

Wilfred Phillips – Ward 3 & 4 – Calgary Board of Education

Education Priorities

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

We need to improve communication at all levels including students, parents, staff and government. Class size needs to be addressed. Make sure decisions are based on the best possible information available to us. Focus groups might be of use to us in gathering input.

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

We need to work to decrease class size. We need to get the resources and people to assist students who require extra help in order to be successful.

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	

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?

Our school board needs to be more transparent, accountable communicate better at all levels including parents, students and provincial government.

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?

It would help us if we improve the communication and relationship with the provincial ministry. Right now, it doesn't appear to be very good at all.

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:

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?

I believe we need to review the 1.1 billion budget to make sure we are using the money wisely. As much as possible should be used for students in classrooms and decreasing class sizes.

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

We need to advocate with the province for special need funding, ESL funding, smaller classes etc

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: School boards should always be reviewing education programs so as to know what is happening, what should be done and how to improve programs.

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?

We must make sure that these schools maintains its autonomy and that no favors are expected by the builder.

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

I don't believe the private firm should expect anything in the school building other maybe then a plaque with the builders name on it.

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

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: Parents should be able to pay some of the basic costs of education through school fees but fundraising should be for a special trip etc.only.

School Infrastructure

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

I believe all required information need to be considered with lots of dialogue with parents before any school is closed.

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: I believe all required information need to be considered with lots of dialogue with parents before any school is closed.