



Lincoln Public Schools Candidate Questionnaire
(Please feel free to attach your answers on a separate piece of paper)

1). Current fiscal constraints at the state-level is affecting State-aid to Schools. This could directly impact the amount of funding Lincoln Public Schools receives.

Can the school system operate on fewer funds, or would the district automatically need to raise property taxes to cover the shortfall?

At this time it appears LB235 is a priority bill in the Unicameral, which would mean the portion of the state budget for education would most likely be set at \$844 million for 2011/2012. This is a drastic decrease, however I do not believe it would be necessary demand an increase to the levy. I will look for ways to create efficiencies and opportunities to outsource services that would impact the budget.

2).The Lincoln Public Schools system is nearing its general-operating-budget-levy limit. Any changes in property valuation or State-aid to Schools could place the system in a position to have to ask the citizens of Lancaster County for a higher operating levy.

Would you support asking voters to override the current levy limit?

No, I don't feel we are at that point. As indicated I would rather look for ways to streamline the budget to work with the funding we do receive.

3). In our Six Statements of Core Policy, the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce encourages fiscal responsibility and the pursuit of government efficiencies.

Can Lincoln Public Schools be more efficient in its use of human and capital resources?

[and]

In what ways?

There are always opportunities that can be identified for consolidation of tasks, streamlining of operations and creating efficiencies. LPS is currently undertaking a Strategic Planning process. Strategic planning would give us to map out where we are, where we need to go and how to get there. It will should address staffing needs and give us a picture of the best use of personnel.

4). 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?

The largest driver of personnel cost after salary, is benefits. I have worked in the employee benefits field for many years and would like the opportunity to review possible changes in plan design or cost sharing to decrease those expenses. Some are set in statute or negotiated, but there are ways to manage that spend.

5). 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 would like to see more community and business involvement in LPS. One of the most intriguing options LPS has is the Focus Programs. There are currently four programs for students that were developed as an extension of the high school learning experience. They offer Entrepreneurship, Information Technology, Science/Zoo School and Arts and Humanities Programs.

They were designed to address those areas of interest and allow students to learn and advance in those areas that are beyond the regular high school curriculum. I think this idea could be expanded to include manufacturing, marketing, advertising or other business models. Having the expertise and partnership with Lincoln businesses in these sectors would create interest and educate students in those lines of business.

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

Clearly it's Lincoln's population growth. The LPS budget for 2010/2011 was based upon an assumption of 630 additional students when they actually grew by over 700. It's the quality of our schools that attract people to Lincoln, it's the reason my husband and I moved here. We have to keep our school system the best in the state and that is a commitment made by LPS, the Board, the community and the businesses that support it.

This will mean expansion and growth in facilities and staff to meet the demands of an enlarging district. Funding this growth will be without a doubt our biggest challenge.