

Bob Schroeder Introduction:

Tell us about yourself and why you are running or what you hope to achieve.

Hi Everyone, my name is Bob Schroeder.

I am married to my wife Melanie and we have a son who recently graduated from grade 12.

I am also the Program Manager at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northern BC and prior to becoming a social worker I worked in the forest industry for many years.

I believe we have a lot of really great people in our schools, who work really hard,

But I also believe very strongly that SD57 is mired in a Culture of Politics which often keeps us and our children from achieving great education outcomes.

As a trustee one of the top priorities will be to listen to parents, teachers, support staff, and students, so that I can provide leadership in determining a way forward in SD57 in order to create a Culture of Education in our schools where every student has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

I thank you all for your support in this.

Question 1 from CUPE Local 3742:

What do you view as your responsibility in relation to senior management?

First of all, trustees are members of an elected board, and so are entrusted to make decisions within that context as part of a board.

So the responsibility to senior management really rests with adhering to the Boards relationship with the Superintendent of Schools, who is the boards only employee.

The responsibility of a trustee therefore as a member of the board is to:

1. Select a Superintendent of Schools
2. Provide them with clear direction
3. Support them in their role carrying out executive action
4. Refer operational and administrative matters to them while providing governance and overall direction
5. But also to assess the performance of the Superintendent annually
6. And to complete an annual review of the School District Organization Chart and grant approval to the addition or removal of positions
7. I also feel very strongly that Trustees have a responsibility and duty to behave in a respectful and ethical manner not only towards all senior management but towards all SD57 staff and citizens of their communities regardless of differing viewpoints.
8. As Trustee's we need to set the example for everyone else to follow in our School District.

Question 2 from PGDTA:

School District 57 continues to face a six-year shortage of teachers in all of its communities. This has already resulted in over 20 thousand hours of lost support to students and District assessment data shows that vulnerable students are not reaching education achievement benchmarks in multiple areas.

What are your ideas for teacher recruitment and retention and how would you advocate at both local and provincial levels for a fully funded serious recruitment and retention plan?

I think we need to first understand that teacher recruitment and retention is not only a local issue but is a wide spread provincial issue.

At the provincial level we need to advocate openly and strongly for dedicated provincial funding for teacher recruitment and retention.

However, we need real evidence based planning that draws from the experiences of teachers so that funding initiatives are properly targeted.

We also need to have a discussion at the provincial level regarding aging infrastructure and better facilities, and how this is impacting teacher recruitment and retention. In SD57 many of our schools are ready to age out.

SD57 Needs to have a seat at that discussion table with the ministry of education.

At the local level we need to start by reviewing current teacher recruitment and retention policy and practice in SD57.

We need to then have an open dialogue with Teachers in our district to get their input regarding their experiences in working here.

- What brought them here to teach
- What keeps them here
- What makes them want to leave

We can the prioritize an action plan, within a proposed budget, regarding recruitment and retention of teachers.

We also need to address the mental health crisis in our schools, not only for students but for all Teachers and Support staff.

Ultimately, our teachers are the districts best sales people when it comes to promoting SD57. But first, we need to ensure that our school district is truly a great place to be a Teacher.

Question 3 from DPAC:

What does accountability mean to you and increasing accountability in SD57?

In order for a trustee to increase accountability in SD57, especially with Parents, they need to first live up to the expectations that are set for them by those Parents.

This means that trustees must engage in their role in a way that instills trust from parents.

In order to regain the trust of many parents in SD57, that I feel has been lost over the last few years,

we need to ensure that parents are heard, that their concerns are truly addressed and that they have a voice as equal partners in their child's education.

To be held accountable requires that trustees ensure that parents have a mechanism to do so and are not shut out of the process of education.

As a trustee, one of my roles regarding accountability will be to promote extensively the parents right to hold trustees accountable,

And to engage in a process where this moves beyond just words but into actions,

that show parents they are being heard when they have concerns about their children's education

- We need to show parents that they are respected for who they are and for the vital role they play in their children's education.
- All of this is how we achieve greater accountability.