

**speaking
notes**

COSC – Update on Elections (Trustee Bazinet)

April 17, 2013

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**Calgary Board
of Education**

Hello. My name is Carol Bazinet and I am the trustee that represents Wards 12 & 14 in the south area of the City of Calgary. I would like to invite you to think about running for school board trustee. Or, perhaps you know someone that should consider this opportunity.

As you may know, on Monday, October 21, Calgarians are invited to cast their vote for mayor, aldermen and school board trustees. It will be three years since the last election of this nature. This is the time of year when we encourage Calgarians to consider running in this election. Now you don't have to make your decision tonight—Nomination Day is Monday, September 23.

The Calgary Board of Education has seven trustees, each representing two of the city's wards. If you were to ask each of us why we decided to run for trustee, you will probably hear a variety of answers, but the common theme would be that we believe in and support public education. We want to ensure that the students who attend the Calgary

Board of Education receive the best education available, and we want to ensure that the voice of Calgarians is reflected in the decision making that occurs both locally and provincially. We each want to be part of the vision for education.

I believe that it is very important to remind everyone that they have a key role to play in deciding which seven people will be making decisions on their behalf for the next four years.

So what does a trustee do?

As trustees, working together, our job is to create and maintain a public education system that best serves all the children of our community.

Trustees do not represent any single school, neighbourhood or community. An individual school trustee does not have the authority to make decisions on their own. However, “the Board of Trustees” in a public session has the power to make decisions based in the needs of the entire city of Calgary.

As a member of the CBE Board of Trustees, our role is to collectively provide leadership by defining the vision, Results and Operational Expectations for the organization on behalf of its community. We represent, lead and serve the organization's owners – the citizens of Calgary. We have the opportunity to influence the economic, social and cultural life of our community.

Successful school trustees put the needs of students first. They run for office because they are committed to making things better for Alberta's children.

As elected officials, trustees have several roles to play:

- **We are communicators.** Trustees ensure the community has a say in what children learn by communicating effectively with stakeholders and ensuring their concerns and wishes are heard.
- **We are advocates.** Trustees address and seek resolution of public education issues of importance to students, parents

and the community at large. We communicate with the municipal and provincial levels of government to ensure those who influence funding and other resources hear the voice of the local community.

- **We are legislators.** Through policy, trustees make decisions that have the status and impact of law. Trustees develop plans to deal with student needs, setting priorities in light of community wishes and sound educational practice. Boards actively participate in the economic and social strength of local communities.
- **We are politicians.** Trustees are elected every four years to govern the local public education system on behalf of the local community. We are responsible to the electorate through the democratic process.

Remember, you do not have to be an educational expert to run for trustee. In fact, because the public education system serves

children from all walks of life, it is better to have a broad perspective and range of experiences among the individuals sitting around the board table.

If public service is not your cup of tea, I invite you to think about who might be willing and capable. Often, people will step forward if they are approached to do so. I'm sure all of you can think of one or two people who would be suitable candidates for trustee.

I would like to see every voter who visits a polling station this year take the time to cast a ballot for school board trustees.

The political office of school board trustee is an important one because school board decisions often affect all residents in a community, whether those residents have children in school or not. As individuals, we should give the role of school trustee the same consideration we give our MP, MLA, councillors or mayors. Election Day is important!

This evening when you arrived you received a brochure sponsored by the Alberta School Boards Association entitled “Become a school trustee.” Inside it you will find some additional information about what you can do to run as a trustee candidate. There is also additional information posted on the CBE website.

The Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) is offering a “Campaign School”. The program will focus on the skills and strategies candidates need to run an effective election campaign. This school will be held at the Sheraton in Red Deer on June 4/5, 2013. Please check out ASBA’s website for further details.

The Calgary Board of Education is also planning an information session for this spring. The date has not yet been confirmed, so please watch our website for more information.

It is my understanding that CAPSC (Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils) will be hosting forums in which all candidates

running for school board trustee will be invited. Watch for further details regarding this fall event.

I urge you, and ask you to urge others, to consider running as a trustee candidate in the October 21, 2013 election. If this truly is not an opportunity for you at this time, then on Election Day, please cast a ballot for the school board trustee that you believe will best represent you and your community.

I would like to now call on Trustee Lynn Ferguson.