

Cindy Olsen – Ward 73 – Edmonton Catholic School Board

Education Priorities

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

Increased funding and a new funding formula that dose not penalize community schools. An understanding by government that equal and equitable funding are not the same. Large Metro centers offer programs that bring in more ESL, FNM and various special needs. These students often require specialized supports yet that is not taken into account within the funding formula. Also need to increase public engagement of all stakeholders with education. Need emphasis on appropriate early childhood services as well

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

Not all students are academically inclined we need to prepare and celebrate success of all students...those going into trades, production service. We need to develop potential of those with special needs , ESL, FNMI. All people have gifts that need to be recognized. We need to work towards strengths and competencies . All this needs adequate resources...including infrastructure needs, specialized technology, professional development for all staff and most important, enough staff. It has been shown that children succeed best when they have relationships with supportive adults.

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 | | | | | X |

government to fully fund junior kindergarten and full-day kindergarten as recommended by the Alberta Commission on Learning.

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: Class size is important, but class composition is a factor as well.

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?

Governance role and advocacy role need to be strengthened and defined

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?

By informing, educating and engaging the public. The public votes all levels of government in so their voiced should be influencing government policy and funding priorities

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 | | | X | | |

if it means being critical of the provincial government.

The provincial government has seriously undermined the power and authority of trustees and school boards.

X

Please comment on any of the above statements: All trustees need to openly and actively debate and advocate their various positions; however once a vote is taken it becomes a board corporate decision . Boards have never has the power or authority to raise money. We are at the mercy of the provincial budget so negotiations are not something we can enter into with any additional dollar amounts. We do however have a lot of power with advocacy and public engagement

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?

School Boards know best where they need to put money for their districts needs therefore more open funding envelopes

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

New funding formula.

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: If we have to run a structural deficit we also run the risk of government coming in and telling us how to administer our 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?

They haven't seem to have worked. Government says they have learned from the first ones but have they?

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

Private firms should not be directing or influencing school board decisions

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:

School Infrastructure

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

Sometimes it costs more to keep a school open then to close it and build new. This sad situation is because of our ever increasing accumulated infrastructure deficit. Also the community has to take responsibility as well for keeping community schools open. Often a perfectly good community school is under attended as parents send kids out of community to specialized programs

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: