

Laura Thibert – Ward 77 – Edmonton Catholic School Board

Education Priorities

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

- Early learning-an excellent start to learning • Learning coaches • Graduation coaches • Remove targeted funding model

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

- Integrating traditional and technology teaching methods • Strategies for English Language Learners to succeed • Education that meets the diverse need of all learners

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				X	

programs and supports for ESL students.

Please comment on any of the above statements:

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?

It is essential to have locally elected school boards that are accountable to the people. Schools Boards are representatives of the constituents to make decisions and set the direction for education. I believe that the Government must allow the schools boards to make local decisions that meet the needs of the students by ensuring each student achieves educational excellence, all children are safe and finances and capital resources are supporting today's students.

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?

• Developing relationships with MLA and the Capital regional caucus • I believe that being creative with the dollars we are provided and developing and enhancing what we have. • Creating partnerships to with business and community to move education into the future.

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	

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?

- Build, maintain and foster relationships and partnerships that promote the development and enhancement of programs and services with our district
- Develop partnerships with business and community to collaborate to meet the needs of our students.

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

I would advocate removing the “envelope” or targeted funding. The government typically has allocated funding for certain projects or lines in their budget. I believe if the Government was to provide the schools boards with the lump sum and allow us to be creative and use the dollars to provide the best possible education, we could provide more.

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		

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?

No Response

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

No Response

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			X		

more cheaply and efficiently and should be allowed to do so.	
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

School Infrastructure

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

- Concern for health and safety of the student
- Delivery of educational programming to students suffers
- The school becomes a concern where the entire district will undergo financial difficulty

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