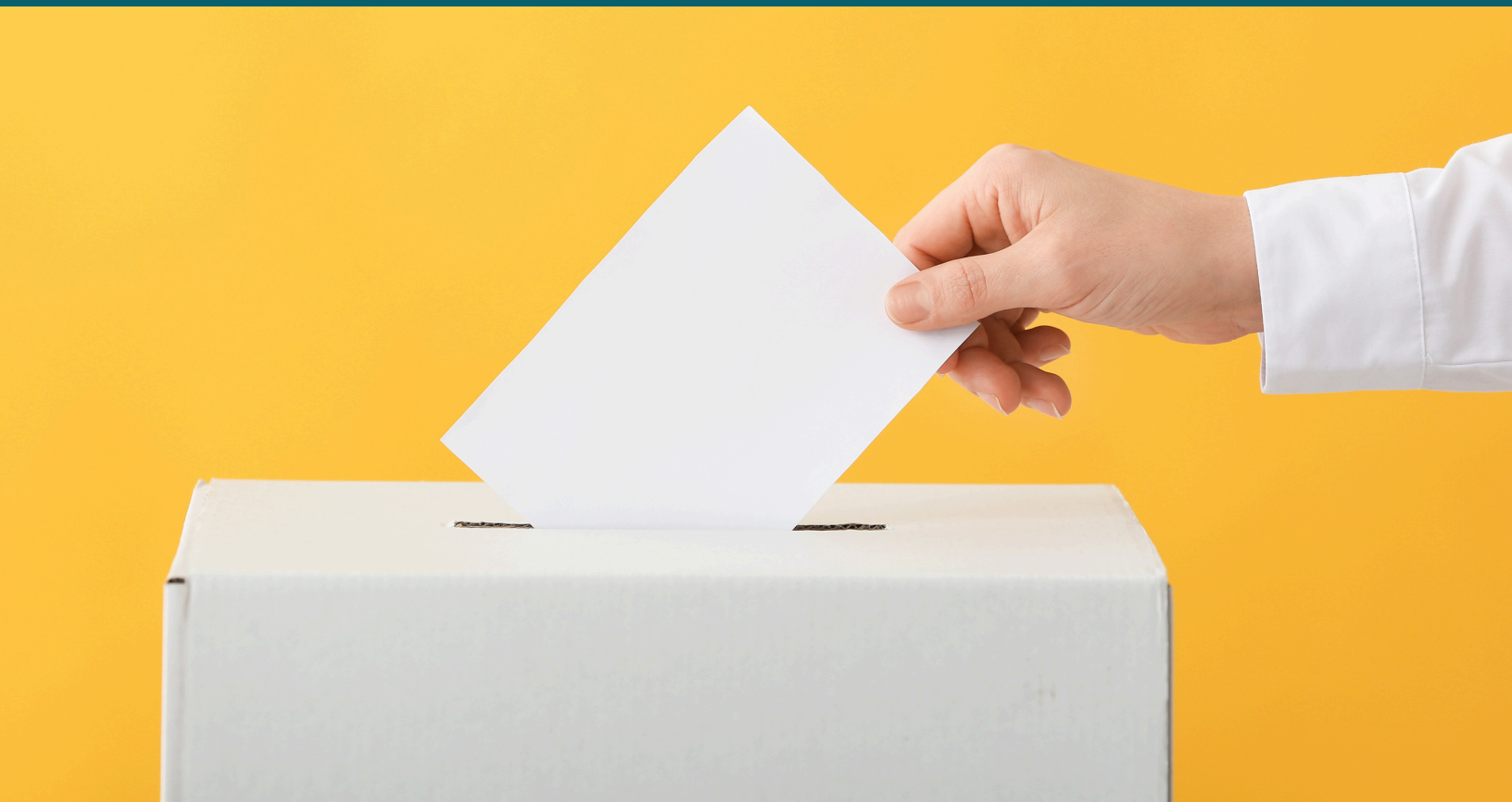
ONTARIO STUDENT VOICES

CONESTOGA STUDENTS INC

Your Vote. Your Community. Your Future

Municipal Election Readiness Handbook

An OSV guide to understanding municipal elections and making an informed choice



Municipal Election Readiness Handbook

Why Vote?

Because your ideas matter, your priorities matter, your vote matters

Start a movement, begin with your vote!



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What does the municipal election have to do with me?

Student Experience	Municipal Connection
Getting to Campus	Local Economic Development and Employment Supports
Finding somewhere to live	Planning, Zoning, Development approvals, Housing
Paying Rent	Local Housing Supply, Property Taxes, Development Policies
Looking for Childcare	Municipal/Service Manager role in childcare systems



Getting a Part-time Job	Local Economic Development and Employment Supports
Accessing Parks, Recreation Facilities	Recreation Facilities and Programming
Garbage Usage	Waste Management
Feeling Safe when in the Community	Local Policing and Community Safety
Emergency Services	Police, Fire & Parademic Services

Who controls what?

Issue	Municipal	Provincial	Federal
Public Transit	Yes		
Roads & Sidewalks	Yes		
Zoning & Land Use	Yes		
OSAP		Yes	
Tuition Policy		Yes	
Employment Standards		Yes	
Employment Insurance (EI)			Yes
Immigration			Yes
Parks & Recreation	Yes		
Childcare	Yes	Yes	Yes
Housing	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mental Health	Yes	Yes	Yes

Navigating your path to voting



Designed with your priorities in mind, this handbook gives you everything you need to make informed choices and have your say

Start with Your Values

Explore what matters most to you — education, the economy, climate change, or mental health, and see how your vote connects to these priorities.

Find Your Voice

Discover how to identify the candidate or party that aligns with your vision and goals for a better future.

Take Action

Step-by-step guidance to cast your vote and inspire your friends to do the same. Let's turn student power into student action!

Understand the Process

Learn about key dates, how to register, and the simple steps to make voting stress-free and accessible for everyone.

Make your voice count where it matters the most



Your vote is your voice

It's how you stand up for the issues you care about, whether it's better education funding, affordable housing, or action on climate change. Think about what matters most to you and make it count at the polls.

What are your top priorities?

- Accesibility
- Mental Health Resources
- Public Safety
- Better Job Opportunities
- Transit
- Sustainability and Climate
- Action
- Taxes
- Community & Child Care
- Affordable Housing

What does Municipal Government actually do?

Mayor

Leads City Council + represents the municipality

↓

City Council

Makes decisions on local policies, budgets and services

↓

Local Boards & Committees

May oversee specific municipal services

Voting is a piece of cake

If you've got 10 minutes, you have got time to vote. It is quick, simple, and the easiest way to make your voice count!

the Voting Quest

Start here!

What's Your Situation?

I have never voted before

Don't worry, first-time voter!
Voting is as easy as 1-2-3:

1. Check if you're registered on the Elections Ontario *website.*
2. Locate your polling station using their *online tool.*
3. Bring ID and follow the instructions, it's that simple!

I don't think I'm registered to vote

Good news! You can register right at the polling station on Election Day:

1. Bring your ID and proof of address.
2. A poll worker will help you register on the spot.
3. Cast your vote.

I am away from my voting location

You're covered! Voting by mail is designed just for you:

1. Vote online between October 16th and October 26th
2. To vote online, you will need the PIN that is on your Voter Information Letter. If you don't receive your VIL or have lost it, please visit the Citizen Service Centre to get a new one.

I will be busy on Election Day

No problem!
Here's how you can still vote:

1. Use advance polls (open on October 17th and 24th).
2. Find the nearest polling station and plan your visit during off-peak hours.
3. Locations will be announced.

I am a voting pro and ready to roll on election day

Already a voting pro, you would be on the voters list.

1. Check your voter registration. Ensure your details are current by using the Voter Registration tool. This helps you receive a Voter Information Card (VIC) with your voting details.
2. Choose your voting option (in- person, by mail, advance voting).
3. Bring your proof of identification (driver's license, utility bill, bank statement etc).
4. Mark your ballot- voila you are done!

Celebrate Your Power to Vote!

No matter what your situation, Ontario makes voting easy and accessible.
Take the first step today because your voice matters, and your vote counts!

How Students Can Vote While Studying Away from Home

You need to be:

- A Canadian citizen and at least 18 years old
- A resident OR a property owner or tenant OR the spouse of an owner or tenant in the municipality

Brantford Polling Station
Cambridge Polling Stations
Guelph Polling Stations
Ingersoll Polling Stations (Vote by Mail or Inperson)
Kitchener Polling Stations
Milton Polling Stations
Stratford Polling Stations (Vote will be done online)
Waterloo Polling Stations

Vote by mail:

Apply for a mail-in ballot or register as an absentee voter to receive a voting kit.

Which adress?

You can choose either your school or home address for registration. It determines where you vote.

Vote inperson:

If registered, you'll get a voter card with details. No card? Find your polling station at Voter Information Service on the Elections Ontario website

Bring ID:

With a voter card, show one piece of ID with your name. Without it, bring one ID with both name and address. Check accepted IDs at elections.

Your vote is a reflection of trust and empowerment

Your vote isn't just a mark on a ballot, it is rather a declaration of trust in your ability to shape the future. It is a way to ensure your voice is heard and your community's needs are prioritized. Voting isn't just about choosing a representative; it is about choosing a vision for tomorrow.

When you cast your vote, you reaffirm your belief in yourself, your values, and the democratic process that binds us all. Inademocracy, silence is a missed opportunity. Choosing not to vote allows others to make decisions on your behalf. But when you cast your ballot, you take control. You show up for your values, your beliefs, and your vision for a better tomorrow.



Throughout history, people have fought for the right to vote. They understood that change doesn't just happen, it is created by those who demand it. Your vote is the link between your ideals and the action needed to achieve them.

This is your moment to be part of something bigger.
By voting, you are not just speaking up for yourself but also standing with your peers and your community. Together, you can build a future that reflects your collective hopes and dreams.
The power is in your hands. Use it wisely. Vote!

Raise Your Voice, Shape Your Future



It is the day

Big decisions are coming your way! Elections are a key moment when your voice shapes the future of your community and beyond. It is the time when candidates and political parties ask for your trust and your vote to lead on the issues that matter most to you.

Every campaign is a conversation, a chance for you to learn, reflect, and decide who best represents your vision for the future. The most important chapter of this conversation is an Election Day, where your vote becomes action.

Now is the time to dive in, explore your options, and get ready to cast your ballot. Let us ensure your voice is heard loud and clear when it matters most!

Who can vote?

You need to be:

- A Canadian citizen and at least 18 years old
- A resident OR a property owner or tenant OR the spouse of an owner or tenant in the municipality



What is the date?

October 26, 2026

Understanding your Ballot

2018 Municipal Election Ballot
City of Kitchener

Ward A
English Public School

DRO

To vote, fill in the next to your choice(s) like this: ● or ⊗

Office of / Poste De
Mayor / Maire

1 to be elected /
1 pour être élu

- Jim **Diodati** ○
- Kevin **Martineau** ○
- Gary **Baker** ○
- Paul **Manning** ○
- Lori **Lococo** ○

Office of / Poste De
Councillor Ward 1/ Conseillieur(ére) Quartier 1

X to be elected /
1 pour être élu

- Weston **Miller** ○
- Steve **McGuinness** ○
- Gary **Burroughs** ○
- Sandra **O'Connor** ○
- Maria **Mavridis** ○
- Andrew **Niven** ○
- Tim **Balasiuk** ○
- Adriana **Cater-Vizzari** ○

Office of / Poste De
English Public School Trustee

1 to be elected /
1 pour être élu

- Helga **Campbell** ○
- Todd **Bright** ○
- Ravneet **Girn** ○
- Shannon **Mlitchell** ○
- Zach **Maves** ○

Candidates

Know What Your Candidate Stands For

Do your research

For each candidate your considering, ask:

What are their priorities?
What issues are they focusing on?

What are they Proposing?
What specific actions do they want to take?

Can they actually do it?
Is this something municipal government has the power to change?

How would they do it?
Do they explain how their proposal would work or be implemented?

How would they pay for it?
Does their proposal have financial implications for municipality?

How to Pick your Candidate?

What Matters to YOU?
Think about what you care about most: better schools, jobs, housing, or the environment.
Your vote helps decide what happens next.

Learn About the Candidates
Think of candidates like superheroes with plans for your community. Read their platforms, watch debates, and see who shares your vision. Ignore the drama, focus on their ideas!

Ask Questions

Reach out to candidates! Call, email, or attend an event to ask them directly: What will you do about the issues I care about?

Watch Debates

Debates are like showdowns! Pay attention to who offers real solutions, not just flashy promises.

Make Your Choice!

Your vote is your power. Choose the candidate who speaks to your goals and dreams. You've got this!

Red Flages

Be Cautious when a candidate does any of the following

- Promises something another level of government controls
- Doesn't explain how something will be paid for
- Uses statistics without a source
- Makes a promise without identifying who would pay for it
- Makes a very broad promise with no measurable action
- Says council can make decisions that actually require provincial/federal action

How Students Can Engage Beyond Voting

Before the Election

- Attend a candidate debate
- Ask a question
- Email candidates
- Attend a local campaign event
- Talk to other students about local issues
- Share reliable election information

During the Election

- Vote
- Encourage friends to vote
- Help someone understand the ballot
- Participate in an election job/volunteer opportunity

After the Election

- Attend council meetings
- Contact their councillor
- Submit delegations
- Participate in consultations
- Follow municipal budgets
- Ask questions about campaign promises
- Advocate for student priorities

Want to kickstart your career with Elections Ontario?

Elections Ontario

To work as an election official, you must be:

- At least 18 years of age (atleast 16 years of age for the position of Information Assistant and Tabulator Deputy Returning Officer)
- A resident of Ontario
- You do not need to be a Canadian citizen for certain positions for example; Information Assistant

Find more information here

7 Questions Students should be asking this election

Transit

Is transit affordable?

Are routes actually connecting campuses to student neighbourhoods and jobs?

Do service hours align with students' schedules?

Is transit accessible?

Employment

What is the municipality doing to support local employment?

Are there economic development programs that support young people?

Housing

What is the municipality doing to increase rental housing?

What zoning/development policies affect housing supply?

Is student housing being considered in planning?

Recreation & Community Spaces

Are recreation programs affordable?

Are community spaces like libraries, arenas, etc. accessible?

Are students considered in community planning?

Childcare

What role does the municipality plan in having adequate childcare spaces?

Are these space affordable and accessible?

Getting Around

Are sidewalks accessible?

Is cycling infrastructure connected?

Are streets safe for pedestrians?

Community Safety

What approaches are being proposed?

What local services and partnerships exist?

Do you feel safe when living, working and studying in the community?



FAQ'S

Where can I cast my vote?

Eligible voters in Ontario have several options: The first one is online. You can vote online between October 16th to 26th

- During Advance Voting: Participate in early voting at specified locations on October 17th & 24th
- Election Day: Vote at your assigned polling station on October 26th

View your specific voting locations above, use the Voter Information Service.
For details on accessible voting options, refer to the accessibility page.

What identification is required to vote?

- If You Are on the Register: Present one piece of identification (ID) showing your name.
- If You Are Not on the Register: Provide one piece of ID displaying both your name and home address.

For a list of accepted IDs, visit the accepted ID to vote page.

What if I cannot vote in person?

If you're unable to vote in person at your local election office, advance voting location, or assigned polling station on election day, you can:

- Vote Online using your PIN from your Voter Information Letter.
- Appoint a proxy vote. To appoint a voting proxy, you must fill out two copies of the Appointment for Voting Proxy Form (Form 3) and give the copies to the person whom you are appointing as your proxy. Both copies must have your original signature on them. You cannot sign one form and then photocopy it. You must know whom you want to appoint as your proxy when you fill out and sign the form. The person you want to appoint must be eligible to vote in the election, and should be someone you trust to mark the ballot in the way you have instructed them to.

Contact your clerk to find out the deadline for appointing a voting proxy.

What assistance is available for voters with accessibility needs?

Electors who require assistance are encouraged to vote at an advance poll. Assistive voting technology is available at all advance poll locations and at Niagara Falls City Hall on Election Day, allowing electors to hear ballot choices and vote independently and in secret.

- Online voting is also available between October 16th to 26th.

How can I soil my ballot or not vote for a role on my ballot?

Under the Municipal Elections Act of 1996, particularly Ontario Regulation 101/97. It entails that you don't have to vote in every race on your ballot.

For example, you may leave the Mayor section blank while still voting for Councillor and School Board Trustee. If this is done, your votes only for complete sections will be included.

How can I vote, if I have to work all day on election day?

You are entitled to three hours in which to vote on voting day. This does not mean you can take three hours off work. It means you're allowed to be absent to give yourself three hours of voting time. Typically, this is at the start or end of your working hours. For example, voting hours are normally from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. If your working hours are from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., you are entitled to leave one hour early so that you would have from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. to vote. Your employer may decide when it would be most convenient for you to be absent in order to vote. For example, if you work from noon to 6 p.m., your employer may decide that you should come in at 1 p.m., rather than leave work at 5 p.m.

How is my personal information protected on the Register?

Elections Ontario is committed to safeguarding your personal information. Measures are in place to ensure data is used solely for electoral purposes, in accordance with the Election Act.

What municipality do I vote in if I live in a different municipality while studying?

Students living in another city during their studies can vote in their home city and city with their post secondary school
There is a special rule for students who may be living away from home while they attend school. If you are a student and consider your "home" to be the place where you live when you are not attending school (that is, you plan on returning there), then you are eligible to vote in both your "home" municipality and in the municipality where you live while attending school.

Meet the Brantford Election Players

Here are your *Mayor* Candidates

View Here

View Here

Here are your *Councillor* Candidates

Here are your *School Trustee* Candidates

View Here

Meet the Cambridge Election Players

Here are your *Mayor* Candidates



View Here



View Here

Here are your *Councillor* Candidates

Here are your *School Trustee* Candidates



View Here

Meet the Guelph Election Players

Here are your *Mayor* Candidates

View Here

View Here

Here are your *Councillor* Candidates

Here are your *School Trustee* Candidates

View Here

Meet the Ingersoll Election Players

Here are your *Mayor* Candidates



View Here



View Here

Here are your *Councillor* Candidates

Here are your *School Trustee* Candidates



View Here

Meet the Kitchener Election Players

Here are your *Mayor* Candidates



View Here



View Here

Here are your Regional *Councillor* Candidates



View Here

Here are your *Councillor* Candidates

Here are your *School Trustee* Candidates



View Here

Meet the Milton Election Players

Here are your *Mayor* Candidates

View here

View here

Here are your Regional *Councillor* Candidates

View here

Here are your Town *Councillor* Candidates

Here are your *School Trustee* Candidates

View here

Meet the Stratford Election Players

Here are your *Mayor* Candidates

View Here

View Here

Here are your *Councillor* Candidates

Here are your *School Trustee* Candidates

View Here

Meet the Waterloo Election Players

Here are your *Mayor* Candidates

View Here

View Here

Here are your *Councillor* Candidates

Here are your *School Trustee* Candidates

View Here

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ONTARIO STUDENT VOICES

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CCSAI Student ASSOCIATION

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