

Walker to run for vacant LRSD school trustee position

SIMON FULLER
STAFF REPORTER

NORWOOD

Ian Walker is throwing his hat into the ring to become a Louis Riel School Division trustee.

The 43-year-old Norwood Flats resident intends to run in the June 6 byelection in LRSD's Ward 1 to fill the vacant seat left by former trustee Francine Champagne, who resigned last November after a controversial time in the role.

Walker, an educator for the last 19 years, is a Grade 1 and 2 teacher at Hampstead School in East Kildonan. Married to Sarah, the pair has two children that attend French immersion schools in the division. Walker himself is bilingual.

"Being a teacher and a parent, I have a real commitment to making sure we have a strong education system and strong leadership at the school board level," Walker said recently, noting he's been working at Hampstead School for the last 13 years.

"I'm on the front lines of the education system, and I'm very supportive of people of all faiths, ethnicities, backgrounds, and orientations. I feel strongly that Louis School Division is a safe place for everybody."

Walker believes he brings a number of things to the table aside from his educational experience. He's a passionate proponent of active and sustainable transportation, and until recently, was a board member of Peg City Car Car-Op.

"That gave me experience of governance and budgets and a large fleet of vehicles," he said. "We've done lots of work creating benefits for employees, coming up with a living wage, and ensuring it's a great place to work."

Walker has also been an active volunteer mechanic at his school's bike repair hub, and co-organizer of a bike bus initiative to École Provencher, alongside Suzanne Simpson. He's also been an active volunteer as a Scout leader with the 3rd Winnipeg Cub/Scouts.

"I think I have the ability to connect with other schools and parents from all over the division — my experience has given me wisdom into class sizes in other schools. I'm



Photo by Simon Fuller

Ian Walker, pictured here in Armstrong Park on April 16, is running to become a Louis Riel School Division trustee in Ward 1.

quite energetic, which is how I can be involved with these organizations, and still be a full-time parent and teacher," Walker said. "Children are our future, and coming out of the pandemic, there were kids that had had gaps in their learning. There were lots of demands on teachers, and I want to be an advocate for students and all school staff.

"I really want to work hard to make sure people feel safe sending their kids to school, as schools need to be somewhere where they feel safe," he added.

According to the City of Winnipeg, the formal trustee nomination period runs from Thursday, April 25 until Wednesday, May 1.

Officials say nomination papers must be filed by the candidate in-person, on the prescribed form, and have a minimum of 25 signatures from voters whose names appear on the voters list for the school division ward in which they are seeking election.

In advance of the byelection, people can visit winnipeg.ca/byelection2024 for more details. Walker's website is www.ianwalker.ca

If you or someone you know is considering running in the byelection, feel free to email simon.fuller@freepress.mb.ca