

Delta School Trustee Candidate Responses

Name: Roman St. Germain

1. Why do you want to be a school trustee? What do you understand the role of a trustee to be?

Public education has been a major part of my family's life: two of our children currently attend elementary school in Tsawwassen, two attend Langara (one graduated from Tamanawis Secondary and the other from South Delta Secondary) and our extended family attends Elementary and Secondary schools in both North and South Delta. I am running because I feel that students, families, educators and support staff deserve an independent, experienced and community-focused voice at the Board table, unencumbered by slate politics. My service as a PAC Chair, PAC Secretary and District PAC Representative along with being involved in many fundraising activities gave me the opportunity to work directly with parents, educators and administrators and to better understand the challenges and opportunities within public education. I also bring significant governance and financial oversight experience from Board and Committee service as well as from the various industries in which I have worked. I am motivated to put that experience to work making transparent and well-informed decisions based on what is best for students and our diverse community. Trustees work collectively as a Board to establish the school district's strategic direction, approve policies and budgets, oversee the Superintendent's performance, and ensure that public resources are managed responsibly.

2. Delta staff are committed to including all children and families. How will you support Delta staff in creating inclusive school communities?

First and foremost, I am a firm supporter of the Delta School District's Justice and Equity Action Plan. I will support Delta staff by treating their frontline experience as essential to building schools where every child and family feels welcomed, safe and respected. Inclusion must be a lived reality, not simply an aspiration in a plan. I will listen to staff about barriers they see and, along with my fellow Trustees, evaluate policy and budget decisions for their effect on students who face these barriers. I will also support respectful communication with families remaining firm that every student and employee has the right to a learning and work environment free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

3. Delta staff are learning about decolonization and reconciliation. How will you support Delta staff in our supportive role?

I fully support this work and within my family I have tried to ensure that my children receive education and historical understanding that my own schooling did not provide.

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I grew up in an education system that ignored the history and continuing effects of colonialism and residential schools and I recognized that acknowledging that gap is only a starting point. If elected I will approach this work with humility and a willingness to listen and learn. I fully support the Delta School District's Justice and Equity Action Plan, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and will seek continued guidance from local First Nations, indigenous staff, students and families. To this end I believe that it is critical that all Trustees are well-informed of the Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement. I will also support policies and resources that address racism and discrimination and ensure that students, families and employees of every identity and background experience genuine belonging. I will not claim expertise or lived experience that I do not have but I will commit to doing the work, being accountable and using the Trustee role to move the communities into action.

4. Due to underfunding in the system, violence has become more prevalent. How will you commit to providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment for students and staff?

Every student and staff member has the right to a safe and healthy school environment. I will advocate strongly for adequate provincial funding while ensuring the resources available to the District are directed toward prevention, appropriate staffing, training, early intervention and effective responses to violence. Beyond adherence to the Delta School District Code of Conduct, I will ask for reliable, privacy-respecting information about incidents, injuries, response times, recurring risks and gaps in training or support. Safety plans should be developed collaboratively with students, families, CUPE members, teachers, administrators and appropriate community partners and not imposed without input from those directly affected. Recognizing that the District has both a District Manager - Safer Schools and the Delta Police Department's School Liaison Program, I will look for evidence that these resources are working collaboratively and achieving the intended results. The Board must regularly monitor whether its policies and programs are effective, address identified gaps and provide the resources necessary to maintain safe, healthy learning and working environments.

5. How would you propose to alleviate the current EA staffing shortage and improve recruitment and retention?

I am not fully up to speed on the current, critical Education Assistants staffing shortages in Delta and would recommend that the Board first listen directly to Education Assistants and CUPE representatives to identify the causes of vacancies, turnover and absences.

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Agreed-upon solutions should address the full employment experience. I will support partnerships with post-secondary institutions to develop local training, effective recruitment and onboarding processes and regular public workforce reporting and will advocate to the Province for targeted, reliable and stable funding. In my experience, staffing shortages are rarely solved by recruitment campaigns alone. The District must understand why qualified people leave or decline positions or avoid applying for positions, including compensation, workload, workplace safety, limited advancement, training access and the availability of comparable work elsewhere. Trustees can, and should, require regular workforce data, ensure budgets reflect realistic staffing costs, support good-faith bargaining, make appropriate investments in recruiting and retention and hold management accountable for timely hiring processes. I would definitely favour a jointly informed recruitment and retention plan with the Delta Teachers' Association and CUPE 1091.

6. Given that funding is limited, what are your budget priorities for the Delta School District?

My guiding priority will always be to direct resources toward ensuring Delta provides first-class, informed and forward-looking public education in a safe, healthy and welcoming environment for every student and staff member. That includes protecting classroom supports, providing students with a broad and accurate understanding of our history and society, and making appropriate investments in skills training and career education so graduates are prepared for a changing economy. I am not prepared to predetermine specific budget priorities before I am fully informed about existing service and resource gaps, enrolment projections, contractual obligations, facility requirements and the evidence supporting competing needs. Responsible governance requires trustees to understand the District's complete financial and operational picture before making funding commitments. If elected, I will fully support and promote the Province's initiative to expand before and after-school childcare on school grounds. I will advocate for the District to pursue available provincial funding, identify suitable opportunities across our schools, and work with families, staff and community partners to expand access where it is needed most. I will evaluate all spending proposals based on reliable evidence, measurable student and workplace outcomes, long-term sustainability and alignment with the District's strategic priorities.

7. Currently, in Delta, decisions are made by trustees prior to the public Board meeting. Do you feel an obligation to make your decision-making process more transparent to the public and what steps will you take to ensure this?

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That is shocking. If decisions are predetermined rather than openly considered and debated, that practice flies in the face of appropriate governance and undermines the purpose of public meetings. I fully recognize that certain personnel, legal and other sensitive matters must appropriately remain confidential. However, confidentiality should never be used to avoid public scrutiny or to predetermine matters that belong in an open meeting. If elected, I will not accept this practice. I will approach public deliberations with an open mind, review the evidence, ask meaningful questions and clearly explain the reasoning behind my votes. I will advocate for timely public access to reports and supporting information, comprehensive minutes, and the reporting of decisions made in closed meetings whenever legally permitted.