Strategic Priorities – Connected Learners

Background Information to Question 4: Budget and Operations

Mandate of the B.C. School System

To enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

The Educated Citizen

School districts must assist in the development of citizens who are:

- thoughtful, able to learn and to think critically, and who can communicate information from a broad knowledge base;
- creative, flexible, self-motivated and who have a positive self-image;
- capable of making independent decisions;
- skilled and who can contribute to society generally, including the world of work;
- productive, who gain satisfaction through achievement and who strive for physical well-being;
- cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences;
- aware of the rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada, and the world.

Prime Goal of Public Education

- Intellectual Development
- Human and Social Development
- Career Development

Reconciliation Framework for Public Education

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act) establishes the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) as the Province's framework for reconciliation, as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. This framework outlines the commitment for provincial government and public education on reconciliation.

Strategic Priorities – Connected Learners

Responses to Question 4: Budget and Operations

The District must ensure that it is operationally sound and fiscally responsible while ensuring excellence for all students.

How could SD8 ensure this?

1. Animal safe garbage dumpsters and outside waste containers. I wanted to include photos over the years of the mis handling of garbage at my neighbour school LVR. Maintenance isn't in charge of pedagogy, the teaching staff and school administration is failing its students who come to school past garbage strewn about by various animals, in particular bears. This statement is: We don't care enough about wilderness values even though we live adjacent to wilderness and attract animals here to their peril. The C.O. will come and shoot the bears and cubs if "they become a problem" as they've done many times in this neighbourhood in the past.
2. Have greater transparency at the school level regarding funding allotments
3. BE MORE TRANSPARENT! Where does the money go? A readable budget breakdown, especially of students receiving additional funding would be well received by all staff and community members. There is a feeling of distrust and mismanagement throughout the district especially when it comes to budget, and this needs to be addressed.
4. We need more transparency in the budget. I would like to see where the money for children with special needs is being distributed and spent. We need more adults in the classroom to promote inclusion!
5. Why so we have such a huge administrative team in the district office and so few EAs? It seems out of proportion with other districts.
6. I would like to see the total cost of the district office renovations.
7. The budgets for schools are too small, we have to do more with less.
8. The bus budget should not be cut for rural areas schools as we need buses to access activities and learning opportunities.
9. Engage with public and ask for feedback, publish spending, transparency
10. Transparency and public engagement. Teacher autonomy
11. By being more transparent on expenses.
12. uh. fix your water fountains and ensure the students don't wreck the school bathrooms. people go there for # 1 and 2s without having a cleansed environment.
13. As an EA I need way more information how funds are managed in the district for have an opinion.

14. Ensure staff are paid industry standard wages. Many staff are very underpaid such as read seal trades. Ensure staff are performing. Take performance management actions against staff who do not "pull their weight". Replace those not able or willing to preform the duties of their job for the hours being paid with people who will. With fair wages, recruitment would be easier as well. There seems to be an increase to highly paid management positions and less actual workers. This also applies to learning support staff. EA's do not have the time needed to provide adequate support. We experienced this directly with a child on a IEP and had to make alternate arrangements to ensure our child could be provided the education experience they required as the school was not capable. The actual staff were fantastic, they were under resourced. I understand you have a budget to balance. If it is unrealistic, speak up to the ministry. Let us know how our voices can help. Our province has the funds. Our public schools deserve more.
15. I'm not informed on the specific condition of SD8's fiscal health. Utilizing community to deliver programs or aid in activities above and beyond the budget adds value though. Creston is a very giving community.
16. Gathering data related to census to know population trends within the SD8. Is there a possibility of developing investments of a contingency fun to carry through the lean years? This is a long-term vision with ebbs and flows of fiscal expenditures related to the work. Keep in mind what its all about: childhood education.
17. Keep getting more feedback from the community, businesses and parents, transparency of budget/operations is key.
18. Reduce carbon footprint and turn down the heat, make sure it is colder and dark in the weekends and holidays in the buildings. Are there other big costs for facilities, I am not sure the latest update?
19. Reduce higher management perks etc., will also build trust.
20. Continue have international student if that is a big revenue.
21. Build a healthy culture that will reduce the costs of bullying and sick leave. Prevention! More funding to the younger kids will perhaps reduce their issues later.
22. Take some money from the military so they can have a bake sale instead ;-)
23. Look towards non-Canadian jurisdictions, including Vermont for funding models to lobby for. Provide parents, funding partners, and the community at-large with data driven fundraising objectives and progress reports. In other words, demonstrate that specific SD8 funding needs are investment worthy.
24. Donations from community members who able to contribute for specific funding goals. Getting parents with skills to contribute to help with specific projects. I'm not sure I don't have time to read the about plan or operations.
25. Be transparent about the budget.
26. SD 8 needs to recycle. The amount if waste produced in schools is incredibly high and it is a disgrace that there is no recycling in our district.

27. SD 8 can make budget choices that restore classroom supplies and resource budgets.
28. Reduce funding to the top-heavy administrative body. Drop the electric school bus campaign. Eliminate electronic pass scanning in school busses. Provide funding transparency. When a parent asks a Trustee where the money is being spent and they say "it's complicated" this is unacceptable and not trust building. Shift toward a parent and PAC powered funding input process.
29. I was shocked when we were given zero dollars for our library this year. But somehow, we have to get kids reading by grade 3. Barely functional technology and now sad and tattered books. The library should be the heart of the school and reflect the district's commitment to learning.
30. Shorten the week to 4 days.
31. More transparency with how initiatives are prioritized and money is allocated from District and School perspective.
32. Clarity around Ministry funding, Grants/Donations, school collected fees and the distinction between District based funding to school sites and School managed bank accounts and PAC funding/fundraising.
33. More accountability following the initial Budget to implementation and final reporting on funds used by year end.
34. Operate with more transparency around administrative budgeting. As a parent I would like a clearer understanding of why there are so many high salary positions at the admin level and so few support staff actually making a hands-on tangible difference in classrooms.
35. Prioritize support equally with instruction. Offer community volunteerism and letters of permission to teach for Indigenous knowledge keepers. Budget accordingly, and remain steadfast in the conviction.
36. More transparency around where and how funds are allocated. If the district believes there is a significant value for a large district office communicate that clearly. When programs are being added, changed, cut, resized, communicate clearly why. Prioritize above all else programming and funds that directly supports learners, be more austere with funding to bureaucratic functions.
37. Make all school budgets, staff and support workers compensation publicly available quarterly or at least within every fiscal year.
38. Turn off the lights when nobody is in the school. Turn down the heat when nobody is in the school. Create a student environment where they take pride in their school and therefore will not intentionally break or deface school property.
39. Having greater parent involvement and interest in socio-cultural elements as well as fiscal challenges at the school and district level
40. Transparent budget information including deficits and areas of high cost available to parents, community.

41. After looking over the income statement for 2021/22 it seems to show that the money coming in seems to be fairly well managed. Further breakdown of each section would be nice. Ie District Administration. What exactly is that broken down to? Who are we paying and for what service?
42. There are rumours in the community of overspending in higher up positions and cutting school and school support funding. If you are unsure do a referendum of how you think funds should be spent or encourage your board to ask those questions, so you have the back up of the community. When the community believes in its institutions much can change.
43. Be transparent with salaries
44. Talk to the people doing the work, the people in the trenches - what is working, what isn't. Decisions are coming from the board office without hearing from stakeholders. There are good ideas out there.
45. Use participatory budgeting to involve parents, teachers and even students in prioritising where SD8's money goes. Be fully transparent about the district's income and outgoings and seek feedback.
46. Don't be short sighted. Look to future growth, plan for new and exciting programs, and budget accordingly. It's understandable to have tight constraints on budget, that's part of being a government agency but don't fear to be bold. If a program works and is engaging, expand it. Work with other districts to see what works for them. Steal the good ideas and the methods to cost savings.
47. Create and share plan to address climate crisis. Ensure operations are taking into account harms of supply chain and climate issues.
48. More transparency- share the budget and how it's being spent on the website- ask for feedback and suggestions from parents and students.
49. Find ways to streamline and cut out unnecessary steps and processes to allow teachers more time to do what they are passionate about- teaching students.
50. Community engagement, grants, fundraising for specific projects
51. Teach indigenous world view. Project based learning and get students outside to have meaningful interactions with nature as their teacher! Through indigenous world view, a culture of care and community includes caring for the land and water we depend on for life. Through our schools, children should develop a working knowledge of the lands, waters, plants and animals of the Kootenays as well as the indigenous teachings of how to live in harmony with this land. Elder society teachings bring elders and knowledge keepers into learning circles so children can learn and be inspired by those who are masters. When we support children to engage as protectors of the circle of life, we support them to deal with feelings of helplessness at the condition of the world and remind them that we all have a roll and part to play in healing our society from our colonial history and trauma.

52. Walk the talk with Reconciliation. I wish all staff knew their cultural heritage, had Elder mentors, sat quiet in nature daily. Do you have practices, personally and as a board/administration as taking your concerns to Elders and mentors?
    Do you (individually and board/admin) give thanks to this place and the world regularly? Do you know your cultural heritage and its traditions and its trauma?
    Do you power hoard? Avoid discomfort and conflict? Do you take a pause to listen between speakers? Do you sit in a circle? Do you think in seven generations...? Do you have a climate change plan?
    Read Coyote mentoring, Hospicing modernity by Vanessa Andreotti, Sandtalk and https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/. Reflect.
    What is education for - consumer culture and ecocide? What is the meaning with your life and you in your work? What if... we followed our hearts and ears.
53. School District 8 (Kootenay Lake) used to be known for its excellence in arts, sports, music. There used to be festivals with community involvements and guests from all over the province. There are teachers with great ideas who would like to get involved and just wait to be asked.
54. When people come together, we can do amazing things and get support from community as well.