs, and bring parents, employers and providers together to find solutions that reflect how families in PEC actually live and work.

Megan, Hutton	
Mental health and well-being	I would continue to support and strengthen organizations like, but not limited to, The ROC and PELC that connect youth to essential services and provide support structures in the lives of their participants. I would also advocate to provincial partners for better access to local mental health services and work to make information about existing supports easier for youth and families to find.
Youth voice	Young people should have a voice in municipal decisions year-round, not just when we ask them to fill out a survey. I would support creating regular opportunities for youth to meet directly with Council and staff, and expanding youth representation on municipal committees where decisions affect them. I would also like to see the Municipality work with PECI, youth organizations and groups like The ROC to reach young people where they already are, rather than expecting them to come to Shire Hall, which could be a barrier for some. Most importantly, when youth give us their ideas, we need to follow up and show them what happened with their input. Meaningful engagement means young people can actually see that their voices were heard and that speaking up for what they believe in can make a difference.
Supporting families	With the rising cost of living, I believe the Municipality needs to make sure existing relief programs are actually accessible to the families who need them, when they need them. That could include working with The County Foundation to explore extending the application window for financial relief related to water and wastewater costs, and making residents more aware of the supports available to them. I would also continue supporting our food banks and community organizations that provide food security, organizations like PELC that provide education in literacy, financial assistance and other essential services. These organizations often know the needs of our community best, and municipal support for them can help prevent families from reaching a crisis point. I would look for opportunities to strengthen these partnerships while making sure municipal dollars are being used where they can have the greatest impact.
A community for all ages	I think we need to look at municipal decisions through the lens of who will actually be able to use and benefit from them. When planning parks, recreation, community spaces and services, I would consider the needs of children, youth, families, adults and seniors, as well as accessibility, affordability and transportation. That means consulting people of different ages before decisions are made and looking for opportunities to create flexible, multi-use spaces that can serve more than one group. Our community spaces should bring generations together, while still recognizing that young people need places and programs that feel like they belong to them too.

Name	**Bill Roberts**
Office sought:	**Councillor - Ward 6 Sophiasburgh**
Affordable housing	Housing is a national crisis. While PEC has one of the lowest property taxes in the Quinte region, it is still a serious problem here. That said, I co-created our Prince Edward County Affordable Housing Corporation because affordable housing matters to me. I've been part of consistent, serious & productive discussions with housing developers that have led to breakthroughs with affordability organizations like Habitat for Humanity, and I've secured assurances from commercial builders that 5-10% affordability is a minimal condition of my planning & approval support. So, I will continue doing that. I am also active with our 2027-2030 Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan, where some exciting things are happening around affordability with community partners; for example, the local organization Solo Seniors has reported 14,000 empty and unused bedrooms in The County!
Youth employment	I support enhanced internship and job-shadowing opportunities for youth within our County employment ranks, including summer job opportunities that prioritize skills-learning and career exploration. Education plays a role in employment, and I have personally funded bursaries for PECI and County high school graduates to pursue college and university. In our 2027 budget, I will support field trips to introduce youth and students to new career options. In addition, billions of dollars are coming to Eastern Ontario over the next 10 years through federal infrastructure, energy, transportation, and defence investment. One of these initiatives alone claims it will create 150,000 new jobs. Quinte West, Belleville, Napanee and Gananoque are already engaged with Ottawa on new jobs and employment. We should be part of those conversations, too.
Recreation and social spaces	Green spaces and parks are hugely important. I led the complete rehabilitation of Northport Centennial Park, including new amenities for youth and families to use as they wish, such as picnics, family events, and inter-generational recreation activities like fishing and paddling. I am an advocate on Council for replicating that success elsewhere in Prince Edward County. It has also been a condition of my support for developers to provide these community recreational social space amenities. I'd also like to see more public art and self-expression by youth made possible and encouraged, something I'd be happy to facilitate.
Affordable activities for families	Our ward Recreation Committees are vital here. Events in Sophiasburgh like our Summer Splash Party in Northport Centennial Park, plus our annual Easter/Spring Egg Hunt, are just a few examples of what free, fun activities are possible. I actively participate in these kinds of events (donating things like bicycles as prizes and "plunging" in the dunk tank), and I often provide financial and other in-kind support. Our recent Sophiasburgh Trash Bash, which I organize every year, is another free, family-focused event that everyone truly enjoys. As a political and financial supporter of our ROC Youth Centre, their efforts to build community belonging also deserve recognition.

Bill, Roberts	
Child care	We have roughly 400 children on the waiting list for licensed spaces at The HUB & Family Centre. That's unacceptable. We need at least a 30% increase in provincially allocated spaces. So I am prepared to be an advocate at senior levels of government to secure more childcare funding, and in future deputations to the provincial government, overall advocacy for rural youth and children should be a top priority. As a supporter of Reaching For Rainbows, I support their pilot program on child-minding and after-hours care. Plus, I'm thrilled that Base31 will be opening a new 49-space facility.
Mental health and well-being	Our work on the emerging Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan specifically prioritizes mental health and addiction support. I will support and advocate for new mental health programs at PECI, and ideally at other County schools. Currently, I hope to see these mental health and wellness opportunities provided weekly, and with special attention to grades 7-12. And I think we need to communicate better. For example, our excellent Prince Edward Learning Centre, which The County supports, as do I personally, provides targeted programs for youth mental health, "baby connections", "Cheap & Easy Meals" workshops, etc. Overall, I want better connectivity between Shire Hall, Council, and our schools. Also worth pursuing is a "Municipal Monday" where staff and Councillors meet with students at schools over lunch to provide mentoring, hear concerns and ideas, and address youth needs.
Supporting families	I led the charge to save our Sophiasburgh Central School from closure, and then helped create The County Food Hub. This initiative has quickly become a huge support for lower-income families and individuals, including free youth and in-school healthy lunches, and projects that provide inexpensive, quality food for families. I will continue to provide political and financial support to youth and families through our Angel Tree (Last Holiday Season I helped deliver 430 food packages for children & youth, 188 families in total), 100 People Who Care, County Kids Read, and other important not-for-profit and charitable works.
A community for all ages	I was the first Councillor in memory to appoint a formal youth representative to any of our County Advisory Committees or Boards. I did this as Chair of our Community & Economic Development Commission. That proactive empowerment of youth voices, and honest engagement with them, is rapidly catching on. Now it's time, in my view, to have a permanent Youth Advisory Committee that makes sure Council listens to youth concerns and incorporates those youth views and experiences into our Shire Hall decisions.

Name	**Ken, Morton**
Office sought	**Councillor Ward 8 North Marysburgh**
Affordable housing	Prince Edward County has started a project at Queen Elizabeth school it needs to be completed. Base 31 has got off to a good start and we need to ensure builders are including this in their plans moving forward.
Youth employment	We need to encourage and support coop placements and part time jobs where possible.
Recreation and social spaces	Ensure we maintain the sports and recreation facilities we have. Every child should be able to play sports whether supported by the organization, or private company support like Canadian Tire Jumpstart.
Affordable activities for families	Every child should be able to play sports whether supported by the organization, or private company support like Canadian Tire Jumpstart.
Child care	Have the school board encourage before and after school programs where needed. Support The Hub where possible.
Mental health and well-being	The County Foundation is a great resource for support systems.
Youth voice	Support the AMO's youth fellowship program.
Supporting families	Continue to stand behind the food banks and current community organizations.
A community for all ages	I believe the current services reflect the needs and interests of all ages and we need to maintain that.

Name	**Tracey, Stevens**
Office sought:	**Councillor Ward 8 North Marysburgh**
Affordable housing	When I was starting my career, I was a renter who dreamed of owning my own home. I know how hard that first step can be, and today it is harder than ever for young people and families in the County. Whether renting or buying, people need housing they can afford, that is safe and well maintained, and that gives them the stability to put down roots here. The County can't solve this alone, but it has real tools. After consulting ratepayers, it should clearly identify what our communities need, from rentals and starter homes to family housing, and set targets it can be held to. It should make it easier for homeowners to add a second unit, whether for an adult child, an aging parent or a local worker. New housing should be encouraged in our towns, where services already exist, and all rental housing should meet safety standards. New development should cover the cost of the roads, water and recreation services it depends on, and larger projects should be planned with schools and health care in mind.
Youth employment	The Municipality can play several practical roles. First, it can actively promote the County as a place to do business. It's a safe community with good schools, recreation for every age and tremendous community spirit. Where it makes sense, the County can use tools such as Community Improvement Plans to offer incentives that attract employers and help local businesses grow. Second, it can help young people build skills here, rather than leave to find them elsewhere. I would encourage Council to explore partnering with Loyalist College to deliver trades programs locally, with students gaining hands-on experience on local building projects through co-op or field placements. Finally, the County can lead by example. As one of the area's larger employers, it can offer co-op placements, summer jobs and mentorship for young people entering the workforce. It can also make sure practical barriers, like getting to work without a car, are part of its transit planning.
Recreation and social spaces	"Young people" covers a wide range. A 15-year-old looking for somewhere safe to go after school has different needs from a 25-year-old looking to meet people, stay active or start a business. Before deciding what to build or fund, the County should ask young people themselves, in both age groups, what they actually want and what's missing. Where they gather matters as much as what's offered. Today, the County's main youth centre is in Picton, and without reliable transit, that's out of reach for many young people in Wellington, Ameliasburgh or North Marysburgh. Our town halls and community centres already exist across the County, and they could host programs closer to home. Affordable doesn't have to mean expensive new facilities. Trails, soccer and other field sports, art, culinary and language or music programs, and workshops on starting a small business can all be offered at low cost, often in partnership with local organizations and schools. The new Parks and Recreation Master Plan gives Council a framework to do this well. My job would be to make sure young people have a real voice in how it's carried out.
Affordable activities for families	No child should miss out on sports, camps or recreation because of their family's finances. I would push for the County to create a recreation fee assistance program, funded through the budget, that reduces the cost of participation for families who are struggling financially. Belleville already offers this, and the County can too. Applications should be simple and kept confidential, so that no family feels singled out. Fees aren't the only barrier. Equipment, travel and program locations matter too. The County should work with local organizations and programs such as Canadian Tire Jumpstart to stretch every dollar, and offer programs close to where families live. As I understand, the County's new Parks and Recreation Master Plan was built on community input. As it's carried out, I will make sure the needs of children, youth and lower-income families are part of every decision, because a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work for a community as diverse as ours.

Tracey Stevens	
Child care	Many families face long waitlists and few choices, especially parents who work evenings, weekends or seasonal jobs. As I understand it, child care here is funded and managed through Prince Edward–Lennox & Addington Social Services, a service we share with our neighbouring county, and delivered locally by providers such as The HUB Child & Family Centre. The County should be a strong voice for more spaces and more flexible hours. The County can also help directly, by making it easier to open child care, including licensed home child care, which can offer evening and weekend hours, through zoning and by offering space in municipal buildings where it makes sense. Most importantly, I would listen to parents and providers first, to understand where the gaps are before deciding on solutions.
Mental health and well-being	Anxiety and depression among young people are real, and any community that cares about its future should take them very seriously. The County doesn't provide mental health care, but it can play an important supporting role. It should work with the schools, health care providers and organizations like theROC Youth Services that already support young people, identify the gaps, and help fill them, whether through funding, space in municipal buildings, or its Community Safety and Well-being Plan. Cyberbullying, peer pressure and social media also present parents with enormous challenges. Helping bring support groups for parents, as well as youth, into communities across the County could make a real difference. And the places young people gather, whether sports, recreation or simply somewhere safe to spend time, are themselves part of good mental health.
Youth voice	As I understand, the County has already started this work: its Youth Engagement Strategy has gathered input from young people across the County. The next Council should make sure that input leads to something lasting. I would propose a Youth Advisory Committee direct to Council that is representative of young people across the County. It would meet regularly to raise the issues affecting young people's lives and propose solutions. As a committee of Council, with Council and staff representation, it would have the resources it needs to fulfill its mandate.
Supporting families	It is a reality today that food banks are a necessity. The organizations supporting struggling families do essential work, and the County should be a reliable partner to them. That means strengthening its Community Grants Program, favouring stable multi-year funding so these groups can plan ahead rather than scramble year to year. For the longer term, I would explore working with The County Foundation to build a fund that the municipality contributes to, with the returns granted each year to organizations that support families in need. The County can also ease the pressure directly: by keeping tax increases in line with the cost of living, by offering recreation fee assistance so children aren't left out, and by supporting more housing that families can afford.
A community for all ages	The County already has the right tools: an Official Plan, a Strategic Plan and a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan. What matters is making sure they reflect the whole community, and that they're revisited as needs change. Our population is getting older and younger at the same time, and a one-size-fits-all approach won't serve either group. The current Strategic Plan ends this year, so the next Council should write a new one shortly. I would make sure people of every age are heard in that process, including young people through the Youth Advisory Committee I've proposed, and seniors, families and working adults through consultations held in communities across the County. Every major plan should include regular check-ins to confirm that it is still meeting people's needs.

Name	**Codie, Goodman**
Office sought:	**School Board Trustee (South)**
Recreation and social spaces	Although this question was not intended for trustees, sports and recreation are something I am extremely passionate about and are something I really think intersects between school and community. Sports and recreation are such a large and important part of students' lives. As a student, I was on countless clubs and committees within PECI while also playing school sports and engaging in the arts. As an adult in our community, I try to foster the same spaces and opportunities I once had. I coach youth sports throughout multiple seasons, am the youth programming coordinator for the Marysburgh Mummers and volunteer with 4H and Clover Buds programming. I also am primarily employed for a youth non profit who focuses on creating third spaces for youth to be and plan and execute regular programming within that role. Through the lens of a trustee, I would absolutely prioritize sports, clubs, and arts groups (such as improv and school plays). Although we are in a time of cuts and setbacks, I think these opportunities are absolutely pivotal to the mental and physical health of students and should be prioritized, as they build critical skills like teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, communication, responsibility, resilience, and confidence that will help students become successful and well-rounded in their futures.
Classroom size	The lack of hard caps in our grade 4-8 classrooms is definitely concerning, seeing class sizes stretch into the high 30s in fundamental years of learning. It is also concerning to know that the provincial government has overturned trustee implemented class size caps that were put in place in other boards, meaning that even when trustees try to protect our students, the province can overturn that decision with no ramifications. These environments are stressful, noisy, uncomfortable, and not at all conducive to learning. Especially with cuts to EA positions and support staff, teachers are on their own and are unable to prioritize learning or safety with such large classes. Current funding is based on a class size of 24 students (without even considering that per student, both PECI Elementary and Athol-South Marysburgh PS have seen cuts at over $3,000 per student over the last seven years), and with class sizes well over 30 in some cases, this is clearly inadequate. I do believe that class size caps have been and will be an ETFO bargaining priority once bargaining begins, and knowing that the province has shown it is willing to overturn trustee decisions when it comes to this issue, I believe it is important that trustees, school boards, students, families and the community as a whole support the advocacy of ETFO for student well-being, especially when it comes to the issue of class sizes, and hope that when they get their chance at the table, this issue can be addressed and resolved.
Support for teachers	As someone who has worked in multiple schools across our province and has spent significant time in K-12 classrooms in multiple roles, I understand firsthand the issues that our teachers and support staff are facing. Staff in our schools often feel isolated, alone, underappreciated, unsupported, and burnt out in a multitude of ways. I have always found this problematic, and unfortunately, I don't think there is a one-size-fits-all solution. I think the most important thing will be to listen to individual teachers about their concerns, their worries, their struggles, and to help them address and navigate them. The responsibility for this support falls on the province. Obviously, more funding, more government support, and provincial dedication to meaningful and holistic education would be the dream in terms of solving these issues, and is something that I do plan to advocate for. But until we find success in provincial support, I would love to see community collaboration and support on some of these things, like donations of classroom supplies from local businesses, more community volunteers with VSCs for trips and outings, programming and curriculum support from external agencies like our museums that take some work off our teachers' plates, and more appreciation from our community towards the work that they do. If I were to become trustee, I would prioritize being someone who teachers and staff can come to and can trust with their concerns, and although I won't be able to solve each and every one, I hope that I can help navigate these issues with them and help them come to solutions in a supportive way where they don't have to feel judged or alone.

Codie, Goodman	
Mental health	I am fortunate to sit on the municipal community safety and well-being plan working group, and as a subgroup of that be a member of the mental health and problematic substance use action team within our community. I was also thrilled to be a vendor with my workplace at the recent Mental Health Resource Fair that took place at PECI, and the community services fair that took place at Athol-South Marysburgh PS and was able to speak directly with students and families about their experiences with mental health and support services. I feel knowledgeable about what services and options are available to students based on their needs and experiences, and I can assist with navigating what options might be right for them and help guide them towards what resources are available. One thing students have been mentioning to me is their concerns regarding the removal of public health nurses and their services within schools, which is something I would like to address if I were to become trustee, as I believe that these confidential in-school services are absolutely necessary, especially as a rural community.
Support for different learning needs	I love what an inclusive place our schools and community can be and how students with varying learning needs can often work together academically or socially and can play to their strengths in group settings. I also love getting to work professionally with community organizations such as Community Living on projects like our local Youth Leadership Team to have young folks with varying abilities come together as leaders in our community to plan inclusive events and activities. Within our schools, I think EAs need to be valued and prioritized when it comes to supporting students with different learning needs and ensuring their inclusion and success. Currently, their positions have been on the chopping block, which I do believe is a mistake. Although there have been no reported mass cuts, our schools are experiencing extreme shortages in these roles due to budget cuts, and EAs who have been working with specific age groups or students for years are being reassigned to duties completely outside of their roles to cover other staffing gaps, which is leaving high-needs students and classrooms with no support, which can be extremely dangerous in some circumstances. We need to stand behind our staff and the value they add to our schools and classrooms in order to ensure our students are safe, included and successful.
Dealing with AI	I believe that there is no place for generative AI, especially in schools and classrooms. Students should be able to learn within a classroom, and we should be fostering their problem-solving skills and creativity. Young people are also experiencing challenging relationships with AI “chat bots” and conversations with AI programs, which becomes concerning and extremely problematic. Students are creating a really strange sense of relationship building with “someone” who doesn’t even exist, which can be really damaging to young people who are just learning what healthy friendship looks like. The environmental impacts of AI, especially generative AI, are extremely detrimental and inevitable if folks continue to utilize AI and want it available. The impact on clean drinking water and on global warming are severe, and I feel that most folks are not taking that seriously enough. AI posters and graphics are so detrimental to our environment and take opportunity away from students who enjoy creating art or engaging in graphic design, and I think fostering those skills and showcasing student artwork could be so much more meaningful and engaging than AI generated posters. I do understand that AI is not going away, and can understand the use of some agentic AI tools, which are far less interactive, have a much lower impact on the environment and is specifically task-based at older grade levels to teach the practical use of it for the use of, say, organizing data that you put into a spreadsheet or completing time-saving tasks after the skill for that task has already been taught, but I do think that is more appropriate at the grade 11/12 level if absolutely needed. Through all of this, I think that the dangers and impacts of AI are very real and are something our students and staff are dealing with in real time. No matter if AI is encouraged, allowed, or banned, I think students need to be explicitly told about all of these dangers and risks and to have meaningful conversations with their teachers and peers so that they can understand all of these risks before they choose to interact with AI either inside or outside of the classroom.

Name	**Peter, Wheeler**
Office sought:	**School Board Trustee Wards 1, 2, 5, 8, 9 (PEC South)**
Classroom size	The Teacher union is asking for 24 - 26 depending on grade for class sizes. Presently the grade five class I heard from has 28 students so the size in general is not far off the requested target. As this is a union negotiation we can only wait to see what the results of that item will be however, past trustees did support the small class size.
Support for teachers	A smaller class size will go a long way to addressing safe and respectful needs. For resources, the Ministry is providing $750 for supplies from Staples at a discount for each teacher and the library and learning management system (LMS) offers a plethora of features to assist student learning and monitoring grades progress. Enriched learning can be done with relevant guest speakers, school clubs, sports teams, field visits, interschool competitions and work integrated learning projects.
Mental health	Anxiety and depression usually have a source that needs to be understood. Too much digital screen time or poor grades or shaming or bullying or gangs or gender biases etc. are all concerns and subject matter expertise is needed help understand and resolve any issue. In college they have faculty who are Program or Academic coordinators, support staff Student advisors, Security personnel and trained Counselors to address particular concerns. Depending on the mental health concern, one or more of these persons are able to help resolve issues. The first point of contact position of Program and Academic advisor must be in place in public schools to start.
Support for different learning needs	Teachers are trained to present content in a number of ways to deal with the various learning modes of students. I created videos of my entire Electronics course to give students a venue to review what was taught in class on their own time and at their own pace. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXJ-WO_IxxU for an example. I will first speak to PELC to ask what their typical student demographic needs are and then create courses such as "Introduction to AI" for our students to learn from me first, then each teach a module to PELC clients. As well some students will mentor the clients while they are working on a lands on lab assignment. This will empower our students, help them understand how much effort is to have people understand certain things and provide a refence for their resume. As well, we can solicit projects from industry or community groups and use school resources (3D printers, laser cutters, software applications etc.) to build the products which is something I have done in the past with college students. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWJVsVAMxCY for one example.
Dealing with AI	The internet is a dangerous place to begin with so any tool or application used incorrectly will cause damage. Fully understanding how a tool works, then how and when to use it is key. There is wiggle room outside of core courses so we will teach an Introductory course on AI with labs to provide the knowledge needed to use the tool correctly. In class, we will discuss and debate the AI guard rails in place today and the ethics of use as per the discussions taking place in government and industry now.

Name	**Pascal Dussault**
Office sought:	School Board Trustee for CEPEO

Classroom size	This is an important issue and impacts our children's learning. I want to begin with how classroom sizes are calculated in Ontario. As many of you know, Ontario education ministry regulates classroom sizes. Remember the key point is that the province generally sets a board-level average than requiring every individual Grade 4–8 classroom to be below one fixed number. Under Ontario Regulation 132/12, the general maximum average for classes containing Grade 4–8 students is 24.5 students per class. This calculation is based on the number of students divided by the number of the various grade classes across the board, using the board's selected September class- Therefore, an individual classroom can sometimes have more than 24.5 students, provided the board's overall Grade 4–8 average meets its applicable limit. This distinction is important when challenging a particular large class. Now that the legalise is completed this is how I can assist with classroom sizes as the school board trustee for CEPEO. 1. Board policy: I will advocate for board-wide class-size targets that are lower than the provincial maximums obviously this is subject to applicable law and collective agreements. 2. Budget and staffing: I will push for additional teachers or educational staffing for all oversized classes. 3. Enrolment projections: I will collaborate with the administration to provide school-by-school enrolment projections before staffing decisions are finalised, so additional classes can be created before classes become too large and unmanageable for the educators from the classroom to administrator levels. 4. I will ask for School-by-school data: Trustees can ask for the number of students and classes by grade/school, rather than relying only on the board-wide average. I will use the provincial limits as a reference point and not necessarily the target. 5. Public accountability: Ontario requires school boards to report class-size data, giving trustees an opportunity to study whether individual schools or grades are over the class size limits. 6. Advocacy with the Ministry: If provincial funding or regulations are preventing CEPEO from adding sufficient teachers, I will advocate collectively to the Ministry for changes or additional resources as required to mitigate large classroom sizes. 7. Specifically concerning CEPEO issue, I'd want to work from the 2026–27 rules and not older standards.

Support for teachers **Pascal, Dussault**	I know for a fact that teachers, administrators and school support staff require community, parent and school board support. I plan to support the academic and school staff by the following: 1. Engage the provincial school ministry and the school board to provide mentorship, professional development and coaching programs to equipe the teachers with all the resources and skills required to teach in the French language effectively. 2. Advocate for on the job mentorship for new or internationally trained French-speaking teachers with experienced teachers. I know Ontario has specifically identified ongoing training, coaching and mentoring as part of its French-teacher recruitment and retention efforts. 3. Advocate for professional development in the French language. Fund language-development opportunities, classroom resources and culturally relevant professional learning. Ontario currently points FSL teachers toward professional-development opportunities, including summer immersion programs. 4. Work with school administrators and teachers to develop strategies to reduce workload and administrative pressure without negatively impacting student learning. Equipe teachers with adequate preparation time, access to Canadian French-language materials, classroom support and manageable class sizes. 5. Build a strong Francophone professional and academic community; for example, I will advocate for regular networking groups, peer-learning circles and opportunities for teachers to communicate socially and professionally in French. Ie. The Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO) provides guides, professional resources and support specifically for French-language education personnel. 6. Advocate for teachers beyond the classroom. Connect them with Francophone cultural organisations, community services and mental-health resources in the French language. Teachers have a difficult job and it is my job as the school board trustee to provide all academic, support staff and administrators the various tools and resources to educate our children effectively.

Mental health **Pascal, Dussault**	To strengthen student mental health requires a collective, collaborative approach involving schools, families, and students together to create a supportive and empathic learning environment. 1. Build strong supportive relationships: Encourage students to have trusted adults—teachers, counselors, parents, coaches, or mentors—whom they can talk to without judgment. 2. Teach coping skills in the classrooms and extracurricular activities for example, lessons on stress management, emotional regulation, problem-solving, mindfulness, and healthy ways to handle failure. 3. Encourage healthy routines; for example, adequate sleep, regular physical activity, nutritious meals, breaks from screens, and consistent study daily routines. 4. Reduce academic pressure: Balance challenging coursework with reasonable workloads, flexibility and opportunities to learn from failures without judgement by fellow students, teachers or staff. 5. Provide accessible counselling as needed: Provide confidential counselling to professional mental-health services when additional support is required. 6. Teachers, support staff and school administration must create an environment of belonging at school. Clubs, sports, peer groups, and classroom activities can reduce student isolation and increase mental well-being. 7. Firmly and openly respond to all bullying and discrimination: Schools should have clear reporting systems and consistently respond to bullying, harassment, and involve community resources or police if required. 8. Family centred approach: Parents and caregivers should be part of the mental health team by regularly checking in, listen rather than immediately criticise or solve problems and watch for significant changes in behaviour and if noticed advise the school, public mental health resources or law enforcement as required. 9. Students must feel they can ask for help early without judgement: Asking for mental-health support should be treated as a normal part of taking care of oneself. 10. Awareness: students, teachers and staff need to be educated on the warning signs: for example, Persistent sadness or anxiety, withdrawal, major changes in sleep or eating, falling grades, hopelessness, or talk of self-harm and the same educators should promptly advise school administration who then can advise the parents and or involve community resources as required.

Support for different learning needs
Pascal, Dussault

A responsible approach to supporting diverse student learning requires an individual, community layered, structured approach while providing services based on demonstrated need. This approach requires various considerations for the student, the teacher and the support staff as well.

1. The teachers and support staff must develop a personal plan based on current student ability, identified needs with identifiable benchmarks for future success.

2. The school will be required to use evidence-based teaching practices, clear learning objectives, frequent formative assessment, and differentiated instruction so the identified students receive access to the academic resources they require.

3. Identify needs early: Use professionally recognised assessments to identify academic, language, attendance, and social needs before problems become more difficult to address.

4. A tiered support approach: Use a multi-tiered model: for example
Classroom: High-quality instruction for everyone.
Break out group: Small-group tutoring or targeted interventions for students needing additional assistance.
One on one: Intensive, individualised program for students with persistent or significant needs.

5. Ensure a community resource approach is flexible:Coordinate all school and community based programs that involve special needs education, language support, tutoring, and intervention are maximised to avoid wasteful overlap.

6. Use technology selectively: accessibility tools, text-to-speech, translation, and adaptive practice can expand support without requiring a separate program for every student.

7. Invest in classroom resources: Professional development focused on differentiation, classroom management, culturally responsive teaching, and accessible instructional design can benefit many students at once.

8. Partner with families and community organizations: Carefully selected partnerships can provide tutoring, mentoring, mental-health resources, or enrichment while reducing duplication of services.

9. Ensure follow-up: Track participation, academic growth, attendance, and other relevant outcomes for not just students but include the families, teachers and support staff as well.

10. Protect equity: Avoid a one-size-fits-all model. Allocating resources according to the level of support students actually need is key.

In closing, I believe it is the responsibility of the school to provide all the learning opportunities and tools to provide every student academic success. This means in short: universal supports where possible, targeted supports where necessary, and intensive individualised services where when needed.

Dealing with AI
Pascal, Dussault

I believe that the use of AI technology in the classroom can be very beneficial for teachers, students and staff alike if applied properly.
I believe protecting all students, teachers, administrators and support staff when using AI in the classroom requires special considerations for the following: privacy, safety, learning, and human oversight.

Key Considerations

1. Protect student, administrator, teacher and support staff personal data: no one should ever enter their names, grades, disciplinary records, personal identifiers, or sensitive student work into any AI tools unless the school has explicitly approved the tool and its data practices.

2. Use age-appropriate tools. Verify the minimum-age requirements, privacy policy, data retention, and whether student conversations are used for training or product development.

3. Teachers must be part of the solution. AI tools should support instruction, not independently make decisions about grades, discipline, placement, or student physical or mental welfare.

4. Teach students about the positive and negative aspects of AI tools. Have students, teachers and support staff verify claims against reliable sources and understand that AI can reproduce bias or stereotypes.

5. Be transparent. Tell students when AI is being used, what it is doing, what data it receives, and what limitations it has.

6. Set clear classroom rules. Define when AI applications are permitted, prohibited, or required to be disclosed. Make expectations about attribution and academic integrity explicit.

7. Don't make AI tools the only route to learning. Provide non-AI alternatives so students who cannot or do not want to use AI aren't disadvantaged.

8. Vigilance. Watch for harmful outputs. Teachers should review AI-generated material for inappropriate, discriminatory, inaccurate, or developmentally unsuitable content before using it with students.

8. Protect equity. Consider unequal access to devices, paid AI features, reliable internet, and students' differing familiarity with AI.

9. Provide a means for anyone to provide feedback when using AI tools. Give students, teachers and staff a way to report problems. They should know whom to contact if an AI system produces harmful content, exposes private information, or treats them unfairly.

In closing here are some useful rules when using AI. If an AI system required sensitive personal information to provide a benefit, first ask whether that benefit can be achieved without sharing the information.

For school staff, a simple governance framework can be as simple as: approved tools, minimum necessary data, informed users, human review, documented rules and regular reassessment.