

# Larry Leach – Ward 5 & 10 – Calgary Board of Education

## Education Priorities

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

Make the business of the board accessible to the public, thereby making better decisions that will get dollars more directly to the classroom. Listen to all voices including parents, staff and others to make the best decisions that will affect student learning.

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

We need to live, everyday, the CBE mantra: "Learning as unique as every student". All decisions and actions should be viewed through this lens. This means respecting the professionalism of staff at schools.

### 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?

Alberta's largest school board needs to behave in the public interest to garner support from the citizens. They need to take this role seriously. When this is achieved, advocacy efforts to strengthen the role of boards can take place.

### 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?

We need to be open and transparent with budgeting and spend dollars wisely. With improved disclosure we will gain public trust, which will strengthen advocacy efforts. We can only control what we can control.

### 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:* On team player point, important to note that you can disagree, but this is the will of the board in a respectful manner. On undermining authority point, boards need to act responsibly to gain confidence in the system.

## 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?

Advocating for and approving a transparent budget with more than 5 line items, so we can be certain the dollars are going to the right places. To look for new efficiencies and partner with community groups to help make school spaces more community hubs, not just schools. This must add to the revenue side to help our

students.

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

Special needs and ESL (English as a second language) learners need stable funding. \$900 billion structural deficit needs tackling. A new model for busing funding if new schools are not built.

**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:* Boards do need to act responsibly with the funds they have, even though the funding could be improved.

**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?**

I would much prefer to see schools built, owned and run by the school board.

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

Naming of classrooms and logo's placed at the school of corporations is something that needs a long public debate. Inclusive of the costs to society on marketing to children. I have written 3 blogs on the subject on the Huffington Post for further information.

**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.		<b>X</b>	
Parents should be expected to contribute towards the cost of their children's education by paying school fees and fundraising.		<b>X</b>	
School boards should ban commercial advertising in schools.			<b>X</b>
Students should be provided with all necessary books and learning materials at no cost.			<b>X</b>
The public interest is best served by schools that are publicly owned and operated.			<b>X</b>
To address funding shortfalls, schools should be allowed to have corporate sponsors, including naming rights.	<b>X</b>		

*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 all Stakeholders, especially the school community was in favor of such a closure. We need to do everything we can to keep schools open before looking to close. I have advocated for and helped save 2 schools from closure prior to running.

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

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>No opinion</b>
Additional government funding should be provided to address the infrastructure deficit.				<b>X</b>	
Community schools with small enrolments should be closed so that larger schools can offer more programs.	<b>X</b>				
The school board should work with the province to provide wrap around services in schools.				<b>X</b>	
Some schools should be closed so that the province will build new schools in new neighbourhoods.		<b>X</b>			
Schools are a part of the community and should be open to other community activities.				<b>X</b>	

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Boards should advocate for changing the province's school utilization formula to account for space used in after school care and other community uses.

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**X**

*Please comment on any of the above statements:*