

What Could You Ask Your School Board Trustee Candidates?

1. Does your district have a seclusion and restraint policy? If yes, how long has it been in place and does it represent current practices? If not, why not?
2. How has the supreme court ruling on the teacher contract restoration impacted classroom availability for students?
3. Does your district have resource rooms? If so, how many resource rooms were lost to make way for additional classrooms? Do you believe in resource rooms? Why or why not?
5. Is the district's overall approach to students with special needs one that accommodates individual needs and timelines?
6. What is the status of emergency preparedness in the district? Do school plans adequately consider their students with disabilities, as well as others who may be included in their school at any given time?
7. Where do you stand on inclusion of marginalized populations – for example students with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ students?
8. How can our school district include other marginalized groups like students with special needs, indigenous students, newcomers to Canada into the curriculum with similar or even the same resources as SOGI 123?
9. Is the school district ready for implementation of the new grade 10 curriculum? What do they need to do to be prepared?

11. What kinds of supports are in place in the school district so that parents new to Canada are able to access information appropriately and quickly related to their children, and School District decisions that will impact their family?

12. How would you improve transparency to ensure that parents get pertinent information that helps improve outcomes? What data would you collect to ensure improvement and a real picture of how things are going in the School District?

13. How many elementary and how many secondary counsellors does your School District have?

14. Do you know what the ratio of counsellors to students is for elementary and secondary? What is the criteria for being a counsellor in your District?

14. Are there enough specialists (such as SLPs, OT) to provide direct service to students, or do they only have time to observe and write reports?

15. How many Learning Support Teachers (also known as resource teachers, inclusion support teachers, etc) are there? What is their ratio to students? Do they have the appropriate training/education? Is your District planning to increase their training/education?

16. How many Educational Assistants (EA's) does the district have? Is the district planning to hire more, to account for the many more classes with the teacher contract restoration?

17. How does your District deal with bumping and seniority when working with students with special needs?

18. How is the district planning to attract more well trained/appropriately educated EA's to support students and teachers? Has the district considered offering an EA training/education to applicants, as well as an upgrade in training/education to current EAs? How will the district make this job a more attractive, career-minded prospect?

19. How does your District provide for professional development? Will there be a district pro-d day specific to inclusive/special education? Will your District's EA's be included as well?

20. What is the school district's policy around bullying? What do you think of that policy? Does it adequately address the issue?

21. What can the school district do about the practice of exclusion? (students excluded from classrooms, extracurriculars, electives)

22. What do you think the solution to increased aggression in classrooms is?

23. What percentage of students with special needs graduate in the district? Does this figure include all students with special needs, including categories A to G? If not, is that data collected?

24. How many students in your school district are forced out/leave the public, bricks and mortar education system for distributed or home learning, or independent schools? Is an exit interview conducted with families leaving the School District?

25. Do you feel that the budget process adequately addresses the needs of the classroom?

In the Moore case, the decision confirmed that special education is not a 'dispensable luxury' for those with severe learning disabilities, but is 'the ramp that provides access to the statutory commitment to education made to all children in British Columbia'. School districts are not justified in removing access to special education facilities simply by reason of financial difficulties, and they need to assess alternatives (financial and otherwise) reasonably available to accommodate special needs before deciding to reduce or remove special education services.

So, does your budget reflect that? If not, what will you do to ensure the budget equitably supports all learners?

26. If you are elected, do you pledge to work to find concrete ways to improve graduation rates for students with disabilities (including include ALL students in all categories, including categories A to G), and to retain and support students in the bricks and mortar public education system?