

Melanie Wen responses
Candidate for Calgary Board of Education Wards 1 & 2

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?

Yes.

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?

I don't think the funding formula is sufficient for wards 1 and 2 otherwise we won't have schools with too large of a class size. This will cause teacher burning out, students do not get enough attention from the teachers. UCP government ran on a platform to increase funding for education in 2019. The government should keep that promise and provide more funding to build more schools, portables and hire more teachers to reduce the class size.

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 de-unionized, 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-Private-Partnerships aka P3s? Will you support bringing

previously privatized services in-house?

I will oppose privatization of school services. I would support bringing some previously privatized services in-house. Such as having publically funding pre-K and full day kindergarten. instead of having a daycare inside of the school to provide such services and parents have to pay for it themselves.

I don't support P3s (public-Private partnership) because it might seem we are saving capital spending at the beginning but pay more operational cost in the long run.

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?

Yes, I think teachers and school staff need to feel supported and feel secure with their job.

Thank you for participating in this survey from AUPE's Committee On Political Action. The Committee is asking for all surveys to be completed by Tuesday, September 28. Please send your responses or any questions of your own to AUPE via email at t.zimmerman@aupe.org The committee intends to publish the responses (or lack thereof) during the week of October 4.

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?
yes

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?

yes.