

**Davis Education Association  
2010 Utah State House of Representatives  
Candidate Questionnaire**

Name: Becky Edwards  
District: Legislative District 20  
Street Address: 1121 Eaglewood Loop  
City: North Salt Lake  
Zip: 84054  
Phone: 801-295-2950 home, 801-808-0805 cell  
Email: [votebeckyedwards@gmail.com](mailto:votebeckyedwards@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.utahbecky.com](http://www.utahbecky.com) (blog)

1. Please tell us about yourself and why you have decided to run for the Utah House of Representatives.

My husband, John, and our four children have lived in the Bountiful/North Salt Lake area for the past 17 years. During that time I've spent much of my time focused on volunteering in the schools, community and service organizations. My children have been the recipients of a fantastic education in 2 elementary schools, 2 junior highs, and 2 high schools in our area. We count the many teachers who have influenced our children as some of the best features of living where we do. My husband is a physician in town and through his work and my volunteering we have had the opportunity to forge relationships with many in our community.

I've had the great privilege of serving as the Representative for District 20 for one term and have really worked hard to truly represent the people of my area. My experience during the past two years, specifically as a member of the Education Standing Committee, has put me in a position to continue to lead out for our area, and students and families specifically.

2. Do you believe that public schools are adequately funded? If you do not believe they are adequately funded, what changes should be made to provide appropriate financial support for quality public schools?

Unfortunately, that answer is no. As a legislature we are required by law to balance the state's budget. Every aspect of that budget has been closely examined over the past years looking for efficiencies, duplication of services, and any fat that could be trimmed. In many cases we have cut fat, muscle, and we're down to the bone. This is the first time in as long as anyone can remember that we have not funded for student growth. So, when we talk of "education being held harmless" that is just not so, because not funding for the anticipated student growth of between 11 and 14K is an effectual \$75 million cut to education. So, what can be done in our current economy? We can continue to look for innovative ways to provide services, although I'm certain this will require some creativity. We must look at the changes in the general state tax structure. The education

fund, for instance, now includes higher education, and that move has hurt both of those entities at the benefit of transportation and other services. The balance between sales, property, and income tax must be examined, especially in light of the need for school equalization funding. And a robust economy will bring in additional revenue so a dedication to strengthening and supporting job growth is critical and something I'm committed to.

3. If another voucher or tuition tax credit bill is introduced in the legislature would you support another such effort, or would you oppose it?

Oppose.

4. What would you do to retain quality educators in Utah?

As the retirement reform bills came to the House this session there was a group of legislators that included me who were very concerned that as the pension portion of the total compensation package was being decreased there was no increase in wages, which was one of the points of the reform (that it would free up funds to increase those wages). We held out on our vote until intent language was included in the bill addressing the increase in wages, and an amendment was passed that put in place an automatic trigger to address increases in wages once the URS is fully funded. I do realize there are many aspects to retaining quality teachers, but certainly an adequate wage is at the top of my list.

5. What would you do to attract new teachers in Utah, considering the fact that the legislature this year significantly reduced the retirement benefit for future teachers?

Much of this is discussed in my previous answer. Additional aspects of the teaching profession can be enhanced, for instance providing teacher mentoring for new hires, adequate autonomy for teacher innovation, opportunities for teacher collaboration and continued training, and support from the district, parents, and community. A system for teacher performance pay in an effective manner is something we'll be discussing during the legislative interim this summer.

Additionally, the legislation dealing with eminent domain over SITLA lands that can increase our funds that go directly to community councils in schools has a lot of promise for essential revenue in the future.

6. Did the legislature go far enough in enacting ethical reforms this session? If not, what is left to be done?

The ethics bills passed this year represented the most significant efforts made in legislative history. However, there is much still to be done, including a legislative code of conduct, independent ethics commission, lobbyist restrictions, and some additional campaign contribution limits.

7. How would you evaluate the Utah State legislature's overall performance and leadership this year?

The move to a more polarized legislature reflects a similar shift in the general population and does very little to help legislators be effective in solving problems. My goal has always been to lead out for the people of my district because truly my constituents are my special interest and my lobbyists. Collaboration and common sense solutions are the hallmark of many currently serving in our legislative leadership and I've been grateful for their support as I strive towards those same goals.