

DSBIA Questions to School Board Candidates

Julia Poole's responses

1. What do you think are the three top issues affecting Surrey Schools today?

I - Changing the way the provincial government allocates funding for our district's school expansions and the current formula by which they approve the development of new schools. Currently, we are only allowed to build to the current capacity, which is not working in Surrey. With the rapid growth we have fallen way behind and cannot get ahead with only one project approved at a time.

II – Lack of teaching staff – we need to find ways to attract new teachers and catch up with the wages that other provinces have for teachers. We are the second lowest paid salary in all of Canada.

III – Better support staff for students with special needs and children at risk or children who are new immigrants.

2. What are your priorities if elected and how will you implement your plans.

Address the space issue by lobbying the provincial government to revise their funding and building beyond the current capacity and the removal of portables.

Try to create ways to recruit qualified teachers and Learning Support Teachers. I have already spoken to the Superintendent about these issues and will continue to work with Administration to help the Minister of Education to understand the desperate need to change the way we do business together.

I will also try to hear the communities voice on what they see is needed to improve their child's education. Host town meeting and collaborate with community groups to work together with the future of education in Surrey.

3. Surrey has too many portables. What is your plan to reduce the use of portables within SD36?

This is a funding problem and more taxes are needed to be allocated to capital expenses for this project. We will have to look at creative ways to collect more tax dollars to add to our budget.

4. Children need activities and programs after school. Often recreation centres are too far from residential neighbourhoods and difficult to access. Do you support the use of school facilities after hours for recreational programs and would you advocate for this if elected?

Yes, I feel this is very needed to keep our kids off the streets and influenced by questionable role models. I am an advocate for after school programs and the use of schools for this purpose. There are programs being run through Parks and Recreation but there is limited access to school space due to numerous rental groups. We need to look for alternate spaces to run these programs and make these programs very accessible and affordable for students. These spaces need to be located near schools where students have easy access within walking or biking distance.