

# VSBC Trustee Candidate Responses to Parent Questions

October 4, 2017 UPDATED



We have included each candidate's responses word for word, and have not edited any of the answers. The responses are arranged alphabetically by candidates' last names.

## 1. What skills would you bring to a trustee position and why should Vancouverites vote for you as an individual (leaving aside party affiliation)?

<p>Alexander, Joy</p>	<p>In 2014 I told people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I went to public school. My three sons went to Vancouver public schools. I am hoping my grandchildren will go to Vancouver public school.</li> <li>• I have spent the last forty years involved in public education</li> <li>• I was a classroom teacher at the elementary level</li> <li>• I was a LAC and resource room teacher</li> <li>• I have a PhD in educational psychology and worked as a school psychologist with the Vancouver Board and then as a psychologist in private practice</li> <li>• I was an adjunct professor at the university teaching others to work with children in our school system, particularly those with special needs</li> <li>• I have worked with children with learning difficulties and special needs. I have worked with Aboriginal children and ESL students</li> <li>• I believe I understand the challenges and frustrations facing students, teachers and parents in our school system.</li> </ul> <p>Those things have not changed.</p> <p>But today in 2017 I can also say that I served on the Board for two years and have a good understanding of the workings of that organization. Although I think it is good to have "new eyes and new perspectives" from colleagues such as Theodora Lamb, I believe with only a year before the next election it is prudent to have experienced people elected to the board also. Even with forty years of experience, I found the learning curve of the inner workings of the Board to be very steep. I would like to put that learning to good use.</p> <p>It goes without saying, that I would also like the opportunity of working with the new government in Victoria, which I feel is more focused on public education than the previous government.</p>
<p>Arnold, Christine</p>	<p>Many of the skills on which I depend to be effective in my role as senior counsel for a large, diversified company - providing practical advice to address complex areas of law and policy, building consensus among multiple stakeholders, making informed decisions premised on careful analysis of facts and research, and working under pressure and in the face of competing interests - are skills on which I will lean to make a valuable contribution as a Trustee. On a personal note, as an alumna of VSB schools and a grateful beneficiary of high quality public education that provided me with all of the tools and opportunities to bring my academic and professional aspirations to fruition, I am highly motivated to champion similarly powerful outcomes for current and future generations of students.</p>
<p>Ballantyne, Fraser</p>	<p>As a 40 year veteran in the field education in Vancouver, I have always strived for excellence in delivering the highest quality teaching for our students. My vast experience base working with ESL, downtown east side inner city youth, Indigenous south side youth in 5 secondary schools has provided me with a strong insight of the issues and concerns of students, parents &amp; teachers in Vancouver. As an experienced trustee and former chair, my decisions have always been based on common sense of what's best for students.</p>

**1. What skills would you bring to a trustee position and why should Vancouverites vote for you as an individual (leaving aside party affiliation)? (continued)**

Bercic, Carrie	<p>I am a parent of two grown children (ages 20 &amp; 23) that have gone through the public school system here in Vancouver. I have been involved in the district as a member of PAC Executives, a DPAC representative, a long-time public education advocate, a volunteer, and have been actively involved in numerous public education campaigns and groups over the last 19 years. My children have both graduated but I remain deeply committed to public education both in this district and across the province. I am currently a member of the Public Education Project, a member on leave of Families Against Cuts to Education (FACE) and the Parent Advocacy Network (PAN), and am Chair of Friends of the School Library (FOSL). Since the 2014 municipal election I have been attending all board and committee meetings at VSB as an observer in order to better understand the complexities of the district. Through my advocacy work I have developed relationships with members of local and provincial governments, multiple stakeholder unions, teachers, staff, and parents. In addition to a proven record of strong public education advocacy, I have taken workplace courses and seminars in Communication Building, Conflict Resolution, and Leadership. I feel these skills will be an asset as a trustee. Vancouverites should vote for me if they want a trustee that is passionate about public education, has a proven record in the district, and who is willing to work across party lines in order to make the best possible decisions for students.</p>
Clement, Ken	<p>As a leader, I strongly believe that everyone should be treated with respect because everyone is a leader in their own right. I see my role as a School Board Trustee as part of a circle, as everyone contributes in different ways. My role would be to listen and give voice to stakeholders including children, vulnerable students and families, parents, teachers, support staff, and administration. Through this work, I see myself in a position of servant leadership which puts others first to address social inequities. As part of my leadership approach, I collaborate with everyone engaged in the school system, and welcome diverse perspectives. I value a big picture plan which is built upon empathy, community building and interconnectedness, and creates a vision for the broader community.</p> <p>Beyond expressing these values, I have worked to implement them throughout my career and personal and professional endeavors. In particular, I plan to take a diplomatic role in advocating for Indigenous student success which will contribute to the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. Towards this end, there is a need for community-wide learning and understanding of Indigenous Peoples history in Canada and internationally from a strengths-based perspective. In my last term as School Board Trustee, I am proud of bringing to life the first LGBTQ2S Policy, which was the first of its kind in BC.</p>
Day, Diana	<p>Did not receive a response.</p>
Dominato, Lisa	<p>As a trustee, I would bring pragmatic leadership, governance, and sound judgment to the board table, drawing on my professional experience of working as the Director of Student Wellness and Safety with the Ministry of Education and my experience sitting on several not-for-profit boards, including the Kettle Society where I currently serve as Chair. I am known for my authentic and collaborative approach to working with colleagues, diverse stakeholders, and all levels of government. I bring immense passion to all my endeavours and am an effective advocate for the organizations and issues I have represented over the years. I am also thoughtful, measured and creative in my approach to tackling complex problems and decision making.</p>
Fraser, Janet	<p>In my two years as a trustee I showed my commitment and integrity. As well as attending VSB board and committee meetings I visited my 14 liaison schools, often several times, as well as many other schools, and was an active trustee liaison for DPAC and my three City advisory committees, Vancouver Food Policy Advisory Council, (VFPC), Active Transport Policy Council (ATPC), and the Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee (UAPAC). I met with stakeholder groups and individuals, either reaching out or as requested.</p> <p>I worked respectfully with everyone, students, parents, trustees and staff, and spoke clearly about my role and views on VSB issues through my blog, Twitter, in the media and personal communication.</p> <p>I will continue to work hard and work respectfully on behalf of Vancouver's students.</p>
Gonzalez, Estrellita	<p>I am a parent to a teenage boy, author, wellbeing promoter and small business owner with 20 years of senior Human Resources management experience. I am a collaborator by nature and have a lot of experience creating healthy organizational cultures, something that is needed with the Vancouver School Board (VSB) right now. I believe I can be a constructive and collaborative influence on the Board while at the same time do what is best for our children.</p>

**1. What skills would you bring to a trustee position and why should Vancouverites vote for you as an individual (leaving aside party affiliation)? (continued)**

Hamilton, Jamie Lee	<p>I believe that I would bring to the trustee position the experience and skills of a proven, results-oriented advocate. Over my life, I have been a champion for at-risk youth and other vulnerable populations. I am passionate, determined, dedicated, a good listener and respectful in the way I communicate and advocate.</p> <p>I have been called up by all levels of government, public inquiries, universities and colleges to provide knowledge, education and awareness around a variety of social justice issues. This experience affords me a unique set of skills that will prove to be a valuable resource at the Board table.</p>
Jaaf, Erica	<p>I have been an advocate for social justice since my teens. I now have two kids in public elementary schools in Vancouver and I joined the PAC as a way to connect to my kids' school experience. Our teachers, administrators, and support staff were doing an outstanding job, in spite of nearly two decades of underfunding. At the time, however, we were fundraising for a playground. (A playground. At an elementary school.) So, I got involved: I have served as the DPAC representative for our school communities, and have worked with a parent advocacy group to call for proper funding of a public education system that supports the learning needs of all Vancouver children in safe, inclusive neighbourhood schools.</p> <p>I understand that Vancouver is a complex school district and there are challenges ahead for trustees. In my professional life, I am a clinical data manager with an HIV research group. Through my work, evidence-based medicine has taught me that policy decisions should start with asking the right questions and having the right information. I am also a member of a housing cooperative, and have served on the Board of Directors. I understand the importance of good governance, sound management, and principled leadership.</p>
Lamb, Theodora	<p>I bring ten years experience as a convener of diverse communities, helping them to find consensus and build bridges of communications across various social justice issues. I also bring four years governance experience as a board director of both the BC Cooperative Association and Vancity Credit Union. I am the current Chair of Vancity's Governance Committee. I believe my experience and approach to governance would help provide much needed stability to the Vancouver School Board, allowing teachers, administrators and staff to focus on what they do best - supporting the excellent teaching and learning of Vancouver students.</p>
Lombardi, Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 years experience as VSB trustee, including serving as chair and vice-chair.</li> <li>• 35 years experience in Education system as teacher, educational leader, and teacher educator.</li> <li>• Good understanding of challenges and opportunities facing VSB.</li> <li>• Established relationships with staff and stakeholder groups.</li> </ul>
McDowell, Robert	<p>I represented Canada as a diplomat in China and Vietnam. In my current role on the Health Professions Review Board, I mediate and adjudicate complaints against health professionals. I manage an education project in Ethiopia, as well as work with Academics Without Borders in countries rebuilding their educational systems after civil strife. All of these roles require tact, diplomacy and mediation skills which have been honed over time in a variety of complex settings. I intend to use these skills to ensure that students are first and foremost in every decision we make at the board level.</p>
Pick, Adi	<p>As a former Representative on the Vancouver School Board's Management Coordinating Committee and Valedictorian of the Magee Secondary class of 2014, I will bring to the Board of Trustees the unique perspective of a recent graduate of the Vancouver public school system. I am passionate about improving the education of our students. I really want to increase student and community involvement in the decision-making process. I think that if we're dictating the lives and education of 54,000 students, we should unquestionably listen to their concerns and suggestions in the process. I am very approachable, open-minded, and relatively quick to respond. I have the time and energy to dedicate to going to student council meetings, PAC meetings, bringing back a district-wide student forum (last one was in 2012), and really put our students first.</p>
Prieto, Julian	<p>As an Oxford University alumni, teacher and past member of the University of Toronto Governing Council, I bring intellectual understanding of education, practical experience and knowledge of governance. I have a wide world view and am able to speak Mandarin, French and Spanish and seek to draw upon this experience to bring forth fresh thinking. I grew up in Vancouver and am passionate about improving our schools.</p>

**1. What skills would you bring to a trustee position and why should Vancouverites vote for you as an individual (leaving aside party affiliation)? (continued)**

Richardson, Christopher	As a Chartered Professional Accountant (FCPA) and long-time community volunteer, I have assumed many roles that have involved delicate resource allocation negotiations and required careful focus by all parties on the ultimate objective. This has required a sharing of knowledge and an acceptance that the ultimate objective of all trustees is that we seek to provide the best education for all learners, children and adults. I will continue to strive to bring a cooperative and collaborative approach to governance. The incoming Trustees must stabilize the District and ensure that the previously documented bullying behaviour does not repeat itself. Vancouverites know that our schools do not tolerate bullying and they expect our elected officials to set the example.
Wong, Allan	<p>I understand the education system. I graduated from the Multicultural Teacher’s Education Program at UBC and was a Teacher on Call in the Vancouver and Richmond School Districts. I understand relationships and business cases. I have worked at TELUS for over 29 years - Most recently as a Corporate Client Relationship Specialist.</p> <p>I have been on the Vancouver School Board from 1999-2016. Majority of the time as chair of the Planning &amp; Facilities Committee. For a large District such as Vancouver I understand the District and Governance. I spend the time to listen and understand others (individuals and organizations). I’m very objective and base my deliberations on how the Board’s decisions impact students. I always seek input from a consultative process, staff reports and budget business/education case.</p>
Zaichkowsky, Judy	As a lifelong educator and citizen of Vancouver, my heart, soul, and mind are entrenched in the well-being of the public education system and students. There are many leadership positions in my resume which give me the knowledge and skills to work collaboratively with others and get things done.

**2. If elected, how will you promote an atmosphere of collaboration with advisor Dianne Turner, senior staff, and Board members from other political parties?**

Alexander, Joy	<p>When I initially heard (through the media) that Minister Rob Fleming had asked Dianne Turner to remain in place as an advisor to the new Board my concern was who was paying her salary. He has since clarified that the government in Victoria is paying for her. With this assurance, I see no difficulty in collaborating with her in an advisory role. She will have insights to share on what has transpired over the past year which will be helpful to us all going forward.</p> <p>As for collaboration with senior staff and other Board members, I believe that my conduct during our short two-year term speaks for itself. I had and have a great deal of respect for senior staff. Their job is a very difficult one – made more difficult, I believe, because of cuts to administrative staff and the general lack of money in the system. I believe that I acknowledged this to them during the two years we worked together and that I always had good working rapport with them.</p> <p>As for other Board members - I worked with all respectfully and would continue to do so.</p>
Arnold, Christine	<p>As an independent, I will be a Trustee with no ties or loyalties to partisan politics at any level of government. My sole interest is the promotion and protection of a robust, high quality public education system. I intend to promote an atmosphere of collaboration by setting a strong example of making decisions through careful and impartial analysis and contemplation of all available information, as well as sincere discussion with all stakeholders, including senior staff, advisor Dianne Turner, and all Trustees.</p>
Ballantyne, Fraser	<p>It starts with respect for what each individual brings to the table. The NPA has always shown support for senior staff and that directly translates into greater trust. Trust that staff can accomplish their responsibilities and work without unnecessary and burdensome oversight. The morale for staff and trust for Vision is at an all time low and may never completely recover because of the bullying and harassment findings as well as the political grandstanding of not passing the budget. As we move forward, the NPA will continue to work collaboratively in a respectful and fair manner. I believe everyone has something good to contribute and I recognize our ability to create positive change. The NPA team has unequivocally committed to speaking out against bullying whenever we see it. We are the only party that has signed a pledge to curb bullying and harassment in the workplace.</p>
Beric, Carrie	<p>In order to foster a true atmosphere of collaboration all parties need to feel valued and respected. They need to feel that the work they do is understood and appreciated by everyone involved. As a trustee, I would help ensure this by committing to broadening my personal understanding of the difficult work undertaken by all parties, by continuing to engage in open communication with others, and by constantly remembering that the only way to move forward is if we all focus on the road ahead of us rather than looking backward. It is my hope that everyone at the board be willing to put past grievances aside and move toward a brighter future for our district.</p>
Clement, Ken	<p>As mentioned above, I am proud to work with those with diverse perspectives. To support a transparent, accountable and collaborative space with the broader Vancouver School Board, I plan to implement the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an open-door policy where I am available to the advisor, senior staff and Board members as needed</li> <li>• Strengthen team morale of Trustees and all stakeholders within the school system, creating spaces for healing and connection which values the diverse opinions by all parties</li> <li>• Role model respect and listening Hear and work to implement issues which arise to ensure that they are addressed appropriately</li> <li>• Support respectful dialogue and debate</li> </ul>
Day, Diana	<p>Did not receive a response.</p>

**2. If elected, how will you promote an atmosphere of collaboration with advisor Dianne Turner, senior staff, and Board members from other political parties? (continued)**

<b>Dominato, Lisa</b>	I will work collaboratively and constructively with the special advisor Dianne Turner with whom I've worked with previously, senior staff and all Board members. I am known for being a relationship builder and connector, having worked effectively with diverse stakeholders including all levels of government, K-12 education stakeholders, not-for-profits, and private sector organizations. I have a strong record of finding common ground, fostering trust, facilitating dialogue and achieving results. I have done this as Chief of Staff to the Minister of Education, as Director of Student Wellness and Safety within the Ministry of Education and as the current Chair of the Kettle Society. I firmly believe that in order to promote an atmosphere of collaboration, we must adopt a robust governance model and conduct ourselves in a manner that is respectful of everyone involved. I believe we need to put students first through sound decision-making, restore public confidence in our great system, and eliminate the polarizing partisanship of the past.
<b>Fraser, Janet</b>	It is the individual responsibility of trustees to demonstrate their leadership for our district and, especially at this time, working respectfully and collaboratively is essential to bringing stability and confidence to our district systems that support the 50,000 students we care for every school day. I will work with the expectation that everyone is focusing on student success, respect other's opinions, even if I don't agree with them, and do my best to find points of consensus, and not court adversity or seek to score partisan political points.
<b>Gonzalez, Estrellita</b>	Respect, communication, civility, and especially listening, are important when working with people. I would lead by example and not tolerate abuse especially in relation to harassment and bullying. It is also important that the VSB outlines its vision, values and goals so it has direction and clarity. All of these are important components in developing a healthy culture within the VSB.
<b>Hamilton, Jamie Lee</b>	I believe it is crucial that we respect the jurisdiction of the Board and its governance obligations. I understand that Official Trustee Turner, will become an employee of the Board as an Advisor and I look forward to working with her and drawing upon her extensive experience as an educator. I also look forward to forging a respectful and collaborative working relationship with all Board employees, at all levels, and my fellow Trustees as we work to put the safety, well-being and educational needs of students first.
<b>Jaaf, Erica</b>	Professionally, I work collaboratively with investigators, physicians, project managers, coordinators, statisticians, regulatory bodies, pharmaceutical companies, and people living with HIV. I will bring this same spirit of cooperation to my work as a trustee. As a member of cooperative housing who has served on our Board of Directors, I have no illusions: decision-making and democracy are hard work. Treat others with respect, even in disagreement, and understand our common purpose. The VSB identifies its mission as follows: "To enable students to reach their intellectual, social, aesthetic and physical potential in challenging and stimulating settings which reflect the worth of each individual and promote mutual respect, cooperation and social responsibility." We can all agree on that.
<b>Lamb, Theodora</b>	I believe in a consensus and collaborative style of governance and leadership. I believe that each trustee brings with them diverse perspectives and unique lived experience, and that together this constellation of leaders should work to represent the best interests of our children across Vancouver. In turn, the special advisor brings several decades of senior administrative experience. As an elected Trustee, I would seek to incorporate her perspectives into our Board's decision making process.
<b>Lombardi, Mike</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the election of a new provincial government we have an opportunity to hit the "reset button." This new context will provide an opportunity to establish a new relationship with the Ministry of Education.</li> <li>• This relationship will enable all trustees to collaborate with the Special Advisor, senior staff, Board members, and stakeholder groups.</li> <li>• I will use my proven communication skills to promote an atmosphere of collaboration and collegiality.</li> </ul>
<b>McDowell, Robert</b>	I will treat everyone with the respect that they deserve. I believe strongly in non partisan governance, and hope that the board is able to function effectively, regardless of its political composition. I also believe that senior staff need the support to do their job and not be harassed or impeded from carrying out their duties.
<b>Pick, Adi</b>	Part of the reason I ran as an independent is because I am open to working with whoever else gets elected. I am keeping an open mind, and will put students first, as opposed to partisanship.

2. **If elected, how will you promote an atmosphere of collaboration with advisor Dianne Turner, senior staff, and Board members from other political parties? (continued)**

Prieto, Julian	Our party, the NPA, has signed a public pledge against bullying and is determined to bring cordial and intelligent behaviour to the Board. We will make decisions based on the interests of students and not on partisan politics. I will personally reach out to Dianne, senior staff and other members to establish amicable relationships from the outset.
Richardson, Christopher	We must all move forward. I believe that recent events including the Supreme Court of Canada decision, the appointment of new Minister of Education, and appointment of the special trustee are all positive steps forward for trustees and staff to work together with educators and the diverse partners to identify the appropriate courses of action. A respectful and supportive approach and the existence of a detailed Strategic Plan will provide us with the course to move forward.
Wong, Allan	<p>5 initiatives come to my mind and I would like to hear from all the other individuals you mentioned.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Informal workshop with the special advisor (DT), Trustees, and senior staff. A facilitator to focus on team building and shared goals of a School District focused on student success and programs. Relationship building.</li> <li>2. I wrote ""Decorum"" policy that need to be followed to ensure opportunity for all to be heard via Robert's Rule.</li> <li>3. I believe thought/discussion/decisions needs to be had on the inevitable functioning of a Board based on the political make up of a Board. We need to understand, early in a Board's mandate, how best to leverage the make-up of a Board.</li> <li>4. The Board chair and superintendent have weekly meetings that includes the special advisor and vice-chair where appropriate.</li> <li>5. Ensure the Board is not inundated with projects and decisions to the extent that no time is given for relationship to build amongst Board-senior staff-special advisor.</li> </ol>
Zaichkowsky, Judy	Listen, learn and respect the opinions of others. Conversation and dialogues from different information sources and points of view are critical to informed decision making.

**3. As an elected trustee, how would you envision the role of parent input with respect to decision making?**

Alexander, Joy	<p>It goes without saying that the parents' input is extremely important. On informal basis I was always available through phone calls and emails to hear from parents. On a more formal level I listened carefully to parents input at the committee level through DPAC. I also, where appropriate, went to hear parent groups such as PAN and FACE.</p> <p>We all want the best for the students of the Vancouver School District. We need to have open communication, collaboration and understanding.</p>
Arnold, Christine	<p>Parent input is valuable. Parents that are plugged in are aware of conditions "on the ground", are personally motivated to promote the best education system possible, and represent the wide array of interests and needs of the students. Trustees need to have access to that information in order to make informed decisions. As a Trustee, I would like to see a mechanism in place through which parent input is efficiently collected and organized for Trustee review.</p>
Ballantyne, Fraser	<p>Over the many years of being directly involved with parents at many schools and at the Board level, I can attest that we have always had strong school and district parental involvement. Parents are an integral part of our consultative conversation along with our students, teachers, administrators and other employee groups. Listening to our stakeholders with intent and purpose allow us as Trustees to make the tough decisions with their input as guiding principles.</p>
Beric, Carrie	<p>I consider parents an integral part of the team and as a trustee I would consider their insights in all my decision making. Having been a parent advocate myself for nearly two decades I know how essential the parent voice is. Parents have an official stakeholder role through DPAC, but all parents should also be able to share their personal observations, concerns, suggestions and anecdotal experience with the board regardless of their ability to participate in their own PAC or DPAC. As a trustee, I would ensure that my decision making is clear and transparent, and is based on accurate and reliable data so parents could have an understanding of rationale. I would ensure parents feel meaningfully consulted by giving them a platform to share their concerns and would work to foster open lines of communication between parents and the board. OneCity trustees would like to remove barriers for parent participation and engagement at the Board level by investigating ways to live-stream or tape meetings, ensuring more correspondence is translated into other languages, and finding ways to provide childcare at meetings.</p>
Clement, Ken	<p>The role of parents is vital in providing visionary direction and leadership in our school system. The role of Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) must be acknowledged and maintained as key partners in the work we do. PACs provide a strong voice in neighbourhood schools, which connects and communicates community-specific needs to school services.</p>
Day, Diana	<p>Did not receive a response.</p>
Dominato, Lisa	<p>I have three daughters ages 3, 6 and 21. I believe parents and PACs play a critical role in their children's education and our school communities are richer as a result of their involvement. I believe the school district needs to have a fair and transparent mechanism for seeking parent input. I think this input needs to be considered along with information presented by senior management and other contextual/environmental considerations (e.g. provincial funding, collective agreements etc.). Ultimately, we want to ensure students get the services and programs they need to thrive and become well educated, engaged citizens.</p>
Fraser, Janet	<p>Parents are co-educators with their students' teachers and schools so it is essential that both individual parents and parents' organizations, for example PACs and DPAC, are involved with decision making. As I trustee I value our district's commitment to engaging with parents, as with all stakeholders, through consultation and especially through our committee system. I value parent input, recognizing that with a divers parent body there can be diverse views and opinions, and it is always a factor in my decision making. I appreciate that parents use their own time and resources to work on behalf of students but it is essential their voice is heard.</p>
Gonzalez, Estrellita	<p>Parents have an important role to play in VSB decision making. Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) and the representative organization of PACs within our district, DPAC, play a key role in representing parent voices, concerns and priorities to the VSB. Trustees have a role in building relationships with DPAC, PACs, parents and the communities, to be able understand and represent parents' priorities in VSB decision making. It is a priority for me to continue building my relationships in the parent community throughout the by-election and once elected. Outreach and engaging with parents and key stakeholders is essential to being an effective representative.</p>



**3. As an elected trustee, how would you envision the role of parent input with respect to decision making? (continued)**

Hamilton, Jamie Lee	I am excited by the opportunity to engage with the Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) and the Parent Advisory Network (PAN) for Public Education on an ongoing basis. I also commit myself to engaging directly with parents; I will have an open-door policy for any parent or stakeholder to share with me their ideas and concerns. Our education system and the future of our children is far too important to exclude anyone from this process, especially parents and guardians.
Jaaf, Erica	I am a parent with kids in this system. I value the voices, experience, and knowledge of parents. (Some of them are the best education-issue researchers I know.) Parents, teachers, administrators and other support staff should all have input when decisions affect them or their children. I would consult regularly with parent groups, and attend PAC and DPAC meetings as appropriate. I would work to remove barriers to participation by asking whose voices we are not hearing. For example, OneCity trustees would move to have Board meetings live-streamed (or available with some other technology). This is only one-way communication, of course, but would improve transparency and accountability, and allow interested parents to stay informed.
Lamb, Theodora	Parents are critical stakeholders in the education system. Their input is paramount and I would seek to incorporate their perspectives through consultative committee processes. In addition, I'd be interested in exploring how the Board could consult better, utilizing digital technology to empower and engage larger numbers of parents across the district - particularly families who may have trouble connecting with the Board through more formal channels - to share their view points and raise their voices. I would also continue to prioritize face to face conversations with PACs and parents at school based events.
Lombardi, Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a trustee, I always valued the views of parents and other stakeholder groups.</li> <li>I will continue to encourage parent participation on Board committees, DPAC, and school PACs.</li> <li>During the 2016-17 budget discussions, I sided with DPAC and other parent organizations by rejecting the VSB budget calling for more cuts to programs and services.</li> </ul>
McDowell, Robert	I believe that parents deserve to be heard, and that their input needs to be carefully and respectfully considered.
Pick, Adi	I really value parental input, and I believe that it should absolutely be part of the decision-making process. I am very accessible and approachable- you can reach me by email or Twitter, and I WILL respond. I will also try to attend as many PAC meetings and DPAC meetings as I can, to really hear and listen to parents' concerns regarding the education of our students.
Prieto, Julian	Parental input is crucial in decision making. They speak on behalf of students and hold the board democratically accountable. In addition to ensuring parents are welcomed in committees and discussions, I pledge to make my cellphone number publicly available should parents wish for a direct method of communication with their trustee.
Richardson, Christopher	It is essential that parent input be encouraged and facilitated to impact relevant alternatives being considered for decision-making by the Board. Several formal groups (DPAC, PAN and BCCPAC ) exist to assist in encouraging this input and the Board should continue to work with those groups to better ensure that parent input is encouraged and respected.
Wong, Allan	Parent input is important. Parent voice is officially presented through the District Parent Advisory Committee at the Board's committees. I am a strong proponent of the Board members hearing directly from parents through a public consultation process. For senior staff and Trustees hearing together as often as possible. As well, I encourage individual Trustees to have meetings with other organizations if invited. Not decision making meetings, but more of sharing of information. I am cautious to ensure all Trustees receive the same important information for deliberations. I have done all this in the past.
Zaichkowsky, Judy	Parents always want the best for their children. It is important to be receptive to their input because they are the "ears" on the ground to the public-school system. The Parents Advisory Councils (PACs) and the DPAC are important forums for parent engagement. As a Trustee, I will work with DPAC, PACs and parents to ensure their voices are heard and considered in Board decision making and planning.

#### 4. Explain your perspective on how the Board should work going forward with the provincial Ministry of Education

Alexander, Joy	<p>As I said above I would like the opportunity of working with this new government in Victoria. In the two years I was on the Board, Minister Fleming, as an opposition member, came to joint meetings with our Board, listened carefully and was genuinely interested in improving public education.</p> <p>When you are working with people that you feel are "on the same page" it is much easier to get things done. While I am not naïve enough to think that all will be corrected overnight, I look forward to good collaboration between our Board and the new government. With all the challenges facing us both, this will be essential.</p>
Arnold, Christine	<p>Much of the formal relationship between the Board and the Ministry of Education is dictated by legislation. However, to the extent that this question addresses the manner in which that relationship ought to be carried out or the manner in which the discretionary aspects of that relationship ought to be exercised, the simple answer is: collaboratively. Trustees can best advocate for students by finding a way to work collaboratively and productively with all stakeholders in the public education system, including the Ministry of Education, so that every stakeholder's powers and strengths are harnessed to pull in the same direction. Collaboration is by definition a two-way street and I am hopeful that some of the early decisions that we have already seen from our new provincial government, such as the injection of funding, signal a desire by the Ministry of Education to collaborate in good faith with the Vancouver School Board.</p>
Ballantyne, Fraser	<p>The most significant recent issue that has faced public education in Vancouver is the slow erosion of public confidence largely due to the constant arguing and politicization of the Board from Vision that has been directed at the provincial government. My hope is that we can have less confrontation and more attention focused on the delivery of programs for parents and staff. I'm committed to developing an atmosphere of transparent, professional discourse for all employee groups. In this way, I hope that we can clearly and collaboratively communicate concerns with the Ministry of Education on local points of views and issues for the betterment of public education in Vancouver. I stand firm on Vancouver's need for sustainable funding from the provincial government and will continue to work as part of a team to increase and expand funding for programs like the Band and Strings programs and ESL related services. The NPA will support advocacy for student improvement and it is important for us as newly appointed trustees to develop a good working relationship with the new provincial government and focus on important initiatives that will enhance student learning in our schools. Lastly, we would welcome the support from the Minister to review our budget options and help our senior staff to find alternate ways to balance the 2018/19 budget.</p>
Bercic, Carrie	<p>For 16 years the board has had to work with a provincial government that did not value public education, that vilified teachers, and that held the purse strings hostage trying to force boards to do their bidding to the detriment of students. I am hopeful that our new provincial government will make good on their commitments and promises regarding public education. Part of the job of trustee is to make the province aware of the specific needs of the district. Currently, there is no greater need than that of seismically upgrading our schools. Trustees will have to establish an immediate good working relationship with the provincial government for this to move forward. Through my advocacy work I have had numerous opportunities to meet with and talk to Rob Fleming, our new Minister of Education, so I feel the seeds of a good working relationship have already been planted. I feel the Board needs to look to the future and as a trustee I would find ways to work collaboratively with the provincial government with the ultimate goal of getting all students in Vancouver into seismically safe, adequately staffed, fully-funded neighbourhood schools.</p>
Clement, Ken	<p>In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, I support investment in public education to support students, parents, teachers, and stakeholders in the Vancouver School District.</p> <p>Currently, we are the second lowest rate of funding per student in Canada, and we must work towards equity for our youth.</p> <p>The meaningful and respectful engagement of diverse communities and cultural groups is necessary to support health and successful children, families, and communities.</p> <p>Investment is needed to ensure safe schools, which includes seismic upgrades, cultural programming, policy development, and poverty reduction. BC has amongst the highest rates of poverty among children, meanwhile BC is the only province without a poverty reduction plan. As a Trustee, I would be advocating for a provincial poverty reduction plan, as well as work collaboratively with the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, and communities to develop a Vancouver Poverty Reduction Plan.</p>

#### 4. Explain your perspective on how the Board should work going forward with the provincial Ministry of Education. (continued)

Day, Diana	Did not receive a response.
Dominato, Lisa	I believe it is critical for the Board to work constructively and thoughtfully with the provincial Ministry of Education. In British Columbia, we have what is called a co-governance model of education, where the Ministry of Education is responsible for legislation, provincial policy and standards, and funding, while Boards of Education are responsible for local policy, delivery of programs and services, and decision making of how to allocate funding. During my decade working with the Ministry of Education, I've observed that Boards are most successful in delivering on priorities for their constituents when they find common ground with the provincial government, identify opportunities for collaboration and innovation, and carry out their fiduciary responsibilities.
Fraser, Janet	There is much hope and optimism for public education with the election of a new provincial government. In media reports and presentations I see that the Ministry of Education under the new government is reaching out to its stakeholders and I am pleased there is a more positive tone for consultation and discussion. I am optimistic that our elected Board will establish a good working relationship with the Ministry so that we can effectively communicate our concerns and requests and work together to improve BC's public education and also address Vancouver specific issues.
Gonzalez, Estrellita	School Board Trustees are democratically elected by its citizens; the key responsibility is to the voters to stand up for what is right for students, and to represent the best interests of students. Trustees must also work with the Ministry of Education. The School Board needs to be clear on the mandate and funding available from the Ministry of Education while advocating for additional funding when necessary. The Vancouver School District's management must be free to manage their operations and resources with support from the Board. It is not the job of the VSB or its Trustees to manage operations.
Hamilton, Jamie Lee	There should always be respectful communications with the Minister of Education; however, the School Board has a unique role to play and should be a powerful and unapologetic voice for our students and the communities we serve. When required we should not be afraid to speak up even if it may be contrary to the political mandate of the current government. While I remain hopeful that we can always work together cooperatively and effectively, I will not be shy to speak loudly and clearly with my fellow trustees.
Jaaf, Erica	As a parent advocate, I have had the opportunity to meet with our (now) Minister of Education. With my fellow trustees, I would continue the work of establishing cooperative relationships with the new Minister of Education and staff, and communicate a clear picture of the unique opportunities and challenges of our large, urban, and multicultural district. The need for public education advocacy doesn't end because of the Supreme Court of Canada decision on class size and composition. The restored funding in the Memorandum of Agreement is a good start, and there is more work to do.
Lamb, Theodora	The new NDP government has signalled their significant interest in investing in public education in a way our province hasn't seen in a long time. Moving forward, I believe the VSB should work collaboratively with the Ministry of Education, but also not be afraid to advocate for the needs of Vancouver students. I believe this advocacy needs to be respectful and strategic.
Lombardi, Mike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As noted earlier we now have a new provincial government that values public education.</li> <li>The Board should continue to advocate to the government for increased funding to support student learning.</li> <li>I will use my familiarity and contacts within the Ministry of Education to support the VSB strategic plan.</li> </ul>
McDowell, Robert	I believe that the Ministry is a partner with the School District, and should be treated as such. It is important to ensure that the Ministry is aware of the priorities of the local district, such as the need for urgent seismic upgrading, opening of new schools of appropriate size for catchment areas, and other issues pressing to Vancouver. We must work cooperatively to ensure that this work is undertaken as soon as possible.
Pick, Adi	With a new premier in power, who claims that education is his top priority, I will try and ensure he keeps that promise. The pace of seismic upgrades is unacceptably slow, and will work tirelessly to ensure we get more funding from the provincial government to certify that new and improved schools get built in a timely fashion.

**4. Explain your perspective on how the Board should work going forward with the provincial Ministry of Education. (continued)**

Prieto, Julian	As is its mandate, the Board must work cooperatively with the Ministry of Education. For this reason, the Board must not engage in partisan favouritism, and be able to work with all parties. The Board must understand the parameters of the policy areas that it is responsible for and work with the Province of BC to ensure timely execution of projects and thorough engagement from teachers, parents and students.
Richardson, Christopher	According to the School Act, a co-management model exists and it is essential that the VSB strives to work with the Ministry of Education to put all students and children first. It is therefore crucial that the Board clearly articulate what we need and why. An evidence-based approach would be the most productive in setting out these goals. I believe that there is common ground to explore on the importance of seismic upgrading, the provision of new capacity in the neighbourhoods where it is needed and the need to examine early intervention and how we address gifted and special need students.
Wong, Allan	<p>Regardless of which provincial party is in government, I have always and will always continue to work with them respectfully and treat them with the dignity their position affords them. I present them with objective FACTS. This is how I always worked with the provincial government. For eg, funding for maintenance upgrade of a school at the same time of a seismic upgrade of that school makes fiscal and long term sense. I present a business, education and student case. Another example, to develop a Vancouver Project Office makes fiscal sense.</p> <p>The Board should advocate strongly on issues where there is unanimous support from all stakeholder groups. Work to ensure cohesion of common goal - eg funding for public education programs and seismic upgrade of all schools by 2030.</p>
Zaichkowsky, Judy	Our new Green-backed NDP provincial government indicates a fresh start to the relationship between the VSB trustees and the Minister of Education. Dialogue between the parties is open and considerate. We see new investment in education and well-being of our young people.

**5. What is your view on how the Board should work going forward with the City of Vancouver (i.e. in addressing the intertwined issues of densification and available school space)?**

<p><b>Alexander, Joy</b></p>	<p>There are a number of issues here – some that on the surface may look to be the result of civic government but in reality fall back on the provincial government.</p> <p>For example, when areas are densified, such as Olympic Village, the civic government makes plans for schools. Although space was allotted for a school at Olympic Village many years ago and building plans were begun the provincial government at the time refused consideration for funding of the new school because Vancouver had “excess space”. Hopefully this arbitrary barrier will not be in place with this new government. Even if there is some excess space it is not helpful if it 10 kilometres away.</p> <p>A second difficulty is that in building new schools the last government was only willing to fund for schools that met their size requirements. This has led to the ludicrous situation that a school such as General Gordon, which was only recently opened, is already over-capacity. Although I wasn’t involved with the construction of Charles Dickens, I believe, the same faulty thinking was in play. Hopefully, with collaboration we can look to considering future capacity when we build new schools.</p> <p>That said, the Vancouver School Board and the city of Vancouver are in regular contact about new developments and need to ensure that school capacity is considered when densifying. We also need to talk about using any available space in schools for before and after care and day cares. This will require creativity in terms of “sharing space”.</p> <p>I believe we should “revisit” the idea of portables in such places as Olympic Village. The fact that there is not a school there is putting pressure on other schools. Collaboration with the city as to land to put the portables may be needed.</p> <p>Densification is good reason not to sell off schools. We never know when they will be needed. Lord Roberts Annex is a case in point. A few short years ago it was quite empty and deemed “expendable”. Now it is bursting at the seams. If necessary we should lease schools that are not needed at the moment.</p>
<p><b>Arnold, Christine</b></p>	<p>The Vancouver School Board needs to work collaboratively with the City of Vancouver to navigate the legislative and policy parameters that inform issues such as land acquisition, zoning, and building permits. If not already in existence, then I would encourage the Vancouver School Board and the City of Vancouver to develop and implement programs and direct lines of communication that will allow the two parties to efficiently address new projects.</p>
<p><b>Ballantyne, Fraser</b></p>	<p>VSB staff continues to consult with the city staff on an on-going basis on a myriad of topics such as densification. We recognize that trends and community consultation are the cornerstones of larger conversation with our parents regarding school readiness and space limitations. We will continue to support any motions that promotes more affordability for all our citizens so that declining enrolment can be stabilized.</p>
<p><b>Beric, Carrie</b></p>	<p>OneCity believes that Vancouver should be a place for everyone. We believe public schools should be the heart of thriving, vibrant, diverse, inclusive, affordable neighbourhoods. These public lands should stay in public hands and as such, I would never vote to sell public school properties to developers. As a trustee I would, instead, advocate for better use of existing public spaces and school buildings. If enrolment in a particular school is currently too low for the building size, OneCity would like to see excess space in that building used for community enhancing leasing opportunities such as child care spaces, senior’s facilities, libraries, or community centers. In addition, we should be using our existing land space more wisely, especially during new school builds. This means building up rather than out. OneCity trustees would advocate for new schools to be multi-storied buildings that would include the aforementioned community amenities as well as including much needed affordable housing. We also need to address the issue of overcrowding in certain areas of the city by undertaking a comprehensive catchment review. All students deserve to attend their neighbourhood school and trustees will need to address this issue immediately. Each of these endeavours will need a solid commitment from school trustees, city councillors, and the provincial government. Trustees will need to foster a strong partnership with all parties in order to make bold moves to address these issues. As a trustee, I would be committed to doing this.</p>
<p><b>Clement, Ken</b></p>	<p>To respond to increasing densification, Trustees must support neighbourhood schools who face increasing student registration and capacity issues which may include a lack of human and financial resources. This includes advocating for more space and resources for safe schools.</p> <p>As a Trustee, I would be advocating for a provincial poverty reduction plan, as well as work collaboratively with the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, and communities to develop a Vancouver Poverty Reduction Plan.</p>

**5. What is your view on how the Board should work going forward with the City of Vancouver (i.e. in addressing the intertwined issues of densification and available school space)? (continued)**

<b>Day, Diana</b>	Did not receive a response.
<b>Dominato, Lisa</b>	I believe it is critically important that the Board work closely with the City of Vancouver regarding school facilities planning. The school district needs to ensure it is engaged in the city planning process in order to appropriately plan for existing school space, as well as new schools needed in areas seeing densification and growth. Working closely with the city also presents the opportunity to explore how school space can help meet other community needs (e.g. child care, outdoor play spaces).
<b>Fraser, Janet</b>	<p>School boards are stuck in the middle of the sandwich – here in Vancouver the City has dramatically increased density in some neighbourhoods yet the Province will not build new or expanded schools to match the increased student numbers. I am concerned that City Council does not fully understand the impact of their decisions on the many families in walkable neighbourhoods but who not only have to travel to a distant school and but often have the additional challenge of finding quality, affordable childcare.</p> <p>I believe the City and the School Board should work together to amplify the request to the Province to build adequate school spaces in every Vancouver neighbourhood. As a first step I would propose a joint briefing for the Mayor, Councillors and Trustees so there is a common understanding of how many neighbourhoods and families are impacted by inadequate school spaces, and of how deeply families are impacted.</p>
<b>Gonzalez, Estrellita</b>	A major challenge I have been hearing about in the community is a lack of school space in a number of communities, as new housing developments have been built without the needed school and other infrastructure to support the additional population. This causes many parents to have to drive their children across the city or into a different neighbourhood, further increasing congestion and stress on already burdened families. Trustees and the VSB need to have good lines of communication with the City to ensure the two bodies of local governance can coordinate their population projections and planning.
<b>Hamilton, Jamie Lee</b>	There is no question that the city is rapidly densifying putting added pressure on the school board, park board, community centres and childcare facilities, which are all intertwined issues affecting public education. We must work across this bodies in an integrated fashion to address and mitigate these challenges. At no time, or under any circumstances, should schools be closed or school properties be sold off.
<b>Jaaf, Erica</b>	Neighbourhood schools are the heart of vibrant, diverse, inclusive, healthy, and educated communities. Enrollment goes up and down, but they continue to be vital community assets. Public schools, and VSB-owned land, should not be up for sale. Instead of selling lands we hold in trust for our children, the Vancouver School Board should seek resources from the City to support re-purposing unused school property or classrooms as community spaces during times of lower enrollment. In a city experiencing a housing crisis, every new school and every school undergoing seismic upgrading should be considered as a possible site for community amenities such as affordable housing, childcare centres, community centres, or seniors' housing. Money in the City's Property Endowment Fund is available to the City to partner with the VSB on innovative, architecturally exciting developments that could improve the use of our public school lands, while ensuring the lands remain public.
<b>Lamb, Theodora</b>	I believe the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board will share a similar goal of creating and nourishing healthy communities. Part of a healthy community is its children. Many people across communities I occupy are considering leaving the City due to affordability concerns. Meanwhile other parts of Vancouver are bursting with families and children. These demographic challenges call for a pragmatic and collaborative approach. The first step will be setting a clear vision on where the Board stands on these issues. Next, I would work to empower VSB staff - who have been working on these issues for years - to work collaboratively with Vancouver planning staff to forecast five to ten years into the future and beyond to ensure relevant development and neighbourhood plans are being considered in our own long term facility planning. A key to a successful collaboration with the City of Vancouver would hinge on identifying mutually shared goals and approaching the challenges with a pragmatic approach focused on what makes the most sense for Vancouver students first and foremost.
<b>Lombardi, Mike</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VSB should continue to meet regularly with the City of Vancouver to share information about demographic trends, development plans, and school space needs.</li> <li>• The VSB should continue to work with the City of Vancouver to co-locate childcare spaces in unused school space.</li> <li>• The City of Vancouver should be a partner in advocating for seismic upgrading and building of new schools.</li> </ul>

**5. What is your view on how the Board should work going forward with the City of Vancouver (i.e. in addressing the intertwined issues of densification and available school space)? (continued)**

McDowell, Robert	We need to have a stronger partnership in ensuring that the needs of families and children are taken into account when large rezoning occurs. Areas need to be set aside for appropriately sized schooling, and the timing for such needs to be part of any new or revised development plan. Examples are the Cambie corridor densification plan, where schools were not fully considered when factoring in higher densities and more family housing along the Cambie corridor.
Pick, Adi	I believe that the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board should have a pretty close relationship, as they have often intersecting issues. I think that the VSB needs to address the issue of catchment areas and school-density, and propose to build a new school in increasingly densifying areas, such as Olympic village.
Prieto, Julian	When densification occurs, we will ensure that the community receives an adequate expansion of educative spaces. We support building new schools. In addition, we will work with the City of Vancouver to find innovative ways to re-purpose relevant spaces to increase capacity for classrooms.
Richardson, Christopher	Sadly, many intertwined issues impacting the VSB have not had the benefit of joint planning. I believe more work can be done to foster this relationship. If elected I will ensure recent initiatives to address 'disaster support hubs' and 'dogs-off leash' areas that have been previously overlooked will gain the recognition and discussion these topics deserve. Processes are in place to share information regarding approved rezoning but it is essential that necessary educational infrastructure be approved, funded and built to coincide with new demands rather than allowing the mismatch of spaces that undermines our neighbourhood school approach.
Wong, Allan	Close relationship to develop programs and cut red tape has helped in the past. Building efficiencies is beneficial for all. This is usually staff between staff. Thus, rather than a top down approach it is best for the electeds to foster an environment for both staffs to meet and develop efficiencies. On occasion, Trustees and Councillors need to be involved WITH both staff. Successes include childcare spaces, collaboration with VPL, school meal programs, planning and facilities staff embedded in city Hall, sidewalk clearing, Working Traffic Group, Police liaison officers, etc.
Zaichkowsky, Judy	We need to better link the planning and decision processes at City Hall and the School Board. Housing, development, and homes left vacant are all relevant to the surplus or deficit in spaces in the classroom.

**6. What do you see as the top three most urgent and important issues facing the Vancouver School Board, and how do you plan to address these?**

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Alexander, Joy</p>	<p>This is very difficult for me to answer simply. It is possible that in answering the question I appear to be pitting one programme against another. Who can say for example that band and string is more important than French Immersion. Further, as I have learned, things are often more complicated than they seem, one decision impacts on another etc. So rather than say three very specific issues I would prefer to put out three broad areas and some of the points to be considered within those broad areas.</p> <p>The broad areas are:</p> <p>Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seismically upgrade schools taking deferred maintenance into account, opening up a school and doing the minimal amount to meet seismic specifications and leaving deferred maintenance undone is penny wise and pound foolish</li> <li>• if a new build is decided upon make sure it meets logical long-term goal capacity</li> <li>• consider retrofits of schools that are underutilized but still have large student populations and then using the old school as a swing space for future seismic upgrades (ie John Oliver)</li> <li>• keep neighbourhood schools open and use any "excess space" for child care -working with teachers to facilitate double usage</li> <li>• work with government to consider space for the arts (visual and music) in buildings- one multi-purpose room is not enough</li> <li>• explore the concept that even if a new school is slightly more expensive than renovation, new builds are safer (asbestos is better handled) and quicker and may be the answer to expediting seismic upgrades</li> </ul> <p>Programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fulfilling the requirements for size and composition recently mandated will supersede restoration or enhancing of other programmes</li> <li>• restoration of programmes that have been cut over the past years (how and when this happens will be contingent on a number of things such as teacher availability and space). This includes band and string, visual art programmes, French immersion programmes, early literacy programmes and adult education</li> <li>• enhancement of our aboriginal education initiatives</li> <li>• support for the new curriculum – both in teacher training as well as resources</li> </ul> <p>District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Vancouver School District has excellent programmes, wonderful teachers and good support workers - we need to trumpet this</li> <li>• with the housing crunch and availability of teaching positions and support worker positions in other districts we need to make Vancouver School District a "go to district", we need good personnel to ensure our district continues to prosper</li> <li>• we need to make sure the lines of consultation are open and robust between teachers, support workers, and district staff in order that our employees feel valued and have a feeling of job satisfaction</li> </ul>
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**6. What do you see as the top three most urgent and important issues facing the Vancouver School Board, and how do you plan to address these? (continued)**

<p><b>Arnold, Christine</b></p>	<p>In no particular order, my understanding of the three most urgent issues at this time are as follows, but I emphasize that as a Trustee I will regularly canvass stakeholders and reassess what issues ought to be identified on this list:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher recruitment. The Vancouver School Board is facing a shortfall of hundreds of teachers. Some students still do not have a permanent full-time teacher one month into the school year. Resources outside of classrooms are also being affected as support staff that normally run those resources are being pulled to fill teacher shortages. The surge in demand for teachers was created by the restored classroom size and composition language arising out of the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, but in any event a long-term solution to the chronic challenge of recruiting teachers to work for the Vancouver School Board must be prioritized.</li> <li>2. Infrastructure and real estate. The Vancouver School Board faces several challenges relating to infrastructure. Many schools still need to be seismically upgraded or rebuilt. The restored classroom size and composition language necessitates more classrooms within each school in order to maintain the same overall volume of enrolment and some schools do not have space for additional classrooms. Further, the geographic distribution of the school-aged population within Vancouver has shifted dramatically in recent years with a surge in downtown Vancouver where new schools are needed immediately. At the same time, overall enrolment in the Vancouver School Board is trending downward, resulting in underutilized schools in other areas of the city. Since the operation of schools require certain fixed costs, the operating cost of those schools are proportionately higher and arguably unsustainable. This leads to the complex discussion of school closures, which then leads to the also complex discussion of how to generate revenue from the vacated schools and/or land. These issues need to be addressed through consultation with stakeholders and effective and efficient collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the City of Vancouver.</li> <li>3. Restoring programs and services. The steady cuts to education funding by the provincial government over the last decade have resulted in the reduction or elimination of an enormous number of programs and services. Many of those programs and services provided valuable support, enrichment, and educational options that are needed to provide high quality, accessible education to all students. As a Trustee, I will prioritize restoring those programs and services and introducing new ones that reflect current student needs.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Ballantyne, Fraser</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We need to bring stability back to the VSB. The past seven years have been turbulent, chaotic, and crisis driven. I believe that the past boards have created a confrontational advocacy campaign based on ideology. We need to re-establish a positive, collaborative relationship based on building trust. The confidence in our public system has been compromised and it is our responsibility as trustees to build that respect and trust once again. We need to deliver integrity, trust, common sense and responsible management for families that promotes our Vancouver public school system as one of the best in Canada.</li> <li>2. Seismic upgrading: I would like to see a reassessment of the upgrading plan to ensure that timing has been effectively and strategically considered. As a cohesive Board we need to advocate Minister Fleming for monies that top up seismic upgrades to "new" schools. This can be achieved by raising the per pupil funding formula.</li> <li>3. The re-instatement of crucial programs such as MHSW's for our most fragile population in our community, workers, support for our teachers that meets the mandate of the recent court case and directly links our vulnerable families to the schools as well as prioritizing crucial support for Band &amp; Strings, Mandarin, and Punjabi immersion.</li> </ol>

**6. What do you see as the top three most urgent and important issues facing the Vancouver School Board, and how do you plan to address these? (continued)**

Bercic, Carrie	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementing the Class Size &amp; Composition ruling.  <p>The BCTF fought long and hard for better learning conditions for students in BC. The Supreme Court ruling was certainly a win for teachers, but it is just as much a win for students. While we work to implement this legislation we have a few challenges to face. With smaller class sizes some schools have had to use previous non-enrolling space for classrooms. This has left some schools without adequate resource spaces, computer labs, or music and art rooms. In fact, it has even forced some schools to use libraries as classrooms. This is an issue that trustees will need to work on immediately by consulting with each school community (administration, teaching staff, non-enrolling staff, support staff and parents) to ensure their individual needs are being met. Another connected issue that the district faces is the dwindling supply of available teachers. With so many teaching positions opening up across the province the pool of available teachers is dwindling fast. The affordability crisis in Vancouver makes it particularly difficult to attract teachers to the district when there are also jobs in more affordable areas of the province. The dwindling supply of available teachers is particularly noticeable on our TTOC list. With fewer Teachers on Call available schools have had to resort to using in school non-enrolling teachers to cover classes. This means that resource teachers are often called upon to teach classes and student who require resource are missing that time. As well, School Support Workers are in short supply so teachers are often left without replacements in the classroom if there are SSW absences – something that is less than ideal for teachers, other students, and of course, for the student in need of support. Trustees will need to address all of these complex issues by ensuring they know what is happening at the school level. The best way to do that will be by meaningfully listening to stakeholder unions and working with them to overcome these challenges together.</p> </li>   <li>2. The Seismic Mitigation Program  <p>The safety of staff and students in VSB buildings is my top priority. Our children should not be spending their days in seismically unsafe buildings. Every day that we continue to put off seismic mitigation brings us one day closer to a seismic event. As a trustee I would be committed to working with senior staff, the city, and the province to find ways to speed up this process. I believe if we work together as a team, and if the province quickly provides the promised funding, we can find ways to fix this situation more rapidly and can greatly streamline the process. As a province, if we can fill a mountain with snow for a sporting event, then I feel we can put the safety of children first and we can get this done. We need to find ways to balance the “least expensive option” with the “best scenario long term option”. This means looking carefully at all aspects of new builds over upgrades while weighing complex issues such as deferred maintenance costs in old buildings and usability of buildings after a seismic event.</p> </li>   <li>3. Maintaining &amp; Restoring Programs &amp; Services  <p>As a parent and long-time public education advocate in the district I have spent the better part of the last 2 decades watching previous boards be forced into cutting services and programs because of a lack of funds. I have listened to staff members, unions, professionals, parents and students plead year after year to not cut their particular program or service. Teachers and staff have been masterful at working through this assault and giving students what they need to the best of their ability – they have worked with less every year, but somehow were able to do the impossible. Parents have picked up the slack and fundraised hundreds of thousands of dollars every year. However, the assault on teachers, students, and public education has hopefully ended with the election of our new provincial government and it is time for us to restore what has been lost. To start, as a trustee I would want to see the return of our Adult Education programs, a focus on Mandarin Immersion and French Immersion, the reinstatement of robust music programs like Band and Strings, and bringing back more Mentors, Multicultural Liaison Workers, and Settlement Workers in Schools. It would be my goal to focus on services across the district to start to heal and repair our public education system.</p> </li> </ol>
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**6. What do you see as the top three most urgent and important issues facing the Vancouver School Board, and how do you plan to address these? (continued)**

<p><b>Clement, Ken</b></p>	<p>From my perspective, the three most urgent issues facing the Vancouver School Board are: addressing poverty, seismic upgrading, and the need for strengthening and implementing specialized programs and policies.</p> <p>BC has amongst the highest rates of poverty among children, meanwhile BC is the only province without a poverty reduction plan. As a Trustee, I would be advocating for a provincial poverty reduction plan, as well as work collaboratively with the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health, and communities to develop a Vancouver Poverty Reduction Plan.</p> <p>Seismic upgrading is an ongoing process, which requires further investment. As a Trustee, I will work with the provincial government to secure funds to ensure that the infrastructure is safe for students, staff and community.</p> <p>Towards strengthening and implementing specialized programs and policies, I would focus on the following initiatives:</p> <p>Supporting Indigenous education through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue towards reconciliation which includes key stakeholders such as Indigenous communities, political leadership, school systems and the broader community</li> <li>• Inclusion of Indigenous history, current realities, and languages in curricula</li> <li>• Reinvigoration of current Indigenous Education programming in Vancouver, which includes building on the strengths of Indigenous students, families and communities</li> <li>• Establish a Centre of Excellence for Indigenous Education at the existing Indigenous Focus School which would acknowledge the legacy and contributions of Indigenous people and provide a collective learning space for students, families and communities.</li> </ul> <p>Implement LGBTQ2S policy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure that safe spaces are provided as outlined in the LGBTQ2S (available on the VSB website)</li> <li>• Provide training for staff, students, and administration on the LGBTQ2S policy and issues</li> </ul> <p>Advocating for Harm Reduction programs which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide services and education to communities and people who use drugs to prevent harm</li> </ul>
<p><b>Day, Diana</b></p>	<p>Did not receive a response.</p>
<p><b>Dominato, Lisa</b></p>	<p>Leadership and stewardship at the Board/district level - I would ensure we adopt a robust governance model, eliminate the partisan politics from the boardroom, hire an outstanding superintendent to provide educational and operational leadership to the district, and improve communication with parents and the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New schools and seismic safety of schools - I would advocate for new schools in growing areas and work collaboratively with the provincial government to find creative solutions to ensure all VSB schools are seismically safe.</li> <li>• Resources and supports for students and staff:</li> <li>• Students: I would ensure that we are offering services and programs that meet the needs of all our diverse learners, with particular attention to our students with special needs, children in care, aboriginal students, students who identify as LGBTQ2S+ and young people struggling with mental health issues. I propose the district develop a school mental health and wellness strategy to support the wellbeing of all students, families and staff. I also propose we explore ways to increase music, art and language programming.</li> <li>• Staff: I would explore opportunities to enhance professional learning opportunities for our educators. This could include teacher mentoring, co-teaching opportunities, and shared planning time to ensure educators have the knowledge, skills and supports they need to thrive."</li> </ul>

**6. What do you see as the top three most urgent and important issues facing the Vancouver School Board, and how do you plan to address these? (continued)**

<p><b>Fraser, Janet</b></p>	<p>I see three broad areas that each have key elements but are also intertwined.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bringing stability and confidence to our district. There are six hundred new employees, most senior management positions are in flux, there are challenges with implementing the hard won restoration of the teachers' collective agreements, and trustees need to ensure a safe and respectful workplace. It will be the elected trustees' responsibility to provide effective leadership to ensure our district can work together to address these challenges, as well as embrace the opportunities they present, and to ensure a culture of respect. And finally, our board must live up to our commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.</li> <li>2. Effective use of school space. Our district has had to rapidly adapt to the space requirements for the restoration of the teachers' collective agreement, we still have more than fifty seismically unsafe schools, there are schools that cannot accept all in catchment students and many families struggle to find childcare. As the province controls capital funds and decisions we need to work with the Ministry of Education to implement a long term plan, not just school by school approval, so that every student can attend a safe school in their neighbourhood and that the schools themselves can become community hubs.</li> <li>3. Stable, adequate and predictable funding. Trustees make many decisions about governance and policy in their districts but in many, many instances what can be offered to students is limited by the provincial funding. The resources in a school cannot be dependent on parents' ability to fundraise for essentials. As a trustee I want to know that teachers have resources to teach the new curriculum, that special needs students have appropriate support, that music and art programs thrive, that adult learners can access the courses they need, the immigrant families have support, that our schools keep pace with using technology to enhance student learning – the list goes on but the level of provincial funding is essential to providing equitable access to education for all students.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Gonzalez, Estrellita</b></p>	<p>The 3 most important and urgent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establishing a healthy, collaborative and respectful culture between the Vancouver School Board and School District staff.</li> <li>2. Establishing a healthy working relationship between the School Board and the Ministry of Education under our new Green-backed NDP government, respecting each body's mandate and jurisdiction, and advocate for the budget we need to deliver high-quality public education in our community.</li> <li>3. Supporting as best as possible the School District and its management with a smooth transition regarding the class size legislation and new curriculum. Also consulting parents groups on their priorities and concerns on matters including French Immersion, special needs, and seismic upgrades.</li> </ol> <p>My mission is to insure our children are thriving in a safe and supportive high-quality learning environment.</p>
<p><b>Hamilton, Jamie Lee</b></p>	<p>While the Board is under immense pressure facing a multitude of important issues, one major issue that must be dealt with is seismic upgrades. It is never reasonable to expect anyone to put their child's life at risk to be educated. This requires a comprehensive board-wide action plan, rather than the piecemeal approach we have now.</p> <p>This brings me to my next issue, which is appropriate, dare I say substantive, funding for our public education system. I will be a strong and vocal advocate for long-term, predictable funding that meets the needs of our growing student body.</p> <p>Finally, I believe that all of our schools should be safe spaces for our students, staff and teachers to learn and grow. This means embracing diversity, and never tolerating bullying of any sort. I would support a board-wide anti-bullying campaign to make clear our zero tolerance policy and encourage the development of a positive learning environment.</p>

**6. What do you see as the top three most urgent and important issues facing the Vancouver School Board, and how do you plan to address these? (continued)**

<p><b>Jaaf, Erica</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We must work with the Ministry of Education, BCTF, VSTA, and VESTA to understand the complexities of the Supreme Court of Canada decision on class size and composition, and implement it in the best interests of Vancouver kids, teachers, and families. I will advocate that the implementation of the provincial government’s response is done in a timely and accurate way.</li> <li>2. There are still many teaching positions yet to be filled in our district, including at my kids’ schools. Again, this must be the collective work of the Ministry of Education, the BCTF, VSTA, VESTA, VSB staff and VBE trustees to identify the challenges and develop the solutions. (I do know that great work is already being done in this regard.)</li> <li>3. Almost 60 schools in our district have yet to complete seismic mitigation, leaving thousands of Vancouver kids at risk. Again, we must work with the Ministry of Education and the communities involved to expedite this process, considering new builds instead of upgrades where appropriate. (We appreciate that some of these schools are heritage buildings and this must be taken into consideration in the planning process.)</li> </ol> <p>We also share responsibility to support the second Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and we are mid-way through transitioning to a new provincial curriculum. These commitments must be part of implementing the SCC decision, when hiring teachers, and when building or upgrading schools. Are school designs incorporating space to meet learning and curriculum needs – e.g. resource rooms, art studios? Are new schools being appropriately named? Are teachers receiving adequate professional development opportunities to weave indigenous ways of knowing throughout their lessons, and are indigenous teachers and support workers being hired?</p> <p>I am prepared to work cooperatively with all stakeholders in the best interests of Vancouver’s kids, teachers, staff, and communities to meet the challenges ahead.</p>
<p><b>Lamb, Theodora</b></p>	<p>The VSB has a number of urgent issues. The first is to hire our next Superintendent. Much of the legwork will have been done by the time a new board is elected. But I believe engaging our stakeholders with this particular priority of finding an executive who can rebuild trust among management will be crucial.</p> <p>My second priority issue would be to accelerate the current seismic program in partnership with the provincial government. This issue strikes directly at the safety of tens of thousands of Vancouver students. Part of this will be accomplished with a renewed and more collaborative relationship with the provincial government. Work could also be accelerated with an updated long range facilities plan which would reflect the new Board’s vision when it comes to asset management.</p> <p>My third priority issue would be to work on making schools more inclusive of early childhood education. This could be tackled a number of ways. I would work on connecting the VSB with the new Minister charged with implementing the government’s 10 dollar a day plan in an effort to determine where district facilities could be utilized to support this initiative. I would also devote Board resources to engaging with City of Vancouver to explore potential partnership opportunities around public daycares in schools.</p>
<p><b>Lombardi, Mike</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Securing adequate funding from the provincial government to fully implement the Class size and Composition agreement. The VSB should work with the Ministry of Education to initiate a process with stakeholders to develop a plan to attract, recruit, and retain teachers in BC.</li> <li>• Development of a restoration plan for programs and services that were eliminated in previous VSB budgets. In conjunction with stakeholders, develop a priority list for restoring programs such as Adult Education, Band &amp; Strings, and French Immersion.</li> <li>• Develop an action plan to expedite school seismic upgrades and the building of new schools at Olympic Village and Coal Harbour. The VSB must work closely to ensure that project agreements for capital projects are signed with the Ministry of Education more quickly.”</li> </ul>

**6. What do you see as the top three most urgent and important issues facing the Vancouver School Board, and how do you plan to address these? (continued)**

<p><b>McDowell, Robert</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seismic upgrading: reassessment of upgrading plan to ensure that timing has been effectively and strategically considered.</li> <li>2. Construction of elementary schools in Coal Harbour and Olympic Village: I would request a report on the latest status of these two schools and when and how they will be developed to ensure that they are appropriately sized for their catchment areas.</li> <li>3. School sizing: with the recent Supreme Court decision on class sizes, we need to ensure that our schools are appropriately resourced, both in terms of staffing and programming, to ensure the success of our students. I would ask for an update on how our Vancouver schools have coped with the recent changes, and what needs to be undertaken due to these recent changes.</li> </ol> <p>Also: I am a champion of the arts, and have a belief in the need for second (and third) language proficiency. I think that strong arts programming and a variety of language options help foster resilient students."</p>
<p><b>Pick, Adi</b></p>	<p>The number one issue I believe Vancouver students are facing, is unsafe schools. The pace of seismic upgrades is much too slow, and this needs to change. We have far too many schools that are considered 'high-risk' in terms of a big earthquake, which is utterly deplorable. After all, safety first!</p> <p>The second most important issue in my opinion is the need to re-evaluate catchment areas and programs- our students' education should NOT depend on waitlists and lottery systems. As mentioned above, I think that the VSB needs to address the issue of catchment areas and school-density, and propose to build a new school in increasingly densifying areas, such as False Creek.</p> <p>The third urgent issue facing Vancouver students is the cutting of the Elementary Band and Strings program. Studies have shown that learning music eases learning other subjects and enhances skills that children inevitably use in other areas. Even Nobel Prize winner Bill Clinton once said: "I don't think I would have become President if it were not for my school music program". I think the positive effects of music are not to be underestimated. The band and strings program was a devastating loss to Vancouver students, which I will fight to bring back.</p>
<p><b>Prieto, Julian</b></p>	<p>As a School Board Trustee, my priority will be to enhance the language programs to reflect our diverse and changing world. I am committed to ensuring that seismic upgrading is completed as well as offer opportunities for the gifted and for those in need. I will work to build a respectful environment through example. I will make decisions based on the best interests of students while considering budgetary opportunities and realities.</p>
<p><b>Richardson, Christopher</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restoration to functional Board governance An examination must be undertaken to implement 'best practices' as it relates to the conduct and structure of the Board and Committee structure of the Board. Those familiar with the Board have observed that rules and procedures have been 'manipulated' in recent years in such a way that creative and dynamic leadership has been impossible. Appropriate processes must be implemented to ensure that input is sought and received from all partners. Better use of limited Board time is essential. As well, an active Vice-Chair is essential to ensure that continuity and succession exists. Policies and procedures have not been update for many years. It is essential that full discussion of issues be undertaken with the input of the broader community including academics. Trustees must embrace professional development to ensure that we benefit from new techniques, concepts and relationships. Further, all deliberations must be made with the achievement of the 2021 Strategic Plan, in mind.</li> <li>2. Senior staff stability and respect. The last 18 months before the dismissal of the Board was not healthy for those involved and for the VSB as an institution. The topic of 'bullying' is serious – it can impact reputations, careers and lives and therefore a strategy of 'healing' is necessary and a return to an atmosphere of respect must be achieved. Professional integrity but be encouraged. Creativity cannot be stifled simply due to ideology.</li> <li>3. Provision of necessary facilities to meet neighbourhood demands. Many factors impact upon our long-range facilities plan. Until the last term, a comprehensive plan had not been created. Times have changed dramatically in the last year. The Supreme Court of Canada case has provided much needed funds but restoration back to 2001 requires many voluntary systemic changes in the area of inclusion and support.</li> </ol>

**6. What do you see as the top three most urgent and important issues facing the Vancouver School Board, and how do you plan to address these? (continued)**

<p><b>Wong, Allan</b></p>	<p>Relationship and Confidence Building - Relationship between the Board and senior management, special Advisor, students, stakeholder groups. This may very well be the focus in the first part of this truncated term. I responded in detail to this issue in the 2nd question for Board-Special Advisor and senior staff. It is important for stakeholders and public to understand the Board is focused on student success and building on a strong District that we are all proud of. Everyone should be made to be part of the process for advancement. I will further elaborate on my decorum policy (used in current orientation) to encourage participation ...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All members/delegates speak through the chair.</li> <li>2. Stakeholder representatives and Trustees perspectives, participation and debate are encouraged. Civility towards others is necessary.</li> <li>3. The committee requires, acknowledges and appreciates staff reports. It is imperative that staff is able to submit objective reports without influence or pressure.</li> <li>4. Refrain from personal inflammatory/accusatory language/action.</li> <li>5. Members/staff are to present themselves in a professional and courteous manner.</li> </ol> <p>Proper funding for public education - I believe in advocacy. I will continue to advocate for proper funding for public education. I presented NEEDs budgets for important student support initiatives and basic restoration of programs. This new Board will need to ensure what came out of the Supreme Court ruling regarding class size and composition is fully funded by the Province. That is the first stage. After that, we need to ensure support programs are in place - educational needs, multicultural liaison workers, Arts programs, Music programs, basic HR and administrative records, payroll, etc. We need to hear from staff what is critical at this stage. Creating objective reports to share with stakeholders, community, and the province will let everyone/organization decide for themselves what they would do. I have in the past, and will continue to advocate with clear facts.</p> <p>Seismic upgrade of all schools by 2030 - including maintenance upgrades where it makes fiscal sense. The Board already has all the reports to back this one up. For example, the Facility Condition Index (FCI) of Vancouver schools clearly shows the need for the seismic program (and maintenance) to be expedited. I will continue with advocacy. Meet with all electeds in Vancouver (MLA, Councillors, MPs and Park Board) and share current state of affairs of all schools in the District.</p>
<p><b>Zaichkowsky, Judy</b></p>	<p>Staffing schools with well trained, competent teachers within their area of expertise.          Increase the pool of TTOC. (reaching out to recently retired teachers)          Long range planning and budgeting for school physical space with respect to health (food programs), safety (seismic upgrades), social, (good relationships and community development) and intellectual excellence (challenging our students to reach their goals). (Consultations with parent groups and other stakeholders).</p>