

If you are elected to represent us in Victoria as our MLA

- 1. We face significant issues with recruitment of qualified and specialist teachers in our region. This has a direct and detrimental impact on student learning. What policies would you implement to ensure our districts are adequately staffed, and that our students are not getting shortchanged?***

Recruitment of qualified individuals is an ongoing issue in Peace River South, not only in education but in healthcare, social services, and many other vital fields. It is an issue I am very aware of, and I am committed to both expanded training options for local residents as well as taking steps to attract and retain talent from around the province as needed.

A major part of the BC NDP platform addresses the need to make life more affordable in our province. Some of the ways we plan to address this pressing issue include gradually raising the minimum wage over 4 years to \$15/hour, making housing more affordable by building 114,000 new units, implementing \$10/day childcare, and getting rid of MSP fees. I believe these changes will help to ease the financial burden on workers, making it easier to relocate and stay in smaller communities. I am committed to keeping the costs of living low in Peace River South, so that we can have competitive rates of recruitment.

- 2. Retention is also an issue that we in the North are facing more and more as young people come into our area, gain a few years of experience, and proceed to move elsewhere in the province or into Alberta to continue their careers. Especially in the case of teachers moving into Alberta it is a case of higher salary with similar or lower cost of living. How would you help ensure that the quality teachers we do recruit stay in our area to raise families, buy houses, and create that consistency for our students?***

Staff retention is another ongoing issue plaguing Northeastern BC. I have been hearing concerns from a variety of community members about the challenges of keeping talent in the Peace Region. A friend in healthcare even joked about marrying nurses off to locals to keep them in town!

Five years ago, my husband and I chose to relocate to Dawson Creek for several reasons including the relatively low cost of housing, job availability, and higher wages. These are factors that need to be maintained and improved upon, and the BC NDP is equipped to do so.

- 3. How will you make sure educational inclusion is done effectively in our region?***

After 16 years of BC Liberal neglect, it is time to examine our school funding formula to ensure it meets the needs of children and communities. A BC NDP government is committed to a comprehensive review of BC's current K-12 funding formula to move BC's school system to a better, more stable and sustainable model for investing in education. Christy Clark's current per-pupil funding model doesn't work for the differing costs of education in BC's rural, suburban and inner city schools.

4. *What is your view on class size and composition and how do you plan to ensure that this critical aspect of our education system is guaranteed?*

The BC NDP has strong ties with labour, and we would never disrespect a collective agreement the way the Liberals did with teachers. We will work towards restoring the funding and staffing levels stripped by Christy Clark, and will work collaboratively with teachers in the collective bargaining process when they look to renegotiate in 2019.

5. *How will you fight to make sure teachers have sufficient specialist support and all students are given the support needed to reach their potential?*

The BC NDP believe that the best way to build a strong economy for today and tomorrow is to invest in the success of our kids, and unlike the BC Liberals, we don't need the Supreme Court to tell us to fund education properly.

For us, investing in our kids' success means providing stability in the classroom, ensuring all kids have the time and attention they need to do their absolute best, and putting an end to parents fundraising for the essentials.

6. *BC is undergoing a massive shift in its curriculum. What is your view on current assessment practices and how this is reported to parents, guardians, post-secondary institutions, and other stakeholders?*

This is not a topic I am well versed on, and I welcome your comments and concerns about the current assessment practices. It may be that current practices do not capture all the factors that go into assessments, but any changes to these methods will need consultation with and buy-in from all stakeholders.

7. *With the new, more innovative curriculum, what do you see as important areas to focus funding on as elementary teachers continue to need support and secondary teachers roll it out in their subject areas?*

We will work with school districts to successfully implement BC's new school curriculum and provide new technology, lab equipment, learning material and professional development support for teachers.

We will also help our kids to lead in the new economy. We will provide supports to learn coding in the classroom and partner with innovative not-for-profits and technology companies in BC that teach coding in schools and afterschool programs. We will support the expansion of digital arts, technology and trades education, and make tools, machinery and equipment available to students.

8. *Over the last 10 years funding to independent schools had increased 92% while funding to public schools has only increased by 19% (from cbc.ca, Vancouver Sun and Ministry of Education). What is your position on the use of public funds for independent schools?*

The BC NDP has no plans to change the current funding to private/independent schools, but we will be providing an additional \$30 million per year to the public system for supplies and other resources. We believe in the right of parents to choose the type of schooling they want for their kids, but it stands to reason that the public system should receive the majority of public education funds.