

**Davis Education Association
2010 Davis School District Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire**

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1. Please tell us a little about yourself and why you have filed to run for the Davis School District Board of Education.

I am a Civilian Employee currently working on my thirtieth year at Hill Air Force Base as a Production Controller. I was born in Ogden, Utah and I have lived in Layton for the past twenty-four years. I am fifty-four years old. The reason why I want to run for the School Board is to improve the quality of education for all students in our district.

2. What kinds of experiences have you had with the schools in the Davis School District? (children in school, volunteering, etc.)

My experience with the Davis School District began when I attended primary and secondary school. I attended South Clearfield Elementary, Hill Field Elementary, North Davis Junior High, and graduating from Clearfield High School. I received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Westminster College, in Salt Lake City, majoring in Social and Behavioral Science. I worked as a school teacher for three years, teaching reading and math to high risk students at South High School, in the Salt Lake School District. I worked for eight years as a Employee Development Specialist in the office of Civilian Training at Hill Air Force Base. I graduated from the US Air Force Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. I also received an Honorable Discharge from the US Navy Reserve following nine years of service.

3. What, in your opinion, is the main mission of public education?

I believe the main mission of public education is to provide our students with the latest technology and support that prepares them for the best possible future.

4. 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?

I do not believe that public schools are funded adequately. Instead of continuing to ask our schools, teachers, and staff to do more and more with less and less, we must provide them with all the resources they need to do their job. We have an obligation and a duty to invest in our students, this is done by recommitting and reinvesting in our public educational system. The School Board must insure that all funding resources at the federal, state, and local level are utilized to the maximum extent.

5. What do you see as the three most critical need/issues facing the Davis School District in the next five years? How would you begin to address these issues?

The three most critical need/issues facing the Davis School District in the next five years are: (1) **FUNDING FOR EDUCATION**. As the economy recovers slowly, the district budget may need to be adjusted to meet possible funding shortfalls. I would encourage negotiations, and collective bargaining agreements to minimize any negative budget impact on our schools, teachers, and staff. The School Board should work with the Davis Education Association (DEA) to ask the governor and legislature to restore the lost retirement benefits for teachers, and for increased funding for education. (2) **TEACHER MORAL**. I believe that student learning and teacher retention can all be tied to the level of teacher moral. Teacher morale must be improved to prevent teachers from leaving the profession. The School Board can assist in improving teacher morale by providing them with shared decision-making opportunities, better professional development, mentor support, and by giving them additional planning time. (3) **EDUCATING TEACHERS FOR DIVERSITY**. As the student population in our district becomes increasingly diverse, educators must respond with school reform efforts that meet the needs of all students. They must develop culturally sensitive curricula that integrate multicultural viewpoints and histories, and apply instructional strategies that encourage all students to achieve. The School Board could provide teachers with educational programs that would prepare them to promote meaningful and engaged learning for all students.

6. What would you do to retain quality educators in the Davis District?

I believe quality educators can be retained by: (1) Providing higher salaries that those paid in other school districts. (2) For teachers working on a master's degree, offer tuition reimbursements and loan assistance. (3) Improve retirement benefits for teachers. (4) The School Board should work with the DEA to identify ways to retain quality educators in our district.

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

To attract new teachers to the Davis School District I propose: (1) Create teacher recruiter positions. (2) Raise starting teacher salaries. (3) Offers a sign-on bonus to new teachers. (4) Offer new teachers a rotation of teaching assignments to develop new skills. (5) Request suggestions from the DEA.

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

I would not support another voucher or tuition tax credit bill. Given the limited budget for schools, I believe a voucher system would undermine the public educational system while at the same time not necessarily provide enough money for people to attend private schools. The voucher system for private schools lacks accountability to the taxpayer by not allowing the public to vote on budgetary issues, elect member to the board or even attend board meetings.

9. In 2010 Sen. Margaret Dayton sponsored a bill (S.B. 77) that would prevent school districts from providing Association leave (paid substitutes) for teachers who serve during the school day on district committees such as negotiations. It would also prevent the school district from paying 50% of the DEA President's salary. Would you favor the continuation of the current Association leave policy between the school district and the DEA, or would you oppose it?

I would support the continuation of the current Association leave policy, and the payment of 50% of the DEA President's salary. This is keeping with my belief that the School Board needs to provide our educational system with all the resources needed to do the job. I believe S.B. 77 would not add value to our School District, but would only make it harder for teachers to do their job.

10. In your opinion, is there anything the Davis School Board and District Administration could do better?

I believe the Davis School Board along with the District Administration should do a better job in the following four areas: (1) **EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH.** The School District has a plan for fostering educational excellence. Under the plans "Belief Statement", it states "site-based decisions about education are best made in collaboration with education, support personnel, parents, students and members of the community. The input and expertise of the community is vital to the development of our educational system". The Davis School Board needs to do a better job in seeking input from others before

making decisions. As a Board Member, I would work to establish an educational community outreach plan that would require School Board Members to aggressively seek input from all levels of the community prior to making a final decision.

(2) **EDUCATION EXCELLENCE THROUGH CULTURAL**

DIVERSITY. Another part of the Davis School District's plan for fostering education excellent states: "Understanding and acknowledging the value of cultural and individual diversity enriches the learning environment and is essential to an interdependent, caring society". This part of the plan cannot be achieved at the Davis School Board level because it lacks a Board Member with a cultural diverse background. As a elected Board Member, I will bring my cultural and ethnic background to the School Board. According to the plan, this will contribute to the enrichment of the learning environment in the Davis School District. (3) **LIFE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION.** To counter the epidemic of unintentional death by drug overdose and suicide in Utah, a renewed approach to early education and prevention needs to be placed in all our schools. The Utah Department of Health reported that last year Utah had 432 documented overdose deaths, with forty-three occurring in Davis County. (4)

STRENGTHEN FINANCIAL CONTROLS. In light of the recent charges of theft and financial mismanagement by some Davis School employees, the School Board needs to do a better job of oversight and accountability of the budget under their control. From 1999 to 2006, over 4.3 million dollars was stolen from our district's U.S. Department of Education's Title 1 program, which helps students who are financially disadvantaged. The Davis School Board and District Administration needs to strengthen or establish procedures and controls to keep these situations from reoccurring.

11. Is the Davis School District too large to be responsive to its patrons and the community? Would you support splitting the school district? Why or why not?

I do not think the Davis School District is too large to be responsive to our community, and I would not support splitting the school district. The Davis School District has provided outstanding educational opportunities to Davis County residents for the past 99 years, and I believe it can continue to meet the future educational needs of our community in the current structure. If our school district were to split into two, it would call for a division of district resources. If this resource division is not fair and equal, it could result in teacher layoffs, increased class sizes, elimination of the teacher preparation period, and increased property tax. To avoid this kind of negative impact to county residents, I would vote not to split the Davis School District.