

Name: Cindy Winston

Link to Website: <https://cindy4tusd.wordpress.com/> and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Cindy4TUSD>

Endorsements: Planned Parenthood, Consuelo Hernández (Sunnyside School Board Member and former student), Alma Hernandez (AZ LD 3 State Representative), Daniel Hernandez (AZ LD2 State representative and former student), "affirmed as a quality candidate" by AZList

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1. A. Evaluate the progress TUSD has made and areas where it is still falling short in achieving benchmarks assigned by the Court toward achieving unitary status. Be specific.

In terms of integration the district is moving in the right direction, but there is still much work to be done in terms of providing academic equity within the classroom. Certainly, COVID19 has brought this to the forefront with lack of technology and internet access for all students. The district is putting in a good faith effort to try to resolve these problems of access and should be proud of the work they have done thus far.

As a teacher that has served in multiple districts throughout this nation (South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and Arizona) I propose we do a better job of spending the \$65 million that we have. We do that by monitoring how that money is spent currently and how much of that goes directly into classrooms.

B. Has the district earned that right to be free of the burden of needing court approval for major initiatives?

While that is ultimately the decision of the judge who rules in this case, I would have to say yes particularly in the way they have demonstrated their dedication during this pandemic. That is not to say there is not still work to be done. As a community we need to look at systems that support academic achievement, teachers and staff pay, professional development, systems of effective discipline and school safety. We also need to expand programs like Drop-Out Prevention, Student Services, and TUSD Media, as all of these departments do amazing things for kids and will reverse the downward trends of enrollment.

2. A. Have you heard stories of problems with the HR department? Yes. My concern as a Site Council Facilitator is that there is a disconnect between what HR says is appropriate staffing at a school and what Finance is willing to support. In my own experience this led to a lot of frustration on my campus and needs not being met.

Would you support the idea of an audit? Yes, although I don't think the problem lies with HR alone.

B. Would you be willing to sponsor a proposal for an HR audit? Yes.

3. A. Do you believe the district needs to reform the way principals and other administrators are selected and/or evaluated?

**Selection:** Yes. This particular issue is very sensitive to me because as the Site Council Facilitator for my campus I had put together an interview panel, reserved a place for the interview to take place and then was told a week out, that no interview would be taking place despite the fact there were 39 candidates who applied for the job of Coordinator/Principal. Every year I took on board training that reviewed this process, yet it was not followed. Policy needs to be followed, otherwise, we are not fulfilling our duty and will lose the public's trust.

**Evaluation:**

Considering that evaluations were once heavily tied to student performance of standardized tests this issue obviously needs to be addressed since those tests have been postponed. Below are 4 standards that I pulled directly from the ADE website on Principal evaluations which I think should be used to evaluate in the coming year and the means by which to obtain the data.

Standard 3: Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being. This data could be obtained via parent/ student survey.

Standard 8: Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student's academic success and wellbeing. This data could be obtained via parent/student survey. 25%

Standard 6: Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student's academic success and well-being. This data could be obtained via teacher survey. 50%

Standard 9: Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student's academic success and well-being. This data would be obtained from site council. 25%

4. Evaluate the actions of the current Governing Board.

What action or actions were their greatest achievements in the last four years?

Certainly, their management in the current crisis has been inspiring. I was proud when almost immediately there was a plan in place for how to continue providing meals to kids, despite the pandemic. As a teacher who has often heard students say, "Ms. I have not eaten all weekend." I was relieved that the basic needs of our students were a priority.

Prior to that proud that Comprehensive Sex Education was passed. I started teaching over 30 years ago and one of my favorite subjects to teach in Health was Sex Education. I taught both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade health and despite the fact that South Carolina is a very conservative state we taught safe sex practices of condom use in order to prevent HIV and the 23 other possible STI's. I can remember that there was an opt out option for our parents and I did have some folks take advantage of that. I know there was some concern here in Tucson that if students opted out that they would be picked on and I remember that I explained to the rest of the class that those children's parents had decided they would handle that subject with their own kids and when they had kids of their own there may be certain things that you would prefer to discuss with your kids and that is perfectly fine. The opt out kids went to the library and did an alternative assignment on recycling and we went on with class.

A streamlined process for access to mental health services. As the adult daughter of someone who died of suicide and the mother of child who deals with anxiety and depression, I am proud of the fact that TUSD is on ball when it comes to this issue. I can remember a parent calling into campus with regards to their student not being able to get counseling services until November and we were having a conversation in May. I was able to call our school assigned psychologist and they were able to present this parent with some options that were timelier.

What actions do you wish they had taken but did not take? While I was pleased at the restructuring of TUSD into regions during my time working there I am concerned that the board is not proactive in maintaining a relationship with the 89 schools it is responsible for representing. It has been suggested that in the future each region will have its own designated board member, but until that legislative action takes place I would like to propose that each board member commit to being in touch with the schools of one region on a regular basis.

#### 4. What does TUSD need to do to stop the loss of enrollment?

The district loses a few hundred students a year. Now, there are certain years, that number has been closer to a thousand or more, but on average a few hundred. Dr. Trujillo has rightfully explained that this occurs predominantly at the middle school level, and that parents are generally pleased with elementaries and high schools. Having taught middle school for 18 years it is a unique time because students are transitioning to adulthood and trying to manage academics at the same time. Middle school age children often push the boundaries, and let's be real, try to be little adults. This can sometimes look like students arguing, bullying, pushing back, crying, hurting others, getting hurt, and the list of adolescent issues could go on and on. So, to address this, three things need to be done. Number one: All Middle Schools need two counselors to address student need, as middle school students especially need to feel safe, and in control; counselors can help schools do that. Number two: middle school teachers need an additional stipend. Teaching is not easy, and middle school teaching is really not easy. So, we have to increase applicants, and try to get highly effective teachers in those classrooms. We also need to honor those teachers who have been putting in the work for years. Number three: we need increased alternative programs at the middle school level. Let's face it, we cannot expect every middle school

student we have to handle their school that has 1000 kids with ease. To believe that our system works for all middle schoolers is just blind. And we need to understand that there is absolutely no shame in needing a smaller or different learning environment. So, let's meet all the kids where they are at. Additionally, if students across Arizona can do their schooling online, the question has to be, what is TUSD going to provide that a strictly online program cannot do? My vision is we take advantage of where we are and expose them to all the Science, Art, and Natural History that our unique desert home has to offer.

5. What does TUSD need to do to help retain teachers and staff?

The bottom line is to provide a living wage, so teachers and staff do not have to hold down two or three jobs to do what they love. Also, take some 301 money and take care of the compression issue many of our older teachers are facing now in their years leading up to retirement. In our effort to promote new teachers (which is necessary) we have neglected and frozen the salaries of folks who have been dedicated and working without raises for years. It would be the just and right thing to do to boost their salaries so that their retirement could be calculated at a higher rate.

Since staff has been placed on the "front lines" it is imperative that they be considered for hazard pay just like other employees in the same situation.

7. What do you know about issues facing subs? Thanks to Dolores de Vera and her briefing on the topic I know a lot more than I did. Do you think full-time subs should be treated more equitably (i.e. access to benefits, compensation, etc.) relative to other full-time TUSD employees? As a teacher who relies on this very valuable resource, I am disappointed at the way TUSD has treated subs. While I understand the desire to outsource this service in an attempt to save money and relieve administrators of the duty of finding subs, I find it disturbing that the board did not insist on a sample contract in writing that showed long term substitutes receiving health insurance and retirement benefits. I understand now that TUSD is responsible for their subs again and during this time of COVID19 we need to look after the people who step in when others are not able.

8. What does accountability in TUSD look like to you? When I have a roster of students, I am responsible for having some sort of contact with them on a regularly, scheduled basis. The same should be true of the board. With 5 regions would it not be possible for each board member to make a commitment to sponsoring one region and communicating with those schools on a regular basis, not just for special functions such as graduation? Since COLE(Catalina Online Learning Experience) did not have a principal the last two years I took on the role as Site Council Facilitator to meet with the District, but it would have been nice if the District had some sort of regularly scheduled meeting with us. Please know that the current regional superintendent was much more responsive than the one prior who would not even answer emails, but it was always a "put out a fire" situation. Accountability means identifying and preventing fires before they happen and you do that through consistent relationships with the people on the ground.