

Lincoln Public Schools Candidate Questionnaire

(Please feel free to attach your answers on a separate piece of paper)

1). The Lincoln Public Schools consolidated tax levy is currently \$1.37 per \$100 of valuation. Overall, Lincoln Public Schools receives 63% of all property tax revenue in Lincoln, the City of Lincoln receives 14%, Lancaster County receives 14%, and all other taxing authorities share the remaining 8%.

Do you feel this is the appropriate level of funding for Lincoln Public Schools?

[AND]

Is the way, we as a community, currently allocate the overall property tax levy appropriate?

State law may mandate the funding mechanism for support of our Public Schools, but we do not necessarily have to maximize the fund allowed. You can have all the formula's in the world to dictate spending levels, but we all know that this is a time a need, a time to suck it up and contribute as a team.

I think the community needs to see that LPS is vested in the future, and is willing to tighten the budget just enough to get through these tough times. Again, I say you can't please everyone, but you need to at least try.

2). In our Six Statements of Core Policy, the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce encourages fiscal responsibility and the pursuit of government efficiencies. In what ways do you plan to encourage fiscal responsibility and efficiencies in the Lincoln Public Schools System?

Considering the state of the economy, I would want to cut the budget where we could. There are many of us who need to cut back in our personal lives in order to get by, and asking for more of what we don't already have seems asinine. I think that if we had to cut, it would be an extremely low amount across the board. In a perfect world, I would want to try and build a surplus, one that would allow us to give back to the community and consider some of the issues that the City Council is dealing with. For example, we could use surplus monies to support keeping the smaller public libraries.

3). Personnel costs are most often the largest driving force behind municipal budgets. As a member of the Board of Education, how will you work to keep personnel cost manageable?

[AND]

Should the district move to a "merit-based" system for salary increases?

I think in some way shape or form, pay should be tied to performance. I truly believe in longevity pay, with scales and steps similar to General Schedule in the federal service. In order to receive scheduled pay increases or steps, it depends on your performance and annual rating. Also, I believe in meritorious pay increases based on performance within the budget. I think benchmarks should be based on test scores, attendance and periodic teacher monitoring. I believe that we need to

look at other educational systems that have these standards in place prior to implementation. Through intense monitoring and restrictions, we should be able to keep personnel costs manageable.

4). What are some ways in which the business community can better partner with the public schools to meet the ever-growing need for an educated workforce in Lincoln?

I believe that the community and all school systems should work together as they have similar interests. I believe that there are current concentrated efforts towards supporting our schools through donations, outreach programs and mentoring programs. I think the business community needs something in return, as it is not a one-way street. Again, LPS should be giving back to the community and not soaking up the majority of the taxpayers' money.

5). What will be the biggest challenge facing the Lincoln Public School system over the next 5 years?

Controlling the every growing population of students. I believe that the concentration of growth will be in the older districts and crowding our older schools. In addition to the growth in the older neighborhoods, the newer outlying areas grow rapidly as well.

6). What do you see as your role as a member of the Lincoln Public Schools Board of Education?

Convincing the board that there is no better candidate for superintendent than that of an educator within the current system. I see myself as a voice of compassion, and one that understands that the school system is not invincible in this era. I am also looking to be the liaison for the children, faculty and people of my district. I truly believe that we all have a voice, but only one is heard.