

## **Jason Schulz responses**

### **Candidate for Fort McMurray Public School Trustee**

Curriculum: Curriculum experts, educators, parents, and many of the current school boards have pointed out the flaws in the draft k-6 curriculum. 1. Do you agree with calls to scrap the draft curriculum and start over to develop a curriculum that is accurate in capturing Alberta's colonial history, diverse present, and modernized to reflect the world we live in?

**With any change there are opportunities and challenges. Given stagnant performance in many key assessment areas I can understand the desire to challenge the status quo. Having said that, as the curriculum is rolled out and piloted it is imperative that performance benchmarks are revisited to monitor performance in key learning areas.**

**From a personal perspective, one of the key areas that should be stressed is numeracy and financial literacy, including budgeting, debt strategies, wealth management and retirement planning.**

**I would not suggest starting the process over. In fact, any new curriculum would likely receive criticism for various reasons.**

Funding: Alberta continues to be a growing province, with more students entering the system. While we're told funding is tight for public education, Alberta continues to subsidize private education with millions in public dollars. 2. Do you believe the current education funding formula is sufficient for your district? If not, how will you work to convince the province to provide sustainable and adequate funding?

**Fort McMurray has a young population with increasing student enrollment. Given the shrinking provincial revenue streams, there is increasing pressure to make do with less. This is not a realistic solution given the challenges in Fort McMurray. With a remote location and challenges in attracting and retaining workers, Fort McMurray should receive a funding premium that accurately reflects the reality of the region. I would suggest that funding could be based on a provincial benchmark of 100 (average funding) and adjusted based on the actual cost in the region and elsewhere in the province. This should be reviewed annually to ensure an adequate funding model is maintained.**

Privatization including P3s: AUPE members know very well that privatization regularly fails to find "efficiencies" and any cost savings are often off the backs of workers who become deunionized, with lower pay and benefits. They also work on the front lines of service delivery and see the problems caused by high-turnover low wage private providers, and the bureaucratic burden caused by having to deal with a third party instead of an in-house provider. 3. Will you

oppose privatization of school services and infrastructure, including Public-PrivatePartnerships aka P3s? Will you support bringing previously privatized services in-house?

**Although I empathize with the challenges of P3s and outsourcing services, the reality is that with ongoing budgetary constraints reinstating such services without changes to the funding models is not possible. As a trustee, I would advocate for improved funding that would provide the best learning outcomes for students while further advocating to reverse the ongoing cuts in the public sector.**

Schools as Employers: As our economies recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, good jobs are an important factor. Public sector workers spend in their communities, and many households impacted by private sector recessions have been able to keep the bills paid thanks to a stable public sector job. 4. Will you support your employees and your community by ensuring the school board employs staff with living wages, full-time hours where desired, job security, and collective bargaining rights?

**I am 100% supportive of providing a full-time living wage while honoring job security and upholding collective bargaining rights.**

5. Will you oppose attempts from the provincial government to legislate against school staff including cuts to the Local Authorities Pension Plan, or restrictions on their right to strike?

**I have worked in Education and am familiar with these concerns. I would expect the provincial government to honor collective agreements and negotiated benefits.**

COVID Safety: With the negligent provincial response to now three preventable waves of COVID-19, school boards have been put in an awkward position of needing to take measure to protect their students and staff throughout the pandemic. Many are introducing measures of their own, but not all have. 6. Do you support measures such as mask mandates, and vaccine mandates for staff to limit and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your schools?

**I believe that we should adhere to the best practices as suggested by medical professionals and scientific data. If the professionals suggest such practices are the best approach, I would advise we adhere to them.**