

Andrea Andreachuk
Candidate for Lethbridge School Division Trustee

1. Curriculum:

Yes I agree with rejecting the K-6 Draft.

I believe that the Draft Curriculum needs to be rewritten as there are too many flaws in it, to be edited. There are many curricular errors at all levels involving concepts and facts.

The Draft Curriculum is a step backwards in Education. Children do not need to be filled full of facts before they can begin to learn about things that are meaningful to them. Children do well with an inquiry approach where they answer important questions about a subject or concept in a meaningful way.

It is an outdated practice to have children “drill a skill”. It is far better to introduce concepts to children in a real-life context with a hands-on approach. This leads to real understanding of a concept.

Very importantly the Indigenous perspective in the Draft is not adequate. It does not support Truth and Reconciliation. I believe in students being knowledgeable and respectful of the rich history and culture of the Blackfoot, Metis and Inuit people. I support the process of Truth and Reconciliation.

The Draft Curriculum is not at all age appropriate. Concepts are introduced to children before they are developmentally ready for them.

Curriculum must be built to support the diverse needs of all Alberta children. Revisiting the non-partisan 2018 Draft K-4 Curriculum that was written by 35,000 Albertans, teachers, the ATA, educational experts, First Nation, Metis and Inuit Elders, LBGTQ2+ and Community Partners would be a good starting point.

Only 3 Divisions in the Province were willing to pilot the Draft Curriculum. Divisions were told that if they didn't pilot the curriculum they were not allowed to give feedback. This is not helpful. All Educational Stakeholders need to have a voice in what our Alberta students learn, as our students are the leaders of the future.

2. Funding:

Funding is not adequate for our Division.

Most importantly, I believe in Public Education and I believe Public Education should be funded adequately so that all children in Alberta are afforded the Education they deserve.

Funding in recent years has not kept up with the growing enrolments in our schools. This negatively impacts class size, programs offered, resources and supports, not to mention the extra monetary strain of Covid.

Early Education Funding has certainly been impacted. Early Intervention is so important in having our youngest learners become the learners they were meant to be. When support for this is lost, we see even greater needs down the road. We also see that much needed support at higher grades is often needed to be moved to Early Education, leaving the higher grades with less than they need.

Further, the "Weighted Moving Average" funding model does not adequately fund jurisdictions with enrolment growth, as the funding using this formula will always lag behind the actual enrolment count.

Trustees need to work as a group, look at the division as a whole, and collectively advocate for adequate funds from the provincial government to support all levels of the division.

If I was elected as a Trustee for the Lethbridge Public School Division, I would see this as one of the most important ways I can advocate for all learners, especially our Early Learners. As a former Kindergarten teacher, I understand how pivotal the early years are to the success of students in subsequent grades. I would be a strong advocate for adequate funding for our schools and our students.

3. Privatization:

Yes, I would oppose privatization of school services and infrastructure, including Public-Private-Partnerships aka P3s? Yes I would support bringing previously privatized services in-house?

4. Schools as Employers:

Yes, I would support our employees and our community by ensuring the school board employs staff with living wages, job security, and collective bargaining rights?

5. Yes, I would 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?

6. Covid Safety:

As a retired teacher, wife of a retired dentist, sister of two Calgary Nurses, and mother or mother-in-law of four Alberta teachers, supporting students and staff as they navigate a safe educational experience through the Covid Pandemic would be a priority for me.

It is very important to me that students and staff are safe with the threat of Covid in our lives. Adequate ventilation, extra caretaking hours, extra cleaning supplies and following safety protocols such as masking would be paramount. Masking and Vaccinations are powerful tools in keeping our community safe. I would hope that all eligible Albertans would stand as a unified front against Covid and be vaccinated.

I feel that we would need to keep well informed of all of the AHS guidelines, be responsive to the guidelines, and most importantly ask for further clarification and direction when needed.

I would support measures such as mask mandates, and vaccine mandates for staff to limit and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our schools.