

David Barret responses

Candidate for Calgary Board of Education Wards 8 & 9

1. Do you agree with the calls to scrap the draft curriculum and start over?
 - Absolutely. The current draft did not include curriculum experts, professional educators, parents, or other key stakeholders in its drafting. As a result, the outcome was a draft K-6 curriculum that absolutely missed the mark. A new draft needs to be designed leveraging the wealth of experts and associated expertise in these areas that exist in Calgary, Alberta and nationally. It also needs to include an increased focus on Indigenous history and colonization, at age-appropriate levels.
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?
 - No. The most recent budgets have resulted in per-student cuts that are proving to be detrimental to student learning environments, including class sizes. The case for properly funding public schools with a sustainable and consistent level needs to be put forward to the province. A focus on strengthening our public systems as opposed to subsidizing private educational institutions needs to be put forward. Highlighting the connection between a strong public school system and the economic benefits that go along with a well-educated society will be crucial to making this case.
3. Will you oppose P3's? Will you support bringing previously privatized services in-house?
 - The evidence unequivocally finds that P3's result in higher long-term costs and poorer service delivery. I am opposed to the use of P3's and would work to bring previously privatized services back in-house.
4. Will you support your employees and community by ensuring the school board employs staff with living wages
 - Absolutely. Paying employees a living wage is a basic responsibility of an employer. Investing in workers will result in lower turnover, increased pride in work, creative problem-solving, and more money spent in the local economy. I also support and respect collective bargaining rights.
5. Will you oppose attempts from the government to legislate against school staff including cuts to the pension plan or restrictions on their right to strike.
 - Yes. I will push back on the provincial government on both of these issues. Legislating restrictions on workers right to strike is not only in bad taste, it undermines the collective bargaining that takes place and restricts the rights of workers. Additionally, cuts to pension plans have the potential to significantly impact workers well-being and life plans. It is moving the end zone mid-game.
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. Throughout my campaign I have been very transparent about my desire to use data to drive decision-making. As such, I am completely in support of public health measures, such as mask mandates, for staff to help reduce the risk of transmission to vulnerable populations, including the under 12 age group who cannot yet be vaccinated. I also support a vaccine mandate for staff, so long as it appropriately allows for exemptions for those with **valid** reasons. We need to do everything possible to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and lower the exposure risk for the children in schools