

Candidate Questionnaire

2026 Municipal Election • Working People. Strong Communities.

Your voice. Our community. Stronger together.

Thank you for running to serve the people of Sarnia. The Sarnia & District Labour Council represents thousands of working people across our community. Your responses will help our Executive Committee review candidates and make endorsement recommendations to our members and affiliates. Please answer each question in the space provided; feel free to attach additional pages if you need more room.

Please return your completed questionnaire within 2 weeks of receiving it to Candace Young at candace.d.parsons@gmail.com, or by mail to 1086 Modeland Rd, Suite 249, Sarnia, ON N7S 6L2. This form is fillable — you may type your answers directly, save, and email it back.

ID CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION

Candidate name:	David Shortt
Office sought:	Trustee, Lambton Kent District School Board
Ward (if any):	Sarnia, Point Edward
Email:	ElectDavidShortt@gmail.com
Phone:	(519)344-7075
Past elected office:	Trustee, Lambton Kent District School Board
Date:	September 4, 2026
In 75 words or fewer, tell us why you are running:	

In my first term I ran to give back to the community, I have the background, skills and knowledge to contribute and believe public service is important. However, with all the conflict provincially I was not going to run for a second term but a number of people approached me saying stability and continuity was needed on the board, given the turnover that 8 of 11 trustees would not be returning and my expertise was needed.

A LABOUR & DECENT WORK

1. Do you support keeping municipal services public and in-house rather than contracting them out or entering public-private partnerships? Identify any services you would protect or consider contracting out, and explain your reasoning.

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Please explain:

From the perspective as a school board trustee, I believe educational services should be in house i.e. teachers, educational assistants, custodial staff, etc. As school board budgets are controlled by the province all services must be affordable and align with provincial directives and contracts.

2. How will you ensure municipal jobs — and jobs funded by the municipality — remain stable, fairly paid, and unionized? Include your position on temporary/contract labour and subcontracting.

Although school board jobs are not municipal (city/county) jobs, in the spirit of the question, school boards must follow the provincially bargained contracts. As Trustees, although we may not be listened to, we can provide feedback on job conditions to the province.

3. Will you support Community Benefits Agreements, fair-wage schedules, and local-hiring requirements on major municipal infrastructure and construction projects?

☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Undecided**

Please explain:

Yes, in principal, but school boards are required to follow provincially mandated requirements on contracts (e.g. accepting low bids). However as Trustees, although we may not be listened to, we can provide feedback to the province on capital projects.

4. Do you support a living-wage policy covering all municipal workers, contractors, and subcontractors, tied to the City's procurement policies?

☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Undecided**

Please explain:

The question refers to City procurement policies, which are outside the scope of school boards. However, I would support in principal the living wage approach, although school boards are required to follow provincially mandated requirements.

5. Sarnia's economy depends on turnaround and maintenance work in Chemical Valley. How will you use municipal levers (procurement, permitting, training partnerships with local contractors) to prioritize local, unionized skilled-trades labour?

Turnaround and maintenance work in industrial settings are not related to school boards. Although I would open to using school board resources to develop the work force and to encourage potential training and apprenticeship opportunities. An example, which I strongly support, of the school board resources used to develop skilled-trades labour is the Specialist, High Skills Major (SHSM) program. In fact I would challenge every union to get involved with the school board to support these programs.

6. Will you commit to meeting regularly with the Sarnia & District Labour Council and its affiliates, and to consulting workers before decisions that affect them, if elected?

☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐ **Undecided**

Please explain:

I am open to meeting with all parties involved with the school board to dialogue.

7. Lambton County's By-Name List identifies roughly 390 people experiencing homelessness in Sarnia-Lambton, including about 190 who are chronically homeless. What concrete actions will you take on homelessness and supportive housing?

Housing and Homelessness are not school board issues as presented in the question. Although it should be realized the school board does have policies/actions where we support students (& their families) when impacted by homelessness. I recently had the opportunity to review the process and made some suggestions to improve the in house school board program.

8. A County report warned that prematurely closing the Out of the Cold overflow shelter could more than double the unsheltered population. Do you support maintaining overflow and low-barrier shelter options while permanent supportive housing is built?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Please explain:

The question is not applicable to school board; although I recognize something needs to be done for the unsheltered population and a temporary overflow approach seems reasonable.

9. Will you support zoning and parking reforms that make supportive and affordable housing easier to approve — rather than changes that stall projects like Indwell's proposed 353 George Street development in Mitton Village?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Undecided

Please explain:

As a school board trustee, I must be cognizant of how close supportive and affordable housing is to schools. We as society must act to address homelessness but we also must address the concerns of all parties eg schools, neighbours, etc. Also in the past year, I have actively encouraged the city/county to work with school board planners to ensure school capacity is in place (or at least considered) for families placed in housing.

10. With more than 900 households on the social-housing waitlist and demand for roughly 2,500 additional affordable units, how will you increase the supply of affordable and non-market housing?

Although this is not a school board issue; I wonder if surplus school board property could be utilized? Also could a school board develop educational programs to develop jobs skills etc, thereby reducing the number of people in need of social housing.

11. Do you support a humane, housing-focused Encampment Response Protocol that connects people to services and housing rather than relying primarily on displacement or policing?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Undecided

Please explain:

I do not know enough to answer the question but believe solving the issue (root cause) as opposed to displacement would be welcome.

12. Major industrial investment (such as the proposed Northern Shield Energy Corridor pipeline) may add capacity while creating relatively few permanent jobs. How will you ensure new industrial investment translates into good, lasting local jobs?

School board do not impact new industrial investments, other than "good schools" could be a factor when large organizations look at making investment decisions. The premise of the question should also be challenged; new investment may not create new jobs but more importantly new investment may protect existing jobs. Given todays challenges (US tariffs, Line 5 etc,) we should be looking to protect and support existing jobs.

13. The closure of INEOS Styrolution affects local workers. What role should the City play in supporting displaced workers and ensuring a fair transition and retraining?

The closure of INEOS is not a school board issue, although I would hope our school board (& Lambton College) could be looked upon as a source of retraining. The school board does have an Adult Education program that potentially could be leveraged. A number of school boards in Ontario have joint board/union arrangements that we should look at importing to Sarnia/Lambton.

14. How will you attract and retain diversified jobs, commerce, and investment beyond petrochemicals — for example downtown, the port and waterfront, clean technology, and small business?

Attracting/diversification efforts are not applicable to school boards. Although I would hope our ability to produce an educated work force and the support of apprenticeships etc would be of assistance.

15. Will you support apprenticeships, Red Seal skilled-trades training, and youth and local hiring through municipal projects and procurement — and if so, how?

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Undecided

Please explain:

Absolutely. The LKDSB has a program for supporting apprenticeships and to support Specialists High Skills Major graduates. Without hesitation I will continue to advocate for and support these programs.

16. How will you support revitalization of downtown Sarnia and Mitton Village and strengthen local small businesses?

Revitalization and strengthening small business is not directly applicable to school boards - although our co-op students can work in these areas and support the businesses.

17. Aamjiwnaang First Nation and nearby Sarnia neighbourhoods face benzene and cumulative air-pollution exposure. What actions within municipal jurisdiction will you take to protect residents' health?

Air pollution concerns are generally not applicable to school boards. If benzene or cumulative effects exposure shows an unacceptable risk to a school, we must act. For example, outside of Sarnia, there was a LKDSB school that was potentially negatively impacted by an industrial development. I actively supported the board and administration intervening in the development process. This is not a Aamjiwnaang FN or Sarnia issue but is an analogy where action was taken.

18. Will you advocate to provincial and federal governments for cumulative-effects air-pollution assessment and stronger monitoring and enforcement in Chemical Valley?

☐ Yes ☒ No ☒ Undecided

Please explain:

Chemical Valley is not applicable to school board, unless there is evidence of potential impact on a board school.

19. What specific actions will you take to implement and accelerate Sarnia's climate and emissions-reduction plans?

Climate change is generally not thought of in the school board context. However I have supported 3 actions within the board to reduce emissions (including climate change compounds); reduced driving, new equipment purchases, and more effective operation of existing equipment via improved or preventative maintenance. I have also supported a number of waste reduction activities in schools. Schools should also teach about climate change - sharing objective and verified information.

20. How will you protect and expand access to affordable public transit and safe active transportation?

Public Transit/safe transportation are not applicable to a school boards; however I would support the increased use of public transit by students including dedicated Sarnia Transit routes for high school students.

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GOVERNANCE, SERVICES & RECONCILIATION

21. Which public services (water and wastewater, waste, transit, libraries, recreation, emergency services) do you believe must always remain publicly delivered, and how will you strengthen them?

From a school board perspective, the key public service is education ie teachers, assistants and custodians. As known, school board budgets are severely underfunded and these services are significantly at risk, I will continue to advocate for increased funding.

22. How will you advance meaningful reconciliation with Aamjiwnaang First Nation and the broader Indigenous community at the municipal level?

The LKDSB has a relationship with Aamjiwnaang and the other First Nations in the district through ongoing dialogue, dedicated school board personnel, education agreements, dedicated educational opportunities (courses) and a standing committee - the Indigenous Liaison Committee. I have personally taken an active role to learn about First National challenges and have encouraged meaningful dialogue and interactions that hopefully advances reconciliation.

23. How will you ensure transparency, accessibility, and meaningful public engagement in municipal decision-making — and how will residents know whether you are delivering on your commitments?

School Board meetings are publicly broadcast and open to the public. Everyone is welcome to attend. Further delegations to the board are possible, any supporter of the board may speak to the board. By monitoring board actions residents can keep the board and individual members accountable. In my personal situation, I welcome anyone to contact me for a discussion of what is happening in the school board.

24. What is one decision you would make that may be unpopular in the short term but necessary for the long-term well-being of working people in Sarnia?

The lack of provincial funding may impact budgets and require the board to reduce services (teachers, special education opportunities, etc) . I welcome and strongly encourage those who are impacted to contact me to make their concerns known. A second decision maybe school closure, some schools are so small they are not viable - to protect the quality of education for students small schools may need to be consolidated.

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

I would note a number of the questions posed are not relevant to a school board and are more focused on municipal responsibilities. Also, school board budgets are a challenge as we are significantly underfunded versus the educational mandate we are given. But to be positive, I would welcome discussion where the school board can partner with community organizations to leverage our skills/knowledge in education for the benefit of all.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and for your commitment to building a stronger community for working people in Sarnia.