

Questions for website:

ACHIEVEMENT GAP:

TUSD shows low achievement levels in many important areas. Where do you believe this comes from? How would you, as a board member, try to both improve overall achievement and reduce the imbalance between the highest and the lowest achievers? As a part of this issue, do you believe that all seniors who graduate are academically ready when they graduate? Please explain.

I believe that low achievement is due to many different reasons such as: 1. Teacher quality 2. Unprofessional working conditions. 3. Lack of teacher diversity in the classroom. 4 Teachers teaching out of field. 5. Lack of uniform discipline policy. Possible Solutions: Innovative teaching programs are needed that include tutoring, particularly in middle schools. Better access to professional development for teachers. Assign the more experienced and best teachers to schools that have the most need. Develop a more accurate testing that minimizes standardized testing. As a former Pima College Board Member, I have seen data that as much as 50% of seniors are not college ready. These deficiencies are in the Math, Science, and reading disciplines.

DESEGREGATION:

What comments do you have in response to the 7/20/22 Court order which finds that TUSD has substantially removed all vestiges of segregation/discrimination?

It is my personal opinion that the Court simply got tired of its participation along with the constant lack of collaboration and cooperation from TUSD and decided to pass it on to the Governing Board. However, it creates an opportunity for the school district to develop more innovative and robust strategies to achieve desegregation.

Also, please tell us your ideas to institute community oversight over the Post Unitary Status Reporting and Accountability Plan (PUSRAP). Finally, what role should the Board serve in oversight of the Plan, including the use of desegregation funds?

I definitely want to see a monitoring committee that includes all the stakeholders including community members, teachers, student representation, legal, and administration. I emphasize that administration would play an advisory and staff support role to the committee and have a non-voting role. The Board must demand, insist and direct that the Committee report directly to the Governing Board without interference from the administration.

SUBS:

What do you know about TUSD's history with subs, and do you believe they are treated fairly?

Substitute Teachers are not treated fairly. They are not recognized as valuable employees. I oppose a system where outside contractors do not respect them and do not pay them their true worth or do not accrue fair benefits.

If you are elected, what do think you as a board member could or should do to improve TUSD's relationship with subs?

I support the right of Subs to be recognized and have access to bargain and negotiate for their own lot. If subs wish to organize and be recognized, the board should allow that process. If subs desire to organize, I am prepared to go to bat for them and try to persuade other board members to do likewise.

SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP:

If you become a school board member, what will your relationship with the Superintendent be? With the staff, teachers and community?

I view the Superintendent as a subordinate whomever s/he may be, as such, my relationship would be a strictly professional one, not a personal one. I do not come to the board with a pre conceived idea of his/her administrative acumen nor shortcomings. My intention is to judge him/her on performance, efficiency, integrity and transparency with the board and the public

With regard to staff, teachers and community, I believe in an open door policy, being accessible, open minded and a good listener in my opinion makes for a better board member. If elected, I intend to create an advisory group composed of people who are stakeholders in TUSD this would include community members. This group would meet with me on a regular basis and offer suggestions, recommendations and advice and counsel.

DISTRICT ISSUES:

It is easy to be a cheerleader for TUSD, harder to shine a light on the problems. How are you personally committed to focusing on the areas that need addressing and making TUSD a better district? How will you handle and balance both of these roles?

The best policy is to be transparent and open about the good and the bad. That which is good, we should do more of, that which is bad, we should correct. Our focus as a board and individual is to do better, not to be bitter. Problems need to be addressed head on and immediately, not wait for these problems to fester and grow. I am not a fan of acquiescence. For me, balancing multiple issues seems to come naturally.

HR AUDIT:

As a member of the Governing Board, you will be responsible for hiring and /or approving the hiring of district administration? How will you overcome some of the deficiencies exposed by the HR audit in order to hire qualified staff and reduce the turnover rate?

The HR internal Audit unearthed a number of material findings. Paramount among them is the length of time it takes to fill positions. It is unheard of to average 11 weeks to hire an employee. Another glaring finding is the inaccurate data entered into the data base without justification or explanation. One of the major functions of HR is to provide adequate training for employees, yet, the audit found that a lack of training exists within the department. This is totally unacceptable. As a board member, I will want to see how a key employee is vetted and how thorough the recruitment process is. I would want to make sure that the hiring process is free of bias and favoritism. In regard to the correction measures needed to "fix the problems" I would insist that a timeline with deadlines be implemented to implement the corrections in a timely manner.

ACCESIBILITY:

How do you propose to increase/ensure board accessibility and accountability to all stakeholders including parents, students and employees? Would you consider Call to the Audience (which is where members of the community can address the board at meetings) to be one of the valuable methods?

Much of this question is addressed under the question about Superintendent Relationship above. I am a proponent of true transparency and accountability. Therefore, my position is that call to the audience is essential to fulfill that commitment. Call to the audience should be a standing agenda item for every public meeting. It is not good policy to pick and choose when call to the audience in a public meeting is appropriate simply because someone may not want to hear controversial part of an issue. I am open to periodic town hall meetings for the public to openly address the board.

DISCIPLINE/TARDINESS:

There are no consequences for students who are repeatedly tardy. Do you believe that there should or should not be? Are you aware of the effects that tardiness has, and will have on other behaviors?

Repeated tardiness can be disruptive to a class and can be a detriment to the learning process. I believe that a reasonable policy should be in effect. This policy should include parent notification as well as parent and student counseling. Attention should be paid to the actual reasons for repeated tardiness including the home environment.