

Terry Harris – Ward 71 – Edmonton Catholic School Board

Education Priorities

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

Advocate for stable, predicable, adequate funding Enhance infrastructure both physical and human. Enhance supports for inclusion and nurturing a safe, caring learning community Embrace 21st Century learning model Engage parents actively in the decision process Provide early childhood supports for children in vulnerable or disadvantaged conditions Strengthen the Catholic character of the district and our schools, stengthening the School, Parish, Family link. Strengthen the leadership pipeline of the district

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

Meet students where they are at, advancing the 21st Century learning model Ensure that physical, human and information infrastructure is in place and ready to support this. Enhance resources to develop faith, skills and competencies among school based employees Strengthening the Catholic character of the district "wholly permeated".

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 Role of the Trustee

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

Enhancing voice of the parents/community through the Trustee from the Ward in board decisions.
Enhancing the voice of School boards in education funding decisions of Alberta Education

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?

Relationships, ensuring that the channels of communication are open and active. Meeting with the Minister, our MLA's and the local caucus both formally and informally on a regular basis. Ensure that our positions regarding financial and policy matters are clear, concise and are supported by the facts and by those we represent.

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					X

undermined the power and authority of trustees and school boards.

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?

Actively engage parents and our communities in discussing priorities and constraints. Ensure that board decisions regarding approvals of funding are based on a robust decision process and evidence of veracity. New programming initiatives should be piloted (with clear rationale, objectives, metrics, evaluation (risk/return) and full costing) before funding commitments are made.

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

Strongly advocate for more resources to get aging facilities and staff development ready for 21st Century Learning model. Enhance resources to support inclusion and early childhood development..

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 adequatelyW 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: In suggesting that funding should be sufficient, I'm not suggesting that it is currently sufficient. I am suggesting that it should always be funded to ensure that staff are appropriately compensated.

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?

This should continue to be an option. I do not have a definitive set of guidelines, but key considerations that I would look for are: To what extent does it advance the goals of the ECSD? To what extent does it enhance the learning experience of the student? How is it aligned with, does it

advance the Catholic character of our schools? What real need of the district does it address? Is it sustainable? What are the risks and expected returns?

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

In many respects, similar considerations as above.

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: Educational sponsorship and naming rights may be considered at the district level, not at the school level.

School Infrastructure

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

Where the resources necessary to support an excellent Catholic education for students cannot be sustained and where programming to attract such resources is not forthcoming.

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