

AUPE Survey by Alene Mutala – ECSD Trustee for Ward 75

1. I am a retired teacher, so I understand curriculum and have to work with many curriculum changes over the 27 years that I taught. I have reviewed the new proposed draft curriculum. I do not think we need to scrap the whole curriculum and start over as there are some positive areas in the curriculum. The government needs to listen to the feedback and suggestions of teacher and curriculum consultants that have been in the classrooms and at the front line for many years. They know how children develop and learn best and how to help students be more successful.

I feel there are topics and subject areas that are presented for certain age and grade levels that are not age appropriate for that level. I think the Social Studies Curriculum is lacking in many areas. We do not need to be Americanized. The history of Canada and Alberta has to be presented in truthful way and not in a colonial way. We have to realize that we live in a different, diverse world as we are very multicultural in Canada. The Indigenous and residential school history has to be truthfully taught but with Grade appropriateness in mind.

All subject areas should be looked at after the government receives feedback from teachers piloting the draft curriculum and from our curriculum experts across the province.

I don't think that the UCP Government should have asked our teachers to pilot a draft curriculum during and while we are in a COVID pandemic. Our staff, teachers, students and parents all have enough stress in their lives during this time pivoting from in-class learning to online learning as well as sometimes they had synchronous teaching and learning going on.

ECSD Curriculum consultants and teachers have reviewed the curriculum and put together a 173 page document with suggestions for the draft curriculum. They also pointed out the positive points and made suggestions for improvement for all grade levels and subject levels. The UCP government should listen to the experts in the curriculum and subject areas and take note where some things presented in the curriculum are not age or grade level appropriate for student development.

2. I don't believe that the current funding model is sufficient for our school division as we have many students from many diverse backgrounds and many different cultures, and we need more English as a Second Language funding for more years for our students. As well we have more students with special education and learning needs that we need to assess at an earlier age so they can get the help they need earlier so they will be able to experience success. Also because of COVID related issues and pivoting from in class learning to online learning, we have students that have fallen behind in reading and math and we need extra funding to help these students catch up. Also, we now need more funding for the many Mental Health issues our students and families are experience because of Covid and isolation.

Over the many years that I had been teaching we always have had to advocate to the government for more funding to help our students. Our school boards have to be accountable to the government and taxpayers for the money received and have to show where we spend that money.

3. I am not in favor of privatization of any school services as each school division knows the needs of their students and communities best and should be allowed to use in house services for their school divisions. We have seen in other areas that privatization in the long run does not save money. Our schools, staff and school experts know what the needs of each school community are, as well as the needs of the students.
4. I personally know how hard all of our employees work as I have been involved with the Educational field for twenty-seven years. Our administration, staff and teachers know best what they need to do to make a school and school division run smoothly and successful. I will support that the school board employs staff with living wages, full time hours where desired, job security and collective bargaining rights.
5. I will oppose attempts from the provincial government to legislate against school staff including cuts to the Local Authorities Pension, or restrictions on their right to strike. As a retired teacher, I know how hard staff work and how much money we have paid into our pension plans over the years. Teaching is not just a job, it is a vocation and our staff are always looking for better ways to help our students be successful.
6. I support the plan to keep health and safety measures in place to protect all staff and students in and out of schools. I feel our government has left too many responsibilities up to our schools and school divisions. We are in the education field and not the health field. We want to teach our all our students in safe and caring environments. We want all our staff to be safe as well. We do not want to put our staff or students at any risk. Schools cannot be responsible to fix all the problems in our society and province. Too many issues and responsibilities are being downloaded onto to our school divisions and schools. I support all safety measures such as hygiene, extra cleaning, masking, cohorts, and vaccinations.