

School District 20 Candidate Questionnaire

This questionnaire is prepared on behalf of 2SLGBTQIA+ voters and parents of 2SLGBTQIA+ students in SD 20. A by-election to fill the trustee position within Electoral Area 2 (City of Castlegar & part of Electoral Area J of RDCK) will take place on Saturday, April 20, 2024. The questions are based on community input regarding issues that are important to them regarding the by-election. All candidates in the School District 20 by-election are invited to complete the questionnaire. Results will be published on [Advocacy Canada's](#) website as well as on social media. In the spirit of transparency, results will include a mention of any candidates who do not complete the questionnaire.

The deadline for completion is March 30, 2024. Thank you in advance for your response.

Email *

jenspurpose@gmail.com



Your First and Last Name *

Jennifer Burton

What do you believe are the most critical issues for local 2SLGBTQIA+ students and their parents? If elected, what work would you do as a trustee to address these issues? *

It seems that the media and most citizens misunderstand and misinterpret specific issues. In my opinion, some policies are in place to protect communities against bullying and extreme radicalization. These communities deserve respect and the ability to pursue their lifestyles peacefully. I don't believe that rallying and protesting against radical ideas in classrooms is the right approach. Instead, we need better communication between parents and schools, especially between teachers and classrooms. All religions and traditions should be respected equally, without any bias. There is no one right way to do things, so it's essential to include all perspectives respectfully. Students are at a vulnerable time in their lives. They need positive support and robust, educated support. Everyone needs to be on the same page. I will be working with all sides to create a well well-rounded approach for students and parents and bringing teachers back into the conversation in a way that brings positive resolution and better communication regarding needs and expectations.

Do you support the BC Education Minister's [statement](#) on SOGI? If not, why? *

Yes, I do.

Have you ever participated in 2SLGBTQIA+ cultural competency or equivalent training? If not, are you willing to do so? *

I have had the privilege of experiencing real-life participation in the LGBT community as I grew up in Vancouver. Many of my family members and friends belong to this community, and I have witnessed first-hand the injustices they have had to endure. It is truly heartbreaking to see people behave in ways that are disrespectful and hurtful towards others.

It is also important to recognize that we can have different opinions and lifestyles while still treating each other with respect and kindness. As someone who is married with three children, I have also experienced hurtful insults and derogatory comments directed towards me. This has taught me the importance of respecting and celebrating all family dynamics and preferences.

Ultimately, we need to work together to create a more compassionate and inclusive society. It is only by embracing our differences and learning from one another that we can truly thrive as a community.

Do you support school administrators being required to take 2SLGBTQIA+ cultural competency or equivalent training in alignment with the Education Minister's statement on SOGI? *

Yes.

Homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are still prevalent in BC schools, resulting in significant harm to marginalized 2SLGBTQ+ students. If elected, how will you combat homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in SD 20? *

With proper education and positive dialogue about cultural competency, people will begin to understand and respect differing opinions. We need to move past the irrational prejudices of the past and embrace a more modern approach. Education on cultural competency is a great starting point, but we also need to show respect towards one another's feelings and circumstances. I will be sharing my experiences with parents and educators about how I have successfully navigated these topics in different communities. It's important to remember that respect is a two-way street. When discussing sensitive topics, it's crucial to approach conversations with well-thought-out questions and opinions, and to always be loving and supportive. We should view everyone as human beings, just as we are.

Do you agree with the statement that “trans rights are human rights, and must be protected as such?” *

Yes

No

If elected, how will you ensure that school dress codes are equitable for all gender identities? *

We must do this while respecting others. We should not forget that some children come from different cultural or religious backgrounds and may have unique attire that should be respected. By supporting each other in identifying these differences, we can all learn and grow. However, we must always be mindful to show respect to all children and parents.

Do you support gender-diverse media in school libraries? If not, why? *

It is concerning to see graphic books circulating around, especially when it comes to children. They may not have the maturity to understand the content, which can lead to trauma and misunderstanding. A better approach would be for students and parents to request this literature, so that it does not end up in the hands of someone who is not ready for it.

Do you support all schools having gender neutral washrooms? *

Yes

No

If elected, how would you support non-binary and trans students' participation on school sports teams and physical education classes? *

I am not familiar with sports and do not participate in team sports with my family. We prefer the arts and music. I cannot provide any comments on this topic as of now.