

Chilliwack DPAC Trustee Candidate Survey

Name as it will appear on the ballot: Cary Moore

What do you believe are the top three priorities for the school district over the next four years, and why? (~150 words)

Excellence in education, first and foremost. Our Grade 4 literacy results have been running below the provincial average, and reading, writing, and math are the foundation every other outcome in a child's education is built on — so that's where the board's attention and resources need to go. Second, capacity and growth — Chilliwack is one of the fastest-growing districts in the province, and the board needs to plan facilities and staffing ahead of that growth, not behind it. Third, trust and transparency — parents should be able to see how decisions get made and why, whether that's about budgets, boundaries, or programming.

These aren't separate issues. A district that's transparent with families earns the trust it needs to make the hard calls that come with rapid growth, and a board that keeps academic excellence as its anchor is one that can protect the classroom experience while everything else around it is changing.

What do you believe is the biggest challenge currently facing students and schools in our district, and what role should the Board play in addressing it? (~150 words)

One of the biggest challenge facing this district is academic performance — specifically, the basics. Our literacy numbers have been below the provincial average, and while there's been some recovery since the pandemic, too many kids are still not on track by Grade 4. That's not one issue among many; it's the foundation everything else in a child's education sits on. The Board's role isn't to manage this day to day — that's what we hire and hold the Superintendent accountable for — but the Board sets the policy direction, approves budget priorities, and asks hard questions publicly so academic outcomes can't quietly slip down the priority list. Concretely, that means keeping literacy and numeracy results as a standing, measured item the board reports on every year, not just when the numbers happen to look good.

How will you balance the needs of students, families, staff, and taxpayers when difficult decisions need to be made? (~150 words)

I'm glad this question is framed around taxpayers rather than "provincial funding." So many governing bodies, unions, and institutions lose sight of the fact that every dollar the education system spends comes from working families — and that should never be taken for granted. Every one of those groups — students, families, staff, and taxpayers — deserves a seat at the table before a decision is made, not just a chance to react after. In practice, that means real consultation — not a survey that gets filed away, but genuine engagement where people can see their input reflected in the outcome or understand clearly why it wasn't. When trade-offs are unavoidable, I start from student learning and wellbeing as the priority, because that's what the system exists for — but staff need to be resourced to do that work, and taxpayers deserve a board that treats their money like it's scarce, because it is. The honest answer is that "balance" doesn't mean everyone gets what

they want. It means everyone gets heard, and gets an explanation, even when the decision isn't what you were hoping for.

What experience, skills, or perspective do you bring that will help you be an effective trustee?

(~150 words)

Having owned several businesses in the community and management positions with Westjet airlines over the past 20 years, I have a full understanding of how larger projects function and are structured to be effective and efficient. My CIS degree studies dovetail keenly into understanding budgeting, procurement and the STEM fields. And my soft skills of compassion for our most vulnerable kids come from my wife and I having been foster parents for over 30 years, and have parented dozens of children through the school system — which means I've sat on the other side of the table from teachers, principals, and district staff more times than I can count, in some of the hardest circumstances a family can be in. I've also spent years as a volunteer on parent advisory committees, which taught me how school-level decisions actually get made, and where parents can feel they get shut out of that process.

What I bring to the board table is a ground-level view of what district policy actually looks like once it reaches a kitchen table — and the willingness to ask a harder question when something isn't working for kids.

How do you understand the trustee's role, particularly the line between governance/policy and day-to-day school operations? *(~150 words)*

A trustee's job is governance, not management. The board sets policy, approves the budget, hires and evaluates the Superintendent, and is accountable to the public for the district's overall direction — it does not run schools, direct staff, or intervene in individual classroom or personnel decisions. That line matters: when trustees start managing operations, they undermine the professionals we've hired to do that job, and they lose the independence needed to hold the system accountable from a governance seat. Where I think boards go wrong is treating "we don't manage operations" as a reason to stay quiet — a trustee can and should ask pointed questions about how a policy is playing out at the school level, without stepping into the principal's job to answer it themselves.