**Bev Manning responses**

**Candidate for Red Deer 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?

**I have taken the time to listen to our administration and our expert teachers as they have assessed the draft K-6 curriculum. I do have some concerns around this proposed curriculum. There are some issues around pedagogy, how we teach is as important as what we teach. I think this curriculum is restrictive in allowing teachers to use differentiated instruction. We need to make sure that the learning styles of all students are recognized. I have concerns around when certain math concepts are introduced, and yes I have some concerns around the social studies curriculum and how it recognizes our diversity, as well as the calls to Truth and Reconciliation. I would like to continue to work with the government to improve the draft before it is indeed made mandatory. I think we need to understand that this government has made it very clear this curriculum is going to happen. But we MUST speak up and voice our concerns in a way that can affect change.**

**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 have been a trustee for 26 years, and funding has always been a concern. Part of my job is to prioritize and budget according to what my community says is important to them. I do not feel that education funding has kept up with the basic expenses that we incur. In spite of this, we do need to be good stewards of the public dollars and do the very best we can to keep as many dollars as we can in our classrooms. This means that we keep great teachers, provide great professional development, and keep class sizes as low as possible under the circumstances - my community has affirmed this time and time again. I will continue to make informed decisions on how we budget and spend education dollars. I will also continue to make sure the government of Alberta is aware of how those dollars are spent, and is aware of what we are losing because of their decisions on how 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- Partnerships aka P3s? Will you support bringing previously privatized services in-house?

**Yes. I have opposed privatization in the past and will continue to do so. I have found that once services are lost to a privatization initiative, it is hard to get them back, which is why we need to continue to promote the value of our in-house services. Over my years as trustee I have negotiated contracts with both our CUPE and ATA and have seen the rewards we ALL get when our work is accomplished together.**

**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 have always had a great respect for our employees and the hard work they do. We are all part of the learning community we call Red Deer Public Schools. I respect the negotiation process and believe it contributes to a great working relationship. That process lets us hear from one another, communicate what is important about working and working conditions, and reach a better understanding. Putting that down into a contract keeps both parties accountable. I will continue to respect that process and do my best to make sure all employees are paid fairly.**

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?

**Employees need to be treated fairly. If contractual obligations are not being met, they have a right to protest and we should listen. Pension plans belong to the employees and I respect that. I would continue to be a strong advocate against government involvement in these processes.**

**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 do not feel things have been handled well by this government. In order to lead people out of a situation like this one, which is driven by fear, you must get people on board with your plan. This government has not done that. I feel it is important that Albertans be offered a menu of opportunities to help us through this pandemic. Let me be clear, I DO NOT have the right to force anyone to have a vaccination. It is not within my LEGAL PERVUE to do so. I would inform people of the benefits, I would provide them with information, and then I would allow them to make their own decisions without coercion. We have a number of different ways in our Covid plan that address safety. I would continue to support such things as staying home when sick, deep cleaning, air ventilation, and I would look at new ways to help all of us stay safe. I can not shirk my fiduciary responsibility to the division by mandating things which I am not legally entitled to do. As we have navigated our way through this pandemic there has been a very short-sighted view on how to manage it. Masks and vaccines are not the only answers and when we limit ourselves to just those two things, we continue to belabour the effects it is having. Surely after wave after wave, month after month, lock down after lock down, we are smart enough to come up with some new strategies.**