

Christina Steed – Ward 12 – 14 – Calgary Board of Education

Education Priorities

1. What specific steps would you advocate to improve the quality of education?

Seek for ways to decrease class sizes or get additional assistance in the classrooms.

2. What are the main directions we need to take to develop the full potential of all students?

We need to allow teachers the opportunity to teach and not be bogged down with administrative paper work.

3. Please indicate if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree or have no opinion on the following statements

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No opinion
Schools currently have enough specialized staff and resources to develop the full potential of all students.		X			
Increased class sizes will hurt the high school completion rate.				X	
The board should provide support for community schools rather than expanding alternative programs.					X
The school board should make sure that students with special needs should be provided additional supports.			X		
School boards should work with the provincial government to assure access to early childhood education and quality before and after school care programs.			X		
School boards should advocate for the Alberta government to fully fund junior kindergarten and full-day kindergarten as recommended by the Alberta Commission on Learning.					X
School boards should advocate for the Learning Commission recommendation on class sizes at all grade levels.				X	
School boards should advocate for renewed emphasis on the arts, trades and language learning in their schools.			X		
School boards should advocate for appropriate programs and supports for ESL students.			X		

Please comment on any of the above statements: Community schools vs alternative programming should not be one vs the other, rather they are not mutually exclusive.

The Roles of the Trustee

1. What are the most important changes that need to be made regarding the role of school boards in Alberta?

Address the current funding model to reflect the diverse needs of the Metro Boards.

2. How can the school board and you as trustee most effectively influence the financial and policy decisions made by the provincial ministry of education?

There needs to be more open communication and collaboration with the provincial government. The Province is our source of funding and the relationship must be amended for mutual respect.

3. Please indicate if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree or have no opinion on the following statements

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No opinion
A trustee must be a team player and always defend the decisions of the board, even if the trustee disagrees with those decisions.			X		
All business of the board should be dealt with in open public sessions except when the board is required to protect the privacy of employees or students.			X		
Trustees should actively consult with constituents and school councils on important policy matters.				X	
At times, school boards need to take more active public stands on education issues, even if it means being critical of the provincial government.			X		
The provincial government has seriously undermined the power and authority of trustees and school boards.			X		

Please comment on any of the above statements: A board must work as a cohesive unit to function effectively. Frank open discussions between board members on the issues should be encouraged and debated. It is ok to have differing opinions; however, once the board has decided on an issue then unity is paramount.

Education Funding

1. In light of the current funding situation, what strategies should the board use to meet the needs of students and the community?

There needs to be a greater sense of collaboration between the provincial government and the board. The board must demonstrate to the public and Government that they can work together for the betterment of system.

2. What changes respecting the funding of education would you advocate for?

Greater autonomy at the local level is required,

3. Please indicate if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree or have no opinion on the following statements

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
Education is adequately funded. School boards can live within their means by "cutting fat".		X			
If a school board cannot balance its budget without harmful cuts to education programs, it should be prepared to run a deficit.		X			
Provincial funding for building and maintaining schools is adequate.		X			
Provincial funding should be sufficient to cover increases to teacher and staff contracts.				X	

Please comment on any of the above statements:

Privatization and Commercialization

1. Should the provincial government continue to use Public Private Partnerships (P3s) for building new schools, what guidelines would you propose be placed on P3 contracts?

Yes, the P3 model enables the Government to build the schools that are currently needed. Guidelines of safety and timing must be followed.

2. What limitations, if any, should the school board place on the involvement of private firms in schools?

Student instruction and commercializations of students should not be compromised. Students should be pawns in the system seeking for resources.

3. Please indicate if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree or have no opinion on the following statements

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
Private sector businesses can operate schools more cheaply and efficiently and should be allowed to do so.		X			
The financing, construction and maintenance of a school should be undertaken as a public private partnership.				X	
Parents should be expected to contribute towards the					X

cost of their children's education by paying school fees and fundraising.

School boards should ban commercial advertising in schools.

X

Students should be provided with all necessary books and learning materials at no cost.

X

The public interest is best served by schools that are publicly owned and operated.

X

To address funding shortfalls, schools should be allowed to have corporate sponsors, including naming rights.

X

Please comment on any of the above statements:

School Infrastructure

1. What reasons, if any, might you vote for the closure of a school?

If the schools enrollment does not support future growth or viability.

2. Please indicate if you strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree or have no opinion on the following statements

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	No opinion
Additional government funding should be provided to address the infrastructure deficit.			X		
Community schools with small enrolments should be closed so that larger schools can offer more programs.		X			
The school board should work with the province to provide wrap around services in schools.			X		
Some schools should be closed so that the province will build new schools in new neighbourhoods.					X
Schools are a part of the community and should be open to other community activities.			X		
Boards should advocate for changing the province's school utilization formula to account for space used in after school care and other community uses.			X		

Please comment on any of the above statements: There is not a one case fits all model with respect to school closures or the need for additional schools. This needs to be addressed on a case by case basis.