

Response to DPAC & PGDTA Questions by Trustee Candidate; Don Sabo

DPAC Questions:

1. I am running for school trustee because I believe public education for our children is critically important to their future well-being and their ability to be positive contributors to our society.
2. I believe that within a diverse society, our choice of educational programs should reflect that diversity. We have seen reductions to choice programming, and the virtual elimination of dual-track French Language programs. I will champion choice schooling whether it is: Traditional, Montessori, French immersion, Aboriginal, or any other type of choice school or program.
3. There has been reluctance in the past about having “Committees of the Whole” trustee meetings, due to a perception that School Board decisions would be made “behind closed doors”. I believe there has been too much committee level discussion taking place at School Board level meetings. To address these issues and provide greater transparency and accountability to the School Board decision making process, I propose that all School Board Committee meetings be held in the public domain. Any subjects that would be deemed confidential or sensitive in nature could be vetted before these public committee meetings and addressed in an in-camera meeting.

PGDTA Questions:

1. In 2002-2003 targeted funding for Special Education / IEP support for mildly mentally challenged, learning disabilities, gifted and moderate behaviour students was discontinued and embedded in the basic per student block funding. This has reduced the funding and student support resources needed for grey area students. I would lobby the Ministry of Education to return that money they have taken from those special needs students. I agree that the number of classes that exceed 3 IEP students be included in the Superintendent’s Class Size and Composition Report, the composition part of the report has been missing. There needs to be movement on some of the collective bargaining issues currently in dispute between the BC Public School Employers Association and the BCTF. The BC Supreme Court has ruled that class size and composition is a right that needs to be included in the collective bargaining process. I believe that the relationship between the BC Public School Employers Association and BCTF is toxic and unproductive and does not reflect the kind of working relationship the school board and the PGDTA has or should have at the district level. As an elected trustee I would provide clear direction to the BCPSEA that, although they are bargaining on the school board’s behalf, they are not acting in a productive or respectful manner in the collective bargaining process.
2. In my role as DPAC Chair, I was very active in identifying funding issues and government initiatives that were counter-productive to the provision of quality education to our students/children. When necessary I will take a stand and publically challenge any provincial initiative that is not in the best interest of quality public education for our students.
3. 21st Century learning initiatives? I have heard this vague concept of learning before but there is no specific information that fully defines what 21st century learning is. As far as far as ensuring teachers have input in the implementation of this new learning initiative, I would want teacher input well before implementation, rather I would want teacher input in the development stage.

Respectfully Submitted; Don Sabo School District 57 School Trustee Candidate