

2026 School District Trustee Candidate Questionnaire

Core Responsibilities

- Set Strategic Direction: Create multi-year strategic plans and policies that guide student learning and district priorities.
- Manage Finances: Approve annual operating budgets and capital plans to ensure public funds support student success.
- Hire Leadership: Appoint and evaluate the school district superintendent (or chief executive officer).
- Represent the Community: Listen to local families, taxpayers, and Indigenous communities, bringing their concerns to the board table.

Questions:

1. What are your 3 main reasons for running for School Trustee?
 - I have over 30 years of experience in teaching and bring knowledge to the board.
 - I am passionate about students receiving the best education possible as I know they are the future of Kelowna. If we can build a desire for learning in our students they will set goals for the future.
 - Finances in the District need to be managed to ensure that all children are able to succeed regardless of their area of the city.
2. Do you support the replacement of RMS? Many new schools have been built and others renovated to accommodate more students while Rutland Middle School, that is now over 70 years old, has only been renovated. What efforts would you make as a Trustee to have Rutland Middle School replaced rather than 'renovated'? If so how is this going to be achieved?
 - Rutland Middle and Secondary will be given an addition and have added capacity. As you note only Glenmore Elementary is 2nd in age.
3. Are you in favour of better administration of the rules around EV bikes and scooters?
 - Yes, Any motorized bike or scooter needs to be ridden responsibly as it is a method of transportation first. This means that rules of the road for the driver and pedestrian should be applied.
4. Are you aware of the traffic jams on Rutland road as a result of uncontrolled crossing at RMS? If so what are your plans to alleviate the jams?
 - The traffic on Rutland Rd. is bad as it is one of our main traffic throughfares. At present there is a crosswalk but it is unmanned. This is a safety issue and truthfully I don't know who's jurisdiction that falls under. The city has tried to change the timing of traffic lights to relieve problems in other areas but I think the main problem is that as a main traffic corridor there is no alternative route for most people. How has this problem been tackled in other neighbourhoods? Has the city been asked for solutions? This is a good time to get everyone's attention to this problem.
5. We understand that bullying has become a major issue within School District #23 (Central Okanagan) resulting in some parents removing their child(ren) from one school and placing them in another or even resorting to homeschooling. What would you do to help ensure that the 0 Tolerance Policy is enforced throughout the school district and that victims are heard and not punished for standing up for themselves?
 - Awareness is the first step. All Students need to understand that all Bullying is prohibited, it is not funny or an innocent prank

- Acknowledge that all members of the school should be treated with respect.
- Allow safe person within the school to be available for students to talk to. This could be the principal.
- Provide a place where students can drop off anonymous tips. (like a suggestion box),
- Punishment (to be determined, must be age appropriate and include taking an anti-bullying course. Punishment could be loss of Privileges and if the bullying is severe the use of Expulsion etc.
- Restorative measure should be used.
- Student's parents should be notified by the school principal.
- Teacher training in anti-bullying should be maintained

6. Too often we hear that students with exceptional needs are not being allowed on school field trips because the support is not there. What efforts would you make as a Trustee to ensure that all students are able to participate equally?

- Of course, all Students should be ensured the same educational experiences. There are situations when students with health difficulties may be in a dangerous situation. As a Special Education Teacher, I know that difficulties can arise on field trips but with diligence, long-term planning and parental support most challenges can be solved. An example would be a severe asthmatic with bronchial triggers visiting an area with a high pollen count or a forested area where mold may trigger an attack. A safe environment would provide a safer environment. Educational Assistants are very helpful to ensure students with *exceptional* needs can attend field trips. During COVID the province did increase the number of Educational Aids and there is an ever-increasing demand for them. At the present time there are 7 unfilled placements posted. Parents/Guardians must have documented evidence of their child's needs to ensure the delivery of extra funds from the Province.
- Districts get extra targeted funding for students with more intensive, documented needs (such as physical dependencies, profound intellectual disabilities, or autism spectrum. Unfortunately, there is a funding gap that in some schools have been partially covered by the discretionary funding, Because all partners in education have the child at the core of their education goals, I believe that cooperation will solve this problem.

Thank you for the opportunity!

Deb Dickerson-Pogue