

Alice McKim

She/Her • Saint John Harbour • Liberal

Candidate #09

1. Why are you running in this election?

I have spent 18 years telling students to speak up when they see something that is wrong. I have told them to write to powerful folks, to stand up and protest on the streets if necessary. And if they feel strong enough to run, even if they're still 19 years old. So when asked by the [party name hidden], if I could put my skills and experience into the race to represent a party I believe in, a 2020 version of the [party name hidden] that I find to be very appealing. I said, 'Yeah'.

2. Describe how the time living in your riding has informed your qualifications as a candidate.

So I live about 500 meters outside the riding, I'm just to be clear, I'm in the North end. But I would say that, you know, any North Ender is of Harbour, regardless of where you draw the line, but I've lived at Saint John High School in a very real way. You know, kids, they come into the class every day and bring not only their academic knowledge, but their story. And my favorite part of being a teacher and working with students is after the lesson. Lunchtime, you know, somebody wants to sit down and talk. So I know these issues. I know that this riding, I walk around and I meet so many people that I already know, and this is my home.

3. Describe how your time living in New Brunswick has informed your qualifications as a candidate.

I've always lived in New Brunswick, always in Saint John with the exception of one year in Fredericton. I had the opportunity when running and winning the election to become the provincial Vice President of New Brunswick Teachers Association, which represents 200 schools, two years in a row. So really 400 stop ins. And again, it wasn't just teachers that I met, you know, students from all over, I'm having my meals at the local Tim's or a drink at the local trivia night. So I've been everywhere in this province and really, so many issues. So being here has certainly focused to me and I know the issues of New Brunswick, but traveling New Brunswick has put a lot of fire in me, we have issues across the whole province, but also so much potential.

4. How does your experience (ie. education, lived experience, workplace) contribute to your qualifications as a candidate?

So I didn't love school when I was younger. I would take notes about how I thought the class could have been done better. And I decided in Grade Five, I wanted to be a teacher and went through with that. I really enjoyed university, studying Politics, History, English, Psychology. And I know that certainly not only that knowledge, but the kind of critical thinking that you get with

that kind of an education. And so that was extremely beneficial. Seeing the issues of school and just the poverty, a number of students would suffer through working 30 hours a week on top of school just to pay the bills, you know, and I'm the one that has to wake them up because they're exhausted. Certainly develop a great deal of empathy for those who are struggling in poverty. And while teaching a class called World Issues, is a relationship with a group of orphans in Uganda, kind of fell into my lap as a class. And we started Skyping with them and learning, we started raising funds. And because it went so loud and teachers share things that go well, it morphed into a registered charity that ran for seven years and had 62 schools around North America, half of them in New Brunswick Skype in twice a year. I went to Uganda three times and have seen extreme poverty up close. Fighting poverty is my number one concern. And when 50% of the children in Harbour, my home, are suffering through child poverty, unnecessarily, I'm fired up. And all of that has really informed where I'm at as a candidate.

5. If elected, what will be your top 5 priorities for your riding?

So we do have our top five published and pinned to the top of our Facebook page and my Twitter feed. So I can give you a short version. So number one was based off of the conversation with Don Darling and many other experts in that city who lived these issues. That's the first thing I did on this campaign is talk to the people who really know their stuff. And Don said, the number one issue was for the industrial tax reform. Industrial taxes raise from heavy industry about \$8 billion a year that we spread around to the profit that goes to provincial coffers. And it's spread around as if we were Alberta equalizing the rest of the province, but we don't have Alberta money. And so Don said that we should keep that, we need to keep that here. And so we worked really hard behind the scenes to pressure our own party into a commitment on about an hour ago, over at reversing falls, we heard [party name hidden] once again, make this commitment, on camera, during his announcement. And then all of the local candidates stood together, and we will be celebrating this because it plugs the Saint John budget gap, just like that. So priority one has been accomplished during the campaign, if we [party name hidden], and that's the only way we get the \$8 to \$9 million. The second priority is municipal tax reform, kind of removing some of the incentives to leave the city core and improving our fiscal situation, to take care of infrastructure. And then for me, and for the campaign, we've been clear that urgent action on the climate crisis is required. That New Brunswick could be a global leader pushing forward with the kinds of technology that we could market to the world, how we did it. And I'm a big thinker like that, but so are my students. I've got thousands of ideas in my head that have been curated and fact checked and because they have to do that, we really can't move fast. And when it involves shutting down for example, a coal fired power plant, you can't just lay people off and send them home. You train them for the green economy and you make sure that they are paid while they train. So that's our main issue. We have identified COVID, because you know, we're talking about the second wave coming back as an inevitability, but if we were actually hunting for COVID the way some people are, you know, in other jurisdictions, you know, random sampling, we'll find it before it finds out. It's true that the committee that had all the leaders work together was a good idea. I give credit to the premier [party name hidden] is committed to continuing that. I will say, no, I'm not seeing this. A

lot of group work as a teacher where, you know, five people work really hard on something and then one person goes to the front and takes the credit. It never ends well. So that is a priority of ours to make sure that we keep people safe. And finally, the South End School and Community Center. This thing is already planned and, you know, approved of that social license in the South End area. Everybody's on board. The need is clear. And the benefit of having a seven day a week community center, the wraparound model for taking care of citizens from birth to grave. I mean, it's timing, it's science, the facts are clear, this fights poverty.

6. LGBTQ+ and reproductive healthcare

Two weeks before the election, I called for the resignation of the Minister of Education publicly and regularly, even though I knew it was a risk to my employment. And I did that because they cut the 10 Respect and Diversity positions, which were teacher's specialists, and indeed members of the LGBT community who were going to go in and who were for years doing good work, helping to reduce racism and homophobia and transphobia and integrate refugees. They were just lumped together with math tutors, like math coaches and said that it's all the same. And actually there were disparaging remarks. So I, you know, I'm on record saying the kids and everybody, we need more education on LGBT. We can't close Clinic 554, we must fund it. In fact, things like that should be even more accessible. We are in violation of the Canada Health Act. And that is the only place where trans people like me receive the affirming, informed care that we require.

7. Access to mental health and/or addictions services

Incredibly important. I have students that wait months. And when it's somebody in a mental health crisis, they need access immediately. We don't have enough guidance counselors in our schools to deal with the doubling of anxiety and depression rates that this crumbling world and even climate crisis are helping to fuel and supercharge the pace of life. So we absolutely need to fund mental health care and de-stigmatize it much better. It's one of the reasons I talked about my own depression a year ago, where I missed three months of work, first time it's ever happened to me. The meds have really helped and one of the reasons why I'm strong enough to do this now. I love that the mayor talks about it. We all need to talk about mental health issues. We need a safe injection site in Harbour. This is not just me saying it, it is Duane Squires, president of the police union, who I spent two and a half hours with a week ago, because I had to learn. My campaign manager thought I needed to go out and meet people, and he's right. But I just couldn't stop learning from the police on this issue, compassionate harm reduction care. It is an illness, not a choice.

8. Glyphosate use in New Brunswick

With the [party name hidden] platform, the announcement was clear that glyphosates will be phased out on crown land over the next four years. If you ask me if I would personally like to be a little faster? Sure. But I am comfortable that a balance had been struck here, and that phasing this out over four years is going to accomplish a lot of good. I pressed for this after my conversation with Lynaya Astephen.

9. Access to affordable housing in Saint John

Not just affordable housing, but mixed income. It's essential. That's something Duane Squires and the mayor have talked about so that we can start reducing the ghettoization that happens when people flee their neighborhoods for a nicer apartment or a suburb. The investment needs to happen here. And I'll just add to that, that the data is clear on people who are homeless. It actually really saved the tax payer a lot of money, like by a factor of two, if you put a roof over the head of everyone, we should not have homelessness. It's not only immoral, but it is economically stupid.

10. Police funding in Saint John

I love the community police model. Duane Squires is an excellent example, where you embed yourself in the community, you start to just check-in with people as you walk, like, how are you doing today? You end up playing in a basketball game with youth so that you're not seen as the enemy. And I think that's really important. And too often extremes on both sides, will paint the other as, you know, all cops are bad, which is of course false, or protesters are terrorists. And they want the police gone, which is also false. So we need to have more conversations between groups, particularly minorities who look out into the world and see the oppression, but also find systemic issues present in New Brunswick as well. And we need only look at the case of Chantelle Moore and know that work needs to be done through dialogue and action when necessary.

11. Reporting and investigations of sexual assaults

It's incredibly sad that so many victims of sexual assault, the vast majority of them being women, go unreported because they feel that it will not be pursued, that they will be judged, they will not be believed. So it's quite simple. You believe the women. And I had a conversation just a few nights ago. It's very surprising when a woman, you know, she was really angry and said that women lie to get back at a man. And I said, no, the statistics do not bear that out, that is rare. And we need to keep saying that, that is rare. And so, believe the women, support them, do not allow them to be revictimized and take this seriously as a police force or specialized unit needs to.

12. Municipal and Industrial Tax reform

That was issue number one, industrial tax reform. A [party name hidden] government will do that \$8 to \$9 million a year. We get our transit money back just for starters. That's the municipal tax reform. I said earlier that we need to remove or reduce the incentive to leave the city core and restructure things so that we are successfully fighting child poverty. We can't do that without looking at the taxes, particularly on the super wealthy, the top 1%, my position, not a platform position, but I don't see how we do a COVID recovery, fight the climate crisis and reduce child poverty without looking to the big heart, a big bank account, and encouraging those that hide

their money to stop doing that. It might sound elitist, but I think more people are led with the heart than we think.

13. Access to public transit in Saint John

Insane now. Sundays people can't even get to their place of work. It's a challenge to get to a voting location. And that starts to beg the question, how could a premier say no to federal funding, no strings attached, to keep our transit going? I mean, we've been lied to, and we now see the consequences. \$800,000 and 13 bus drivers out of work in a city where more people rely on transit to get around than any other in the province because of the poverty. Double the child poverty rate of the nation.

14. Access to affordable childcare in Saint John

So I tend to think of that more as a federal investment, but I guess they shouldn't, because you can support the education system and the healthcare system, you'd support the economy itself when you make it easier for parents of any gender who wish to go to work. It should not be the case that going to work in a job you want... You know, actually, I have personal experience here and I don't think my ex wife would mind me mentioning it, but we had twins who are 11 now. She liked her job, but it was a financial disincentive. We would've lost money if she had gone back to the job she liked and we shouldn't have that as a reality. Quebec has a good model where it's, I think it was like \$10 a day, for childcare. You know, that strikes me as more reasonable. Personally, do I like the idea of free? I do, but I'm realistic when it comes to just how many things we can do with all that new tax revenue.

15. Media Ownership in New Brunswick

It's a monopoly and an enormous threat to democracy. Oh, you said media ownership? Okay. We'll leave it there.