

## **Ainsley Miller responses**

### **Candidate for Grande Prairie Public School Trustee**

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?

There are a lot of concerns about the K – 6 curriculum that was drafted and we were asked to pilot this school year. Educators and support staff have identified it is not age appropriate among other concerns. The Alberta Teachers Association surveyed 6000 of their members and heard very clearly the message that it is not acceptable in the current form. This has to be rectified with their input and more consultation from subject matter experts before we move on to the additional curriculum that is in development for the older age groups.

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?

While the school board are responsible for the budget and maintaining accountability, their most important responsibility is looking out for students. So if we cannot ensure the funding is directed to deliver quality public education then we need to advocate for that with all the information at hand. The school Board are in place to ensure adequate resources including financial and human, this has to include recognizing where resources are not adequate, coming up with innovative ways to assist and advocating to the provincial government who manage taxpayers' dollars to fund education.

### **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

Partnership's aka P3s? Will you support bringing previously privatized services in-house?

I don't know enough about privatization of schools and how it would affect us in this District, but I don't support efforts to shift any funds out of public education at this time when they are, I believe, considerably underfunded. I will have to learn more on this, thanks for bringing it forward.

### **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 believe employees should have sustainable and secure work and hours, to support their ability to deliver quality education and the communities need for a future work force of well-educated adults. The fight for living wages and enough for all to support people who educate and support our youth seems easy to support and contributes back to our community and province.

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 don't believe that the government should legislate against the right to strike, the ability to strike brings parties to the table to negotiate change and is a collective right.

### **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?

Do I think it is reasonable and fair to ask school Boards to make decisions for their school district when the Province has the best practices and health information at hand? Should they have mandated the decision previously and take the stance as the leaders they are paid to be? Completely. Let's talk about responsibilities and

the common good, including our responsibility as citizens to protect the most vulnerable amongst us and the responsibility to help others in the community.

At bare minimum, it has been proven to reduce transmission with hand hygiene, physical distancing and masking, This is not an either/or, layer protections and do them all. Should we take measures to protect students and staff and have a safe and healthy environment – of course, and to the best of our ability.