

Elizabeth Johansson – Ward D – Edmonton Public School District

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

Class size impacts the quality of education. We need to lobby for the education dollars to hire enough teachers to reduce class sizes. We also need to ensure that bullying is not tolerated in our schools.

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

In order to develop the full potential of all students we need to ensure that there are programs available for a variety of learning styles. Whether they excel in arts, sports, or science we need to provide opportunities for students to have an enriching educational experience while also making sure they have a solid foundation in core subjects.

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	

Please comment on any of the above statements: I don't believe that we have to choose between community schools and alternative programs. Both should be offered.

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

School Boards need to do more consultation with parents and other stakeholders before important decisions are made.

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?

School Boards and Trustees need to make strong, well-researched presentations to the provincial ministry of education about how students can be best served and how we can provide an excellent quality education to Alberta's young people. We need to also keep parents well informed of the impacts of education funding decisions so they can also lobby provincial politicians to support education.

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:

1. In light of the current funding situation, what strategies should the board use to meet the needs of students and the community?

Engage with parents. Parents as a whole represent a wealth of knowledge and expertise that has been largely untapped. When parents feel they are part of decisions that affect their children's education they become more engaged and often can help find creative solutions.

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

School Boards need stable, predictable funding in order to plan for the future. Because of Alberta's strong economy many people have settled down and started families. Combined with the increase in families moving to Alberta, we are seeing increasing numbers of children entering school. Education funding needs to be stable and predictable in order for School Boards to look ahead to these children's educational path all the way through Grade 12.

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: The question about funding covering contracts is unclear. I think you are asking if there should be an obligation to provide sufficient funding, but it could be read as asking if one thinks the funding already provided should be (will be) sufficient for those areas.

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 do not support P3s for public education. It is our responsibility as a society to educate our young people. Society as a whole benefits and we collectively bear the cost. We should simply pay a fair price to builders to do the work as they are in business to do business. It is society's job, not their job, to provide education.

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

I do not support private firms being involved in 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
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				

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

It can take several years for a school to turn around its enrollment levels, but it can happen and does happen. I have seen it happen in my neighbourhood. We need to take a long-term view and find ways to support schools in mature neighbourhoods. Strong schools draw young families to neighbourhoods and help keep them vital.

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				X	

provide wrap around services in schools.

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: Before and after-school care is vital for many families and funding formulas should take this much needed use of school space into account. Community use of school space after hours also provides an important service that should be acknowledged.