

Submitted by Rhonda White-November 6, 2011.

October 24, 2011.

Dear Trustee Candidate,

The Prince George District Teachers' Association (PGDTA) and DPAC (District Parent Advisory Council) would like to pose a few questions to you around your desire to become a School Trustee. We appreciate the time that you will be taking to complete these questions; as well we would ask that you keep to a one-page document length. Your response will be distributed, as part of an election package, at the **School Trustees All Candidate Forum on Wednesday November 9 at 7PM at the Prince George Playhouse**. This information will also be communicated electronically via the DPAC website <http://sd57dpac.ca/> and the PGDTA folder on the SD57 internal email system. We would appreciate this document be returned to the PGDTA via tcousins@sd57.bc.ca by Friday November 4, 2011.

DPAC Questions:

- 1) Why are you running for school trustee? **I have 3 children who attend school in SD57 and I believe it is important to be an advocate for them and all children in the district. I come from a family that supports political activity and speaking out in support of what you believe in. I believe in public education and fighting for the best possible education for all our children. I absolutely cannot sit idly by and wait for others to make decisions for our children when I know that I am an effective voice and can continue in that regard in the future.**

- 2) What is your position on choice of school and programming in School District 57? **I think that opportunities of choice are important. Prior to moving to the Prince George Region, my two oldest were in French Immersion in Manitoba. I am proud of the opportunities that our District provides our children and families, in the French Immersion, Montessori and Aboriginal Choice programs. I believe that these choices make our District more appealing to families who are looking to relocate from other areas.**

- 3) How will you ensure that parents and other education partners are involved in decision-making? **The last 3 years has been a time of considerable upheaval and change due to decisions that have been handed down by government at the provincial level. I believe now is the time to become more transparent and seek input from all our community partners with regards to the education of our children. We need to have more involvement from community groups, the City of Prince George, RDEFG and Municipal governments from Mackenzie, McBride and Valemount. The only way we can ensure that the future of all our children is being met, along with their families, is through effective partnerships with open communication and planning.**

PGDTA Questions:

1) What specific actions would you take to ensure better classroom composition for the students of School District 57? **I have already been advocating for changes to the funding for Special Education and plan to continue this. If it hasn't been loud enough, I have no problem with being louder. The Northern Interior Branch is always very well represented by SD57 and I plan on running for Chair of the NIB again, which I did previously, against Roxanne Ricard. I believe that having people on our Board who have children or other family members in the educational system is an absolute necessity. As well, I have a broader understanding of the children who may or should be classified as 1701 due to my volunteer work and also through my paid employment. I know what difficulties our children have, what they are coming from and what we need to do to help them. Again, I don't have a problem speaking up.**

2) How do you plan to advocate for District 57 students even if it means opposing government initiatives? **As I mentioned above, being Chair of the Northern Interior Branch is one plan. As well, I have been quite vociferous in the presentation of motions brought forward to BCSTA on behalf of not only our Board, but of those across the province. While at provincial meetings, I am frequently at the microphone voicing my support or displeasure at the motions being brought forward. I do not support frivolous motions & I have absolutely no difficulty opposing motions that support the government if they are not in the best interest of our children, their education, or our employees.**

3) How will you ensure teachers have input in the implementation of 21st century learning initiatives? **I believe it is very important that our teachers are actively involved in the process of identifying what 21st Century Learning will be for our District. We need to have consultation from our teachers, as they are the front line staff responsible for delivering whatever is decided that 21st century learning means for our children. I will make sure that everyone is aware of the necessity of teacher input at all levels of the decision making process & I will fight for teacher representation during this process.**

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Matt Pearce or Tina Cousins at the PGDTA office, (250) 562-7214. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Tina Cousins
First Vice President, PGDTA

