

Davis Education Association
2010 Utah State House of Representatives
Candidate Questionnaire

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1. Please tell us about yourself and why you have decided to run for the Utah House of Representatives. *As a 22 year resident of Bountiful, I believe our next legislative representative should be the voice of our great city and the voice of public schools. This is my third time running for the Legislature, (twice for the House, once for the Senate) and I strongly feel that I am the only candidate in District 19 that will sincerely represent public education. Over years, I have served on four different school community councils and I am the current Chair for the Millcreek Jr. High Community Council. As a result, I have had a front row seat as a parent and a community participant on how school budgets operate. I have also participated as an advocate for some of the Autism bills during this past legislative session. As Chair of Government Affairs for the Autism Council of Utah, we were happy to have had a favorable response to our programs and bills. One bill in particular was the Autism Awareness License Plate bill where I was a part of from the beginning and to the end of this passed bill. Some of my other community activities include:*

*-Chair of the Bountiful City Community Service Council (Concerts in the Park and Emergency Preparedness Fair)
- Youth Basketball and Baseball Coach.*

*Members of my family are my wife, Carol (school teacher at Cottonwood High), and my two sons, Andy and Bret.
I am a New Product Analyst for Associated Food Stores.*

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? *Public schools in Utah are NOT adequately funded and they have not been for almost three decades. In Utah, public schools depend on the Uniform School Fund as directed by the Utah Constitution. In addition, public school funds are also*

received from property taxes and from the Trust Lands funds. And occasionally, schools may receive additional funding from the Legislature. Unfortunately, funding has been cut because of some changes made to the Uniform School Fund. I believe as a state, we need to address the flat tax issue and explore the impact it has had on our state. I am not suggesting that we raise taxes, but we need to look at all possible ideas on how to fund our public schools. In addition, as much time as our lawmakers have taken to carve out a budget for our public schools, they should also spend the time in exploring ideas for increased revenue. If they can spend the time during interim to change the state retirement system, then they can spend the time in creating more funding for our public schools. Also, if we are serious about economic development and attracting new businesses to Utah, then we must excel in public education. In recent reports, Utah must better prepare our workforce if we expect a better economic environment. And in a recent Deseret News Editorial, "The goal of Utah's public school system should be to exceed any national benchmark." For Utah to excel, we need to properly fund our public schools.

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? I am strongly opposed to any voucher or tuition tax credit program from the Legislature.*
4. *What would you do to retain quality educators in Utah? In this past legislative session as the State Retirement Reform bills were debated on the House floor, one glaring question stood out. As a legislative body, when are we going to address the problems of compensation? Public School teachers have been asking that question for years and I have found it interesting that no one in the legislature bothered to answer the question. Well, the time is now. As mentioned in question #2, if we are going to excel in economic development, we must include teacher compensation. Simply put, if we want the best teachers, we must be willing to pay for the best.*
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? As mentioned in the previous question, compensation plans for teachers need to be addressed, particularly if we are cutting retirement packages for newly hired teachers. In addition, I believe we need to re-address the recently passed Retirement Reform bills and look at the potential impact it will have on our teacher workforce, both current and future. Two years ago, it was predicted that there will be a teacher shortage. It appears that the current Legislature is trying to fulfill that prediction. Right now, we have some great teachers and some great*

schools. However, I am deeply concerned about the future of our public school system. We can and must do better.

6. Did the legislature go far enough in enacting ethical reforms this session? If not, what is left to be done? *Over the past several years, the Utah Legislature has proven that they cannot provide substantial legislation in governing their own ethical behavior. As a citizen, I support the current petition, Utahns for Ethical Government, as the best way of addressing the ethics of our Legislative lawmakers.*

7. How would you evaluate the Utah State legislature's overall performance and leadership this year? *For the 2010 Legislature, I would give them a D+. I would not flunk them as they tried to address the budget cuts and for the most part, did listen to some concerns. In addition, they were cooperative in helping with some of our ACU bills. However, I am always amazed on how much time they spend on "message" bills and the callousness that some of the legislators possess.*