

2010 OK-SAFE SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE SURVEY

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GENERAL: (If you want to answer any of the questions on separate sheet(s) of paper, please do so.)

1. Why are you running for this office?

I run in order to serve students, their families, and the public in fulfilling the Oklahoma Constitutional mandate that we provide a free and appropriate education to every child who resides in this District. I run to help fulfill TPS' mission "to provide a quality education for every student, every day without exception." I run to repay a debt that I have for the quality public education my two children received in Tulsa Public Schools. I run to invest students and their families with a high quality choice, and to expect their active involvement in making choices to further their education.

2. What are your qualifications for this office?

With the consent of the people I represent, I have served in this position for eight years. I was recognized by the Oklahoma State School Boards Association as one of three outstanding School Board Members in 2009. I am passionate about bringing the Tulsa community together in support of public education.

3. Are you a member of a church or synagogue, and if so, which one?

I am a life-long member of my church, active in its worship and governance at the local and national level. The particular church and congregation are not relevant to this office.

4. What is your occupation?

I am retired as a business and family attorney. I currently teach at a private alternative high school. In addition, I am an Adjunct Instructor of various social studies courses at Tulsa Community College.

5. List no more than 10 people who have endorsed you or are supporting your campaign.

I have not sought public endorsements and so I maintain no such list. I have been elected to this office previously. So, to that extent, the voters in this district have endorsed my service as a school board member.

5. List any college degrees and/or professional certifications (e.g. CPA) you have attained.

I received a BA in Political Science in 1973 from the University of Louisville. I received a Juris Doctorate from the University of Louisville School of Law in 1980.

6. List groups of which you are a member (e.g. Kiwanis, Young Professionals, Chamber of Commerce).

None

7. List any political organizations or clubs of which you are a member.

None

8. Other than your campaign, what other candidates have you volunteered for and/or contributed to?

In a non-partisan election such as the School Board race and for a "Non-Partisan Voter Guide Questionnaire," this question is not relevant. However, in past, I have supported both Republican, Democratic, Libertarian and Independent candidates at various times for various offices. My primary (although not sole) criterion for candidates is the quality and integrity of their support for public education.

9. What would you say is the primary role of a school board member?

Legally, an Oklahoma school board member has three roles: a) to hire, supervise, advise and, if necessary, dismiss the district Superintendent; b) to establish and ensure implementation of district policy, and; c) to approve all financial expenditures of the District. In addition, a school board member serves as a voice for public education. Also, a wise board member will actively seek out and listen with an open heart to comments from all stakeholders involved in or affected by public education.

ACADEMICS:

11. Do you support or oppose schools giving primary emphasis to teaching basic skills (e.g. reading, grammar, spelling, arithmetic) rather than social or psychological matters? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I believe that it is the fundamental purpose of education in America to make one people out of many. Accordingly, students should share a common curriculum adapted and applied locally. This curriculum includes, at a minimum emphasis on basic academic skills as you list them. In addition, developing inquiring minds and critical thinking skills to engage in lifelong learning is important for students.

12. Do you support or oppose the use of intensive, systematic phonics to teach first-grade children how to read?
SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I support any teaching method which produces results and improves reading literacy.

13. Do you support or oppose the goal that children should be able to read by the end of the first grade?
SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

This is a worthy goal. However since children enter school on the first day of kindergarten with a wide range in their reading skills (some report up to six years variation), I support the goal that every child should make annual progress from their individual starting points and that all students should be reading at no less than grade level by no later than the end of third grade.

14. Do you support or oppose the teaching of abstinence as the norm for unmarried teenagers and as an effective way to prevent sexually-transmitted diseases? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I believe that sex education is primarily a parent's obligation. Having said that, I support offering age appropriate classroom instruction in personal health and hygiene, including (for older students and with parental permission) sex education. Abstinence is clearly the most effective means of avoiding pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. Stressing this in any sex education curriculum only makes sense.

15. Do you support or oppose excluding the topics of homosexuality and alternative lifestyles from the classroom?
SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I do not believe that any sexual orientation or lifestyle should be promoted in school instruction. However, I cannot agree to exclude any reference to the topics from the classroom. For example, if a classroom discussion or lesson

addressed groups which Nazi Germany targeted for persecution, I would expect it to include reference to homosexuals just as a matter of historic accuracy.

16. Do you support or oppose teaching that the use of illegal drugs and the unlawful use of alcohol by young people under the age of 21 are inappropriate?

SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

Tulsa Public Schools has a Code of Student Conduct which specifically prohibits the use of illegal drugs and alcohol on any school property or at any school function. I fully support that policy and uphold its enforcement. Further, I support civic education which includes respect for and adherence to all laws, including laws regarding use of drugs and alcohol.

17. Do you support or oppose classroom instruction that downgrades American sovereignty, limited constitutional government, and private enterprise? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I support, and engage in, classroom instruction that values accurate information and which fosters critical thinking. I fully support instruction in our American ideals (including, for example liberty, equality, self-government and Constitutional principles) and their expression in our federal system.

18. Do you support or oppose global curricula that promote global citizenship (for example, the International Baccalaureate, UN Model Schools, GLOBE Program, the Center for Civic Education curricula)?

SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I do not support any curriculum which places students at odds with their obligations as American citizens. I do think it important, however, for students to achieve a good understanding of international issues and the critical skills to evaluate and apply American ideals to those issues.

19. Do you support or oppose teaching the scientific strengths and weaknesses of scientific principles such as evolution?

SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I believe that the fundamental objective of science is to develop theories which explain the world in which we live. The scientific process is a series of attempts to test and disprove those theories. What is left over (and that remainder constantly changes) becomes the body of science upon which we rely. Inherent in the scientific process is the open and objective testing of strengths and weaknesses in all theories.

POLICY:

20. Do you support or oppose local control of education, with accountability through the local school board?

SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

Education is fundamentally the responsibility of parents. The beneficiaries of education include the students, but also include our communities and our nation. The most effective means of ensuring quality education is to place the responsibility as closely as possible to its delivery. We must assure, however, that from school to school and from district to district, we provide equality of opportunity for every student. Because of local economic disparities, funding for education must come from as broad a base as can be reasonably managed. Providing state funding for basic education and local control and accountability seems to be an effective blending of these principles.

21. Do you support or oppose federal control of curriculum through the implementation of No Child Left Behind (unification of Goals 2000, School-to-Work and the Workforce Investment Act)? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I do not support federal control of curriculum decisions.

22. Do you support or oppose the establishment of school-based health clinics, which may perform examinations, provide immunizations and medications, and dispense birth control devices and abortion referrals, without parental consent or knowledge? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I do not believe it is appropriate for schools to provide any medical services to students without parental knowledge and consent. I do not object to placing clinics within schools, but they should be there for community and parental convenience and for the cost-efficient availability of local services, not for the delivery by schools of clandestine health care services to students.

23. Do you support or oppose the collection and maintenance of data on student health, performance, attitudes, behavior, and family in computerized databases? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I support cost-efficient collection, storage and use of student data which directly assists in the delivery of quality education and student achievement. Consistent with that principle, I would have to evaluate each proposal for such databases.

24. Do you support or oppose allowing the school district to deduct money from the paychecks of school employees and forward it to political funds without the annual written consent of each employee? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I believe political contributions are the decision of individuals. Individual employees may decide whether to join or not to join organizations which include payroll deductions.

25. The school board for Tulsa Public Schools voted to challenge in court the Oklahoma statute dealing with charter schools. If you were a member of your school board at the time this vote was taken, would you have voted to challenge this law? YES NO UNDECIDED

I was a member of the Tulsa School Board when this lawsuit was undertaken. I support the prerogative of the Oklahoma Legislature to decide whether to make charter schools available. I also support the Oklahoma Constitution which prohibits "local and special laws." Consistent with that Constitutional provision, if the Legislature decides Oklahoma is to have charter schools, they should be available statewide rather than only in a handful of districts. That is what the lawsuit was about and why I supported it.

26. Would you support or oppose (if you are elected to the position you are campaigning for) a measure or proposal that would raise the millage levy in your school district above the level that it is right now? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

All millages levied locally are done only with a vote of the people. I support the right of the people to decide whether they are willing to raise or lower their property taxes to support public schools.

PARENTS' RIGHTS:

27. Do you support or oppose the opinion that parents have a right to direct the upbringing and education of their children? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

It is not only the right, but the primary obligation of parents to direct the upbringing and education of their children.

28. Do you support or oppose a school board policy allowing parents the ability to inspect and review instructional materials and methods? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

Parents that choose to do so already exercise this responsibility regularly through constructive conversation with teachers and principals.

29. Do you support or oppose a school board policy forbidding psychological evaluations, testing, treatment, or physical examinations of students without prior written parental consent? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I support parents' right to determine whether their student should undergo any medical or psychological evaluations, testing, treatment, or physical examinations.

30. Do you support or oppose requiring parental consent prior to giving information and care to students regarding sexuality and reproductive health? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I support offering age appropriate classroom instruction in personal health and hygiene, including (for older students and with parental permission) sex education.

31. Do you support or oppose requiring students to answer questionnaires about sex, drugs, suicide, and family behavior without prior written parental consent? SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I am not aware of any such questionnaires presently in use or proposed for use that would require students to respond. I would not support requiring disclosure of such information unless the student and families are exercising their discretion to seek particular supplemental services which rely on such data (e.g., some alternative education programs).

32. Do you support or oppose the opinion that parents have a right to home school their children?
 SUPPORT OPPOSE UNDECIDED

I absolutely support this right. I would favor enough measure of external accountability, however, to ensure that home schooling is indeed for the purpose of education and that, in the guise of "home schooling," children are not being exploited or overtly harmed.