

Trustee candidate answers from Stuart Nixon

- 1. It is acknowledged that poverty has a serious impact on student learning outcomes. As a Trustee, please list some of the ways in which you would advocate for the Division to support students in need on this issue?**

Attending school as an impoverished student is difficult as it can carry stigma in our upper/middle class neighborhoods. I would advocate to address this stigma as well as actions including offerings of school supplies, meals and transportation programs. Food security, supplies and access to schools are a priority for successful learning.

- 2. In previous years, the Division has experienced a shortage of Substitute Teachers and as a result, positions have gone unfilled during a teacher absence. Which ideas do you have to address this problem?**

We must create a larger pool of substitute teachers and consider the use of surplus teachers to provide coverage during absences.

- 3. What are some practical ways in which you as a Trustee will foster and build relationships between the Division and the Teaching Staff?**

I plan to be present in the schools during special events and personally connect with division and teaching staff in order to establish trusting relationships. I will be accessible and approachable as I listen to issues and concerns.

- 4. The Manitoba government has released its Education review which raised issues around Division amalgamation, public education funding and improving learning outcomes. What are your concerns with the Education review? What is your hope?**

My concern is that Bill 64 was created as a financial priority. A "one size fits all" will not lead to greater student outcomes. Our communities are diverse and communities need to have the ability to influence approaches to education.

- 5. First Nations students are amongst the most vulnerable learners in the Division. What steps will you take as a Trustee to strengthen supports for First Nation Students? How will you advance and implement the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's Calls to Action 62 and 63?**

In addition to supporting treaty education training for educators, I would encourage them to utilize any number of the following courses of action while preparing unit plans for all subject areas:

- Include Elders and parents in learning plans.
- Explore ways to discuss Indigenous world views.
- Utilize Indigenous learning spaces.
- Create opportunities to educate students on the Calls to Action.
- Consult with our division's Indigenous support team.
- Teach Indigenous successes as well as trauma.

- 6. Some school divisions have chosen to deal with inadequate funding levels from government by increasing class sizes, cutting access to clinicians and intervention specialists, etc. These decisions**

**impact student learning. How will you ensure services are preserved? What will you do as a Trustee to ensure education funding levels are stable, predictable, and adequate?**

There needs to be equity across the division when it comes to spending. As trustee, my priority for spending would be student centered. We should not resurface parking lots if it means less laptops in students' hands or less smart technology in our class rooms. Open dialog between educators and the board regarding front line resources will be strongly encouraged.

7. **Recent shifts in social attitudes have led to conversations about systemic biases and racism. As a Trustee, how would you help ensure that the Division explores potential systemic biases within the Division? In your view, how should plans for examining and rectifying such matters be developed?**

Systemic biases need to be identified and addressed. This should be prioritized for division wide professional development as it is a cross curricular issue. These conversations can be difficult but are needed to create a more open and inclusive environment for our students. We need to reflect, educate and initiate meaningful conversations to rectify these matters.

8. **How will you ensure that the Division studies closely the idea of full-day kindergarten and other programs related to early childhood education to ensure a successful start for early learners?**

There is a needs factor involved in full day Kindergarten and other early childhood education programs. We need to learn the needs of our constituents and research best practice for student achievement prior to determining programing offerings within the division.