



The following are the responses to the Parents for Choice Education Trustee Candidate Questionnaire provided by **Locke Spencer, candidate for Lethbridge School Division, Sub-jurisdiction Lethbridge**, submitted at 9/30/2021 13:25:52

The long form answers are on the last page of this pdf.

*\*The candidate's responses, including name and comments, are presented below precisely as the candidate entered them on the questionnaire form. If you have questions about these responses, please mail them to Locke Spencer at [info@LockeSpencer.ca](mailto:info@LockeSpencer.ca)*

The response was “**Yes**” to the following question:

1. Do you agree that all education laws, school board policies and best practices in Alberta should comply with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Family Law Act when it comes to the right of parents to direct, and be fully informed about, all aspects of their children's education?

The response was “**Yes**” to the following question:

2. Do you support subsidiarity - the idea that distant levels of government should not make decisions that are best understood and resolved at the local level?

The response was “**Somewhat**” to the following question:

3. Do you agree parents should be permitted to choose the location, type and style of education (i.e. home-based, language, interest, faith-based, etc.) that best suits their child, free of bureaucratic, union or government coercion?

The response was “**Somewhat**” to the following question:

4. Do you agree that the Alberta government should provide equitable funding to all education settings, whether public, Catholic, francophone, independent, faith-based, charter, alternative and supervised home education?

The response was “**Yes**” to the following question:

5. Do you agree that the Alberta curriculum should leave room for chosen educational interests - such as history, faith, the arts, sport, language, or STEM for example - and refrain from prescribing excessive content which unduly crowds out local thematic interests?

The response was “**Yes**” to the following question:

6. Do you agree that curriculum development must be transparent and focused on clearly defined and foundational basic skill and knowledge outcomes in core subject areas?

The response was “**Yes**” to the following question:

7. Do you agree with providing a system of high-quality standardized testing based on specific scholastic skills and knowledge outcomes, created by independent testing organizations? Examples might include the Canadian Test for Basic Skills or international tests such as the PISA.

The response was “**Yes**” to the following question:

8. When it comes to communicating student progress for Grades 7-12, would you agree that an objective and clear reporting system of percentages and class averages (as opposed to descriptive terms only) is important?

The response was “**Somewhat**” to the following question:

9. Do you agree that any school board policy that forces teachers to keep secrets from parents is unacceptable, and if elected would you move to repeal any such policies? For example, the NDP government in 2017 forced boards to pass a policy regarding certain student clubs that said “notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization [...] is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity.”

The response was “**Yes**” to the following question:

10. Currently, provincial legislation requires that parents be provided notice when a program of study includes subject-matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion or human sexuality (Education Act - Section 58.1). Do you agree that this notice and opt-out opportunity should continue to be provided?

The response was “**Somewhat**” to the following question:

11. Do you agree that a parent’s legislated right to be informed of and allowed to opt out of material primarily and explicitly of a sexual or religious nature should be construed by the Board to extend to the use of sexual or religious instructional resources and online portals used across subject areas, such as the Prism toolkit?

The response was “**Somewhat**” to the following question:

12. Do you agree that every school board should establish a procedure for vetting and obtaining parental consent when it comes to individual external facilitators accessing students during both instructional and non-instructional time?

Locke Spencer’s added comments:

For Q3: Provincial standards dictate a minimum level of required curriculum for all students, beyond which individual choice should be employed. I am a University Professor which relies on students entering post secondary education to have met entrance and course pre-requisite requirements.

For Q4: I support public education and for parent choice to be developed within the public education system, inclusive of all of the categories in your question. This should allow for equitable funding for different education settings.

For Q9: Current policies 502.1 and 502.2 in the Lethbridge School division cover this appropriately at present (these policies were developed through community panels including division, parent, and community representation).

For Q11: Communication and clear understanding of topics presented at appropriate grade and age level should be provided to parents. We have opt-in / opt-out provisions for in-class movies within our school division, as well as other extra-curricular activities. Ensuring parents are informed of potentially controversial materials reinforces the joint responsibility to educate held by parents and teachers.

For Q12: Your question is unclear as to what the vetting process would be and when parental consent is required. I go into K-12 schools and talk about astronomy, astrophysics, engineering, and science in general very often. I am very well received and far exceed expectations in presenting amazing science happening right here in Lethbridge to our students. I would not want a policy targeted for one specific area to encroach on the many wonderful programs related to reconciliation, science outreach, community awareness, community partnerships, sports experts, and performing arts, etc. that are currently able to engage our students. A lot of informal vetting already takes place and policies for accompaniment and attendance during in-person visits should provide for the safety of all involved. Any areas of weakness in policy or practice that do place students at risk need to be identified and corrected.