



Vancouver DPAC • DPAC Questions To All Vancouver School Board Trustee Candidates

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Responses of Christopher JK Richardson, Independent.

I invite anyone to contact me to clarify any of my responses as it is imperative that we all work together to support ALL learners in our public education system and the various stakeholders and partners.

Please refer to my new website christopher.richardson.ca for policy platform and bio details.

Policy & Governance

1. What do you/your party see as the most important role of the elected school trustees?

Elected school trustees must collaboratively advocate for public education so as to enable ALL learners especially those with unique learning needs to achieve success. This role is one of governance rather than the actual administration and management of the Board activities. Several factors must be kept in mind: One that school boards in BC are co-managed by the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care (see question 35) (MoECC) with the other 'partner' allocating the operating and capital funding envelope (see questions XX and XX) and also that we are public-facing elected officials, so that there is a reasonable expectation that we will be knowledgeable of matters impacting the success of students or have immediate access to the necessary information.

The Vancouver School Board (VSB) has undertaken a significant reconsideration of the perceived 'role' of Trustees due to the tragic bullying incidents of 2015 / 2016. This situation must be avoided as it was counterproductive and has had significant impact upon the Board moving forward.

2. What do you understand as the limits of the power of a Trustee? How would you navigate within these limits to achieve your agenda?

The limits of the powers of an individual Trustee are well-documented in legislation (School Act) as a Trustee must fulfill a fiduciary duty (or 'loyalty') to the Board which means that their actions must always be in the best interest of the Board and therefore the students that we are entrusted to serve rather than our own particular interests. This requirement should work to ensure that we as Trustees in conjunction with our professional staff work collaboratively together to achieve the mandate of the Board.

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3. There are pros & cons to the revised VSB delegation policy; Do you/your party have a position on the current delegation policy?

It is essential that the public engagement process (AP 106) provide a robust, efficient and timely opportunity for all concerned to input to the deliberations of the Board. The current process appears well-founded in the 'spectrum' of activities to ensure input but if and when concerns are raised or situations are identified where modifications are needed to maintain a high level of input, these cases should be examined.

4. How would you improve the consultation that the VSB does? Specifically, what changes would you make to Administrative Procedure 106, if any?

I have not identified any specific improvements to AP 106. I note that in-person delegation limitations (time and venue) concerns should be reduced by encouraging advanced submission and consultations prior to the final debate by the Board. Earlier input of ideas and alternatives to achieve the common and agreed upon objective is more productive. It is the responsibility of the Board to solicit and encourage input in a format and venue that will better ensure that participants will acknowledge that they have been fully heard prior to the final decision whatever that is.

5. Are you satisfied with the VSB anti-racism policies? If Yes, why? If No, why?

Yes, I am satisfied with Policy 21 – Anti – Racism & Non-Discrimination and its administrative procedures (AP 170, 171 and 350) but am most pleased that these policies are being updated by the working group that reported its 3 goals moving forward at the Board's 22.06.27 meeting to ensure that the policy remains current and responsive to the needs of the VSB.

6. What VSB meetings have you attended? How much time do you expect to spend per week on Trustee work?

Since 'leaving' the Board on October 17th, 2016, I have maintained a 'watching brief' of the Board's activities. Prior to COVID-19, I attended in-person committee and Board meetings and reviewed minutes. Personal attendance was impacted by my return to UBC in the Summer of 2019 to complete courses towards a MEd in Inclusive Education, of which I have now completed 10 courses with about 3 left to complete once this election process is concluded. During COVID-19 I have continued to review minutes and 'attend' on-line as schedules permitted. The availability of meeting for later review is most appreciated.

I expect to spend about 30+ hours per week on Trustee work. I realized during my previous tenure that it was essential to complement the workshops, briefings, committee and Board meetings with in-person visits to my assigned schools and other programs, to get a hands-on sense of the work of the Board.

7. Given that you may have different views on issues, how do you see yourself interacting with other trustees? Similarly, if your view differs from your party on an issue, how would this impact your voting?

I plan to continue my well-received approach of proactive and positive dialogue and collaboration towards common goals which I have developed and demonstrated in my professional career and civic career on the Vancouver Park Board (1986 – 1990) and (1999 – 2002) and in my brief 2014 – 2016 term on the VSB as Chair to June 15th, 2015 and continuing as a Trustee until our 'departure'. If we all can agreed that our objective is to improve the achievement of ALL learners, especially those with unique learning needs – we can align our efforts to achieve that objective. Although we may put forward a list of priorities during an election campaign, the Board agenda schedule and subsequent information and advice from the VSB administration may cause us to alter our views and that is a positive thing, if it is in the best interests of students. 'A good idea, is a good idea wherever the source'. In the end, I will be voting as an individual Trustee given my assessment of the issue. 'Block' or slate voting is not productive if it is not in the best interests of the students, we are elected to serve.

Facilities Planning

8. There are 18 schools with NO PLANS to be made seismically safe and the thinking is that most of these schools are on the VSB Land Asset Strategy which identifies

the closure/consolidation and disposition of 13 schools in addition to the disposition of 8 annexes. Currently, only a [FOI attained version of the strategy is available](#). What's your plan to address the schools that have NO PLANS to be made safe and what are your thoughts about how the long term planning of school closure/consolidation and disposition ought to be done?

The stewardship of the extensive capital assets of the Board – comprising enrolling facilities and related lands is extensive and requires knowledge and expertise. This need has resulted in the Urban Systems June 2020 VSB Land Asset Strategy report. As aspects of the report deals with an in-camera matters, immediate ‘suspicion’ is aroused given the previous school closure debates and the unfulfilled ‘political’ deadlines for the completion of the seismic mitigation program (SMP). A 2020 deadline became 2030 and that will not be attained. Sadly, the politics, lack of confidence in the process and failure to actually locate new or expanded schools where they are needed -- to enable the long-embraced ‘neighbourhood school’ policy to be actualized has caused unproductive concern and decisions. Due to the accepted in-camera nature of land-dealings – a way must be pursued to offer access to the process to partners such as DPAC without risking the integrity of the process but to achieve a degree of comfort that critical discussions do not progress with public consultation. This balance will not be easy but is essential to allay fears that decisions are made behind closed doors. Transparency is essential.

9. What is your/your party's position on children having a school available to attend in their local neighbourhood? How do you see future catchments changing to reflect the city's future growth so that there is school in every community: Ex: Annex land becoming a catchment school in the future?

A fundamental school policy MUST centre around ‘neighbourhood schools’. The reinstitution of ‘cross-boundary restrictions’, the offering of District-programs within each Secondary catchment area would begin a process of once again focusing on full neighbourhood access. Sadly, the location of schools in the 1920's, Junior and Senior Secondary schools in the 1940's, and annexes in the 1950's have not meshed with where children reside today. The slowness of addressing new capacity where it is and will be needed must be pursued and that is a task for Trustees within their mandate. I am aware of efforts by some to assist financially in ensuring that new and renovated schools offer necessary components such as community-access spaces, visual and performance spaces, classrooms incorporating UDL (universal design for learning aspects) and other components that are not deemed ‘essential’ for whatever reason. Ask your MLA! The current MoECC area standards do not ‘Build School Right’ to paraphrase a PAN (Parent Advocacy

Network for Public Education (2020) initiative. This focus will have significant impact upon the VSB's carbon footprint as discussed in Q. # XX. A return to the ability to walk or bike to school is health and good for climate change. Really a no brainer.

10. Does the VSB have too many Kindergarten lotteries for your comfort? If so, what will you do about it?

Yes, but it sadly will take time to obtain the necessary spaces to permit full registration in 'neighbourhood' catchment schools. Making it a key policy will prompt staff to examine ways to achieve it.

11. Mini Case Study: The Fleming surplus land disposition. If elected, the Fleming surplus land (49th Ave. and Knight St.) will be something that you will be deciding on. If you had to choose between:
- a. Keeping the land and developing it for maximum revenue to education (ex: leasehold strata)
or
 - b. Keeping the land and developing it for maximum human resources benefit (ex: workforce housing)
or
 - c. Leasing the land for 99 years for some revenue (ex: Non-profit builds general public affordable rental)
or
 - d. Selling the land to another public organization for one time revenue (ex: sell to BC Housing or City of Vancouver)

Which/What would you choose and why?

Overarching policy should be 'to acquire land and not sell land'. There may cases where long-term leasing and 'land-swaps' make sense and yes, the incidental revenue would assist in righting the chronic and counterproductive systemic financial short-falls faced by the Board. Forward student projections must be undertaken to avoid preventable situations where leased sites are not readily available for enrolling purposes as Vancouver grows.

12. For Capacity utilizations purposes, classroom spaces like sensory rooms, music rooms, childcare, technology and resource rooms, staff rooms, etc do not count. This has negative funding implications and results in schools with more students who have specialized needs as appearing to be under capacity. What is your plan to better understand how many "empty seats" truly exist in VSB schools?

Progress towards the completion of the long promised (see Q. XX) seismic upgrades and rebuilds along with addressing excess demands in certain neighbourhoods must be accelerated. I thought that the arbitrary and seemingly restrictive 95% utilization limit was removed in 2016. The utilization calculation seemed to be flawed and what was in and what was out seemed hard to follow given the layout and actual functioning of functioning schools. Sadly, this was one of 'swords' that could not be addressed given special advisors and auditors along with bullying behaviour during my last term (2014 – 2016). It is in everyone's interest that the process and definitions are understood, if not fully agreed upon. I would see that this conversation be undertaken. For the sake of safety and embracing the undesirability and parental inconvenience for some students to be unable to attend their neighbourhood school or the next nearest school but one that is only accessible by car, is wrong and counter to the communities best interests. This is occurring in the downtown, south False Creek and UBC area amongst others.

13. ONLY in the VSB, is the public forbidden to know about or be involved in the choices for seismic mitigation (upgrade, partially replace, or full replacement) before a Steering Committee makes the decision in-camera. No other BC School District has this anti-democratic restriction. Is the continuance of this clause in the Vancouver Project Office Memorandum of Understanding something that you support?

Public consultation must proceed final decision and I would agree that setting a firm building envelope amount without any consultation and public review of the appropriate factors to consider, is wrong. Many if not most significant decisions are already made before meaningful public consultation is begun. This is compounded by the current habit of not adjusting the announced lump-sum with construction inflation adjustments between initial announcement and actual receipt of tenders. This does not seem right but maybe MLAs should be called to explain the shortcomings rather than School Trustees. I have not been able to find the comparative PO processes for other Districts, referred to in the Question. Please direct me to them, for review.

14. Mini Case Study: David Thompson Secondary

a. Knowns and Unknowns:

- i. VSB did a land swap with Park Board; the school was identified for seismic replacement
- ii. Ministry did not fund; Project definition report (business case) not public
- iii. Applied Skills (Teaching Cafeteria replacement) not funded by Ministry rules

- iv. Was right-sizing the school part of the business case and if not, what would be the implication on other schools, specifically Gladstone
- v. Lifecycle cost and deferred maintenance do not count towards “lowest cost” so upgrading a school may seem less expensive, but on a life cycle cost analysis basis could be much more costly and have suboptimal outcomes for sustainability, accessibility, and student health factors (lead pipes and air quality)

If David Thompson will now be seismically upgraded and Ministry GO will be given to coordinate with when the replacement Hamber is ready so the David Thompson students can move to the old Hamber which will be a swing site, do you feel that this is the right choice? What involvement do you see yourself having in this process?

Boy, lots to consider here. As a new / returning Trustee I recall the multitude of schematics and time-lines trying to achieve a cohesive plan to achieve efficacy while minimizing the impacts of a seismic event while being prudent with the taxpayers money and seeking to upgrade building with an expected 40 year life-span but knowing that they will be there in 80 to 100 years. I agree with swaps, if it is in the best interests of the Board. The ‘cheaper by a penny’ approach which is obvious to comprehensive lifecycle costing and impact upon deferred maintenance is not cost-effective and must be exposed and ended. Punting a problem down the road is not prudent.

Student Learning & Well-Being

15. What do you understand as the purpose of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) resources? Do you support their use?

SOGI resources establish and ensure the maintenance of a safe, inclusive, equitable and welcoming learning environment for ALL learners and those that support them.

I support their use and efforts (such as the hate and harassment reporting tool discussed in Q. 21) to ensure that behaviours that are not consistent with the principles of SOGI are identified and dealt with.

SOGI is a ‘flashpoint’ amongst some parents rather than students. This lack of support by some parents cannot be ignored as their children may express views and behaviours that fail to meet the expected level of acceptance and tolerance. I would defer to experts in this field to advise what our response as a Board should be as nothing should interfere with the implementation of these SOGI resources.

16. What are your thoughts and approach to income inequality within the system?
Specifically when it applies to PAC fundraising as PACs have become the fundraising arm for items previously paid for by the government. Many PACs are capable of raising hundreds of thousands of dollars. Other PACs are barely raising a thousand.

Fundraising can be and should be a contributor to equalization to address 'inequality' within school communities. Care must be taken to re-introduce fundraising into the systems as it has had a rough and unjustified ride in the past. Between 2002 and 2009 the VSB had a public foundation, the Vancouver Public School Foundation. Unfortunately, this was 'voluntarily revoked' rather than made dormant and the countless bequests that were designated to it have been frustrated and not received as the charity no longer existed. Previously, the assumption was the government fully funded its two primary responsibilities – being healthcare and education. Fundraising began to be accepted in the health field in the 1980's however it has been taboo in K-12 education. The reality is that the source of fundraised funds is problematic in the community where it is most needed. It is possible, as demonstrated in other Canadian jurisdictions (Ottawa) that adequate safeguards can be implemented to protect the integrity of the learning environment and accept funds to support much needed purposes from willing individuals, corporations and charitable entities.

17. Student voice is important and the Griffins' Nest Newspaper wrote an editorial in the spring; part of it here:

"The VSB's current level of student consultation currently receives a fantastically failing grade. And there's no public relations spin to put on that statement. Consultation of students consistently appears minimally effectual in the District's decision-making, especially through restrictive surveys. Senior management and trustees need to meaningfully consult with those whose lives board decisions impact the most but have the least voice. A robust framework for collecting and using student input in decision-making is needed."

What is your action plan to have the VSB engage in meaningful student consultation?

Frankly, I have not followed the conflict (I am struggling to find the correct descriptor) between the Board and the students involved with the Griffins' Nest (student) newspaper at Eric Hamber Secondary. This conflict appears to be inconsistent with the efforts of the Board to encourage and strengthen 'student voice'. Examples include the VSB being one of the first school

districts to welcome a Student Trustee to the Board table. Reference to the Public Consultation Policy referred to in Q. XX and the intervention of the current Student Trustee, Mia Liu along with the Vancouver District Students' Council should seek a process to resolve this conflict / dispute as we should be 'leading by example' of cooperation and dialogue rather than seeking progress through FOI requests.

18. How do you/your party define inclusion? How do you see trustees/your party engaging in this area?

- **Disclaimer – I am 10 courses into an MEd in Inclusive Education and this is concept will hopefully be instrumental in address the ALL inclusive classroom with full supports that the education community has been talking about for 40 years.**

This conversation began even prior to the UNESCO 1994 Salamanca Statement and Framework for Actin on Special Needs Education. Unfortunately, strides have been made but its implementation has not been universal and the necessary educational / professional development energy seems to be alluding educators and the VSB.

In its simplest terms, Inclusion is providing supports so that ALL students have equity access to a full educational experience. It is essential that ALL students include those students that are defined by the MoECC as unique and therefore require additional support to address special needs and exceptional students their identified with specific designations or included in unique groups such as indigenous learners, English Language Learners (ELL), students in care and others.

[insert]

19. What is your view on the 5 pillars of equity used as the basis for revisioning of the MACC program and do you feel that these 5 pillars of equity could/should be used to potentially cancel or phase in the cancellation of other programs in the future?

The 5 pillars of equity (admission, service, location, access and development) is a very comprehensive framework to judge a program. In the case, of the MACC program the very arguments of equity would seem to justify an expansion of the program to satisfy the demands of other students as long as the aspects of segregation as illustrated by Shelley Moore are avoided by including these gifted students into the SEL network of a school for a portion of their classes. Would this not be better than depriving them of the classes that they thrive with. [insert]

20. What place do you see for Honours and Advanced Placement (AP) courses in the curriculum?

I see Honours and Advanced Placement (AP) courses as necessary options from which a student may choose. Recent trends to eliminate these course options based upon an equity lens seem counter to my view of inclusion and diversity. Some students seek enriched opportunities. To deprive them of these options is discriminatory and contrary to their social emotional learning success. One caveat is that these courses should not result in segregation. School life includes academic and equally important are social, emotional aspects of learning. The implementation of a Respecting Diversity (RD) program would ensure that self-awareness, social awareness and respectful interactions would exist amongst all students.

21. Would you bring a motion forward to support the creation of a hate and harassment reporting tool that would ensure the school board knows accurately what students and staff are experiencing at schools?

Yes, I would be in favour of examining the creation of a hate and harassment reporting tool which would inform a better understanding of the school environment. This should be an aspect of the mandate of the recently initiated Safe and Caring School Department. Tracking these reports would enable the Board to be proactive rather than following a 'Wait to Fail' approach to critical concerns such as bullying.

22. It can take a long time for students to get an assessment for a designation and many parents end up paying for a private assessment so an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and support resources can be provided faster. How would you address the need to ensure that all students with disabilities and/or diverse abilities get the supports they need regardless of designation?

Early diagnose and early intervention is known to be in the best interest of student progress. This was my key objective when I was elected in 2014. Additional psychoeducational assessment capacity was engaged soon after I was elected but not enough. The 2018 BC Education funding model review and Inclusive Education implementation recommendations prioritized (Recommendation 6, Component 2) funding for unique learners AND identified that care must be taken to ensure that the necessary quantum and flexibility be available to address baseline and increased needs over time. COVID seems to have delayed the trial implementation of these recommendations and I acknowledge that an untested prevalence-based model may not solve the

identified shortcomings of the previous funding model. The current 'overspending' on special education is clearly attributable to the delayed assessments which are the basis of funding and the legislative and human rights imperative to allocate resources to those with special needs even if a formal designation has not been assigned. Sadly, the Elwood and Moore decisions have been all but ignored depriving students of the supports they need in a neighbourhood setting.

This is my passion and the basis of returning to UBC to obtain my MEd. hopefully in 2024. I witnessed the inability of the public school system to deal with my son's dyslexia and it was tragic to see the social emotional toll that he had to deal with. This failure to support ALL students must STOP.

Finally, I note that in the recent BC Budget consultations, Dyslexia BC and others received positive response to including psychoeducational assessments as part of MSP. If this was the case, could the backlogs be eliminated and kept current.

23. How will you accelerate implementing the VSB's long term mission to restore hands-on music education for every child?

The priority is restore hands-on music education along with fine arts. In the case of music, I would initially look to the 2019 Music Review and the progress towards the vision and mission statement for K-7 Music. This process is an example of collaboration between the stakeholders to achieve the objective identified by the Trustees rooted in the priorities of the parents and students.

24. The VSB's Safe and Caring Schools Department has taken the place of the former School Liaison Officer program run in partnership with the Vancouver Police Department. What ways of supporting student safety would you work towards as a trustee? Who needs to be centred in the process of deciding the forms those take?

It is essential that a conversation take place leading to the graduated return of a modified School Liaison Program (SLO) program. A 'wait to fail model' has not worked anywhere, with the community, with addictions and is counterproductive. The decision was made at a time of great debate. What was needed was a fact-based 'made for Vancouver' solution reflecting the generally positive, pathfinding and long-term SLO introduced in 1972.

A number of issues were raised during the consideration of the program. The actual and potential trauma felt by some member of the public is a matter to

address. Care must be taken to implement response and support for member of the school and general community.

Since the decision, I have only spoken to several parents who have been in favour of the decision while I have been approached by many hundreds of students, parents, teachers, support staff, administrators and community members who feel that the complex decision was not in the best interests of the school community and the general community. The recently implemented Safe and Caring Department (SCD) should be part of the modified program. The information, coordination, support and follow-up mandate of the SCD has been a positive improvement within the Board.

Personnel

25. What is your understanding of resource teachers often being pulled to cover enrolling teacher absences (classroom, resource, etc) and do you see a role for trustees in that regard?

Again, this is an example of the severe staffing shortage and once again a solution must be found to the cascading staffing issues that generally impact the most vulnerable unique learners. Mandatory reporting will hi-light the issue and prompt solutions.

26. In your view, does the VSB have a teacher shortage? If No, why? And If so, how would you address it?

**YES, (P.S. – if anyone says NO, the rest of us would be pleased to chat with them before you print their final submission and embarrass themselves)
A teacher shortage had been evident prior to the 2016 BCTF Supreme Court of Canada decision regarding classroom size and composition. Sadly, the settlement resulted in a unfulfilled need for more enrolling teachers and in many cases the trickle-down solution caused exclusion issues with the very unique learners that the case was intended to assist.**

Teacher shortages and surpluses have been a yo-yo in BC over the years. The shortage issues is further complicated as some teaching specialties are constantly in short supply such as music, French, advanced level maths and sciences.

Several decades ago, community placements during their pre-service practicums were introduced to attempt to deal with unemployment. I mention this because this placement is still being offered when a severe shortage exists. This 3-week session would be better targeting at placement in special need environments but that is another issue that caring Trustees should

address (related to Q. XX) One interim solution, is less-than ideal one of the Teacher Regulation Branch (TRB) offering 'term-specific interim licenses' to teacher in Vancouver along with a completion education plan with a local Faculty of Education (UBC, SFU, OUBC, TWU or UNBC) This is currently used to place XX qualified individuals in out-of-the-Mainland school districts. The recent focus on addressing the access to affordable childcare may further impact the teacher shortage. It is my understanding from a course I recently took (EDED 420) that one pool of potential teachers are early childhood educations working in the childcare sector. There could be a cascading effect which will negatively impact the progress of our learners. The VSB gain would be pyrrhic as the early care and develop of children will impact those students arriving for K.

27. If you got an email from a parent reporting the lack of an educational assistant for their child who has a designation and IEP, what would you do?

Cry. This situation is not hypothetical as I heard these cries for change when I was Chair in 2024/15. Sometimes it was the lack of EAs but sometimes it was the lack of an EA with the necessary experience to address the needs of the student.

My immediate response would be to refer the matter to staff for immediate attention. There is a proper sense of urgency. 'Excluded time' is not just lost time but previous progress may be threatened.

This lack of 'comfort' and experience with learners displaying certain characteristics was not unusual. As a result, I approached an educational leader to see if a solution could be found to increase the knowledge of resource and enrolling teachers, administrators, support staff such as EAs as part of a certificate or diploma professional development offering in cooperation with the BCTF, CUPE and the MoECC. (apologies if I missed someone). Sadly, our term of office was abruptly ended.

Finance

28. When considering the VSB budget, what revenue generating sources and/or cost saving opportunities do you see?

Although, I am an accountant, I have no 'silver bullet' to solve the systemic shortfall that the VSB faces each year. The 2018 Budget Review (Q. XX) does not guarantee additional funding as the study specifically precluded consideration of the 'envelope quantum' (page 34 ?) but fortunately the 'esteemed' panel was bold enough to recommend that direct access to the

Treasury Board was appropriate with an appeal in the case of special need funding

Although, fundraising has had a difficult journey at the VSB, in the past, it is one avenue that could provide significant assistance without the negative implications that have been attributed to it, by some, in the past.

Fundraising is one source that is equitable in the sense that outside public sources are generally willing to support causes in the vary communities where fundraising amongst parents is not appropriate. Many schools such as Britannia have been very successful in attracting substantial bursary funds to support graduating students. This opportunity should be examined and gauged as to potential with the appropriate safeguards identified so as to not compromise the educational integrity of the public education system. Some examples of successful program exist in Ottawa.

FACT: The VSB established a public foundation, the Vancouver Public Schools Foundation', in about 2002. It was voluntarily revoked in 2009 rather than being made 'dormant'. Sadly, all the subsequent bequests and gifts designated to it were frustrated or 'rejected', as it no longer existed.

In recent past, new initiatives or inflation have not been funded by the MoECC but they have suggested that they be funded with 'operating efficiencies'. Although critical 'zero-based' budgeting should be undertaken to identify unnecessary expenditures, wholesale efficiencies no longer exist and then it becomes a case of 'rearranging the deckchairs of the Titanic'.

The current inflationary pressures facing this incoming Board will be unprecedented in recent memory (or at least to the early 1980's).

I appreciate the difficult fiscal allocation of scarce resource decisions that the Provincial Government must make but what learners should be abandoned'.

29. The Stewardship model says "work within your budget" and the Advocacy model says "we need more funds." How will you balance these two models?

Both models have their faults. In the long run, do we want 'to do the best we can, with the resources we have' or 'do the best you can and strive for excellence'?. The first accepts failure and we must put a cost on that.

The stewardship model accepts mediocrity and the advocacy model must adequately justify the request for more funds. We need an 'educational economic' justification for our requests. I am not naive, but many cuts are not justified in the long-term.

30. Are you in favour of releasing the more detailed departmental (divisional) budgets at the start of the budget consultation cycle? If not, why. And If so, how would you address it?

If releasing the budgets in a more detailed format will prompt creative and innovative suggestions and solutions, then it worth a try. I recall comments from some stakeholders that some suggestions such as the student supply fee should be reexamined but it was not there place as administrators to make those suggestions. This hesitation may have been abandoned but if it hasn't – it and other suggestions should be made.

The MoECC must be approached with a business case – “pay me now or pay (much) more later”. If learners learn better earlier then early diagnosis and early intervention (Q. XX) is more cost-effective and eliminates or reduces the need to address the negative social and emotional costs of not addressing learning differences early.

31. Sir Guy Carleton Elementary had a fire in 2016 and has been closed since then and you, if elected, will be deciding on what to do. What's your financial vision that will drive your decision?

I recall attending to the smoldering remains of Carleton Elementary, just a week before the September opening in 2015. I would reiterate my principle of lease or swap not sell as noted in Q. XX. The location of Carleton in the bustling Collingwood community would have to be examined in light of the major arterial streets that are located on three sides of the school.

This school site must be examined along with others in determining the current and long-term needs for enrolling spaces.

One possible scenario to consider is whether a non-VSB funded archives and / or Museum and may there are filming opportunities as a revenue source or offset. Just thinking outside the box, as this DPAC questionnaire is about to come to an end.

Active Transportation And Safe Routes to School

32. Will you/your party address safe(er) routes to school and active travel for students that are vulnerable road users? If yes, how?

Some Safe routes to school programs (SRtS) and Active Transportation Promotion and Enabling Plan (ATPEP) initiatives have been undertaken under the City of Vancouver Climate Emergency Action Plan but these have been few

and far between. When elected I would initiate efforts to accelerate these initiatives.

I am the Vancouver Police Department School Safety Patrol trainer and have been for about 15 years. This program is excellent but its existence has been reduced from the majority of elementary school to a small fraction. The encouragement of this program makes sense from a pedestrian safety justification but it serves as a community leadership opportunity. I have noticed that traffic circulation plans, signage, X-walk markings are a total hodge-podge and only waiting for a tragedy to occur.

Complimentary programs exist in Vancouver such as Walking School Bus (WSB), School Streets and School Active Travel Education. Some would require funding and some depend upon parent volunteers. Trustees could and should advocate for these programs.

Sustainability

33. What is you/your party's stance on climate change and do you see that influencing decisions as a trustee? Please share any relevant examples.

My stance on climate change is that it exists and its impact and mitigation must be interwoven into our daily lives and especially the K-12 curriculum. The recently approved Coal Harbour Elementary School is to be built to Passive House Standards. Hopefully, this trend will be continued in other MoECC approved projects. Are there not other steps that can be taken to demonstrate that the Board is 'walking the talk' when it comes to a climate change response. The VSB 'sustainability committee' has undertaken many environmental initiatives and with direction they can continue to offer suggestions.

Child Care

34. For primary school parents the availability of before and after school care is often an issue. What role do you see for the Trustees and the VSB in improving access to care?

It is essential that the Board embrace those outside partners that provide services and programs complementing our mandate. It is my belief that many parents make decisions of student enrollment more on the basis of available before and after school care than on the school. In the past, the offering of before and after school programs was a decision of outside groups and the Board was ambivalent to the offerings. A 'partnership office' must be

established to encourage, facilitate and coordinate essential programs such as before and after school programs. I recently spoke with the Executive Director of a major service provider who stated that unlike other SD, the VSB did not seem to overtly seek before and after school operators. Like breakfast programs, it is not a traditional enrolling mandate of the VSB but it is critical and essential that we be proactive and welcoming. The necessary funding to provide this coordination position should not be a burden on the teaching resources of the Board but be funds sought from willing philanthropic donors.

35. Reflecting that the Ministry of Education is now the Ministry of Education and Child Care, what changes do you think will be required to incorporate before and after school care and 0 to 5 childcare?

Firstly, I would enquire as to why the Ministry did not include the phrase Early Childhood Development in its name (as has been done elsewhere – Nova Scotia in about 2008). Just saying – words count.

There are two separate but related aspects of this question – one before and after school care and one 0 to 5 childcare. Again as with K- 12 school, adequate qualified staff and facilities are in short supply.

The VSB has been consistent in incorporating new childcare spaces into its building plans where outside fundings is available. Consideration of reintroducing MoECC funded ‘junior kindergarten’ along with the utilization of surplus school space to house childcare spaces should be considered.

Having said this, the staffing and skill shortages rampant in the K-12 system may be complicated as early childhood education becomes a part of childcare. School Trustees have a responsibility to advocate for the necessary education opportunities to address these shortages and retention issues especially when then result in systemic ‘exclusion’ of special need students.

Reconciliation & Indigenous Learners

36. How do you define reconciliation and what are the opportunities that you see?

I define reconciliation as a journey of understanding of the circumstances that indigenous people have had to deal with. The process of one that we must address as it is our problem and not that of indigenous peoples.

Understanding what came before such as residential schools will hopefully assist in understanding wait must be done to move forward. [insert]

Although I could not find the quote, I recall Senator Murray Sinclair noting that ~ Education (Residential Schools) contributed to the problem and our public school system can contribute to the journey of reconciliation as part of the solution. [I will endeavor to find the reference and citation].

The recently adopted Education Plan 2026 will ensure that journey of reconciliation and concrete action to implement the T&RC Calls to Action within our scope of responsibility.

37. VSB's completion rates: Indigenous completion rate is 66% and non-Indigenous completion rate is 91%. What ideas do you have to close the gap and over what time frame?

Although significant strides have been made, further progress to close the gap must be a 'dashboard' indicator tracked by the Board. I would defer to a working group to advise on the appropriate time frame. Therefore, funding opportunities should be examined. Building on the most recent Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (2016 to 2021) closing the gap should be an objective. Some possible ideas are to seek Federal Truth and Reconciliation implementation funding. This could be a source of additional Indigenous Education Enhancement Workers.

I admit that I have not updated myself on the Indigenous Focus program at xpey School but could creating a UBC Indigenous Teacher Education Program (NITEP) teaching education site encourage the success of this program.