



Questions for Candidates - D51 School Board, 2023

From moderator Michelle Boisvenue-Fox

Candidate Name and District: **Barbara Evanson / District "B"**

1. A variety of educators and studies indicate that an Arts education helps students with development of motor skills, language skills, social skills, decision-making, risk-taking, and inventiveness along with connecting them to cultures and the wider world. **What was your experience with the Arts as a student?**

I attended school in a small country town in Northwestern Virginia. I was offered a traditional art class, choir, band, and marching band. I participated in choir throughout high school.

2. There is a term in the arts community and education called Arts Integration. In acknowledging students' different learning styles, education with arts integration has students demonstrate understanding through an art form no matter the subject. Examples include creating plays for a history lesson, commercial jingles to teach persuasive writing, or narrating creative stories through photographs. **What role do you see for the Arts in the education of a D51 student?**

I feel the Arts enhance a student's all-around academic performance. The Arts provide an opportunity for students to collaborate skills and imagination and apply them to academics and later to their chosen profession. The Arts are essential in our schools for our students.

3. As a community leader, I love this quote, "Because schools play a pivotal role in cultivating the next generation of citizens and leaders, it is imperative that we reflect on the fundamental purpose of a well-rounded education." It's easy to think of children as children but forget that they are an up-and-coming generation. **What do you see as the role of a D51 board member with regards to supporting curriculum beyond the core subjects of reading, writing, math, and the sciences to include an Arts Education?**

I believe board members have a responsibility to include the Arts in curriculum just as much as reading, writing and math. Arts help to develop creative minds that will advance a student's ability to apply and implement a variety of resources that help turn a creative concept into reality.



4. The Art Heritage Program was created in the 1980s for K-5 students after an economic downturn in Western Colorado -- the Oil Shale Bust -- led to major budget cuts. Today, parents and community volunteers in 25 D51 elementary schools, as well as private schools in the Grand Valley, offer six art units based upon well-known artists. Students learn about an artist's life and times, view presentations of the artist's work, then create their own art. ***In order to effectively manage arts education in the 46 schools within the district, would you support a full-time director position for the Arts Heritage Program?***

With the current budget crisis, I would not support the hiring of a full-time art director. I am unaware of how many art programs are currently funded by the district. I am aware that the only reason an art program exists at Wingate Elementary is due to fund raising, the PTO, additional volunteers, and the oversight of the school's administration. If there is available money in the district's budget for art, I feel the money should go toward funding the art programs across the district. I am unsure what a full-time director's role and duties would be, since the programs are currently managed by the administration of individual schools. I would be open to more discussion on this topic in the future if the budget allows for it and there is a clear and concise need for a director.