



Questions for Director District 2 Candidates

Responses to be part of Candidate Screening

Wednesday, May 5, 2008

6:30 p.m. - Knox Center Board Room

- 1) The District spends approximately 85 percent of its budget to pay wages, salaries and benefits; most of the 85 percent is spent according to the terms of collective bargaining agreements. In the recent past, collectively-bargained agreements have been negotiated by administrators and unions, and the Board often receives the final product for the first time at a meeting held after a regular Board meeting, usually around 10:00 p.m. The Board may also receive several pages of explanatory information for the first time at the 10:00 p.m. meeting, and is often asked by the Superintendent if the Board is prepared to ratify the agreement. If the Board chooses to ratify the agreement, it generally does so at the next regular meeting.

An alternative approach is for the Board to discuss the contract negotiations with staff at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the process, and for directors to receive copies of negotiated agreements and of information in advance.

What do you think would be a good process for Board involvement in contract negotiation planning?

- 2) What would be your focus as a Director?
- 3) Please state what you believe are the fundamental roles AND responsibilities for a school board member in Washington state.
- 4) There have been a lot of changes in graduation requirements in recent years—WASL, culminating project, etc. There is talk of adding additional math requirements. What do you think about all these changes—are you in favor of more requirements, the same?
- 5) What do you see as the greatest opportunities and challenges for the District?
- 6) Do you believe there are any issues or questions concerning educational policy (not questions or issues related to identifiable, individual students or employees) and Board operations that should not be discussed publicly; and, if discussed publicly, are there any issues or questions concerning educational policy and Board operations for which the Board should not make a recording of the discussion available on the OSD website? If you believe there are matters (excluding issues concerning individual students and employees) that should not be discussed publicly or recorded and made available to the public, please give three examples.

- 7) How would you work cohesively and whom would you include in the process?
- 8) The Franklin School District (Mass.) has a policy and practice which engages parents in their children's schooling. In the 8th grade all students' parents must meet with a teacher/counselor who presents the four high school paths they must choose from. These paths range from a plan to simply graduate HS with a diploma, to being prepared (upon graduation) to attend the top colleges and universities in the nation. If a parent/guardian does not attend this mandatory meeting, the child will not receive a schedule for HS. As a result of other additional tools to encourage/require the parents' attendance at this meeting the District has achieved a "parent involvement/engagement" of 100%. Would you support such an effort at the Olympia School District?
- 9) What experience do you have with conflict resolution, and how do you see yourself using this experience on the school board?
- 10) What is the Board's role in the management of the District?