

JOE NICOLAS PIERSON

For Additional Information:

www.pierson4TUSD.com

Info@Pierson4TUSD.com

Endorsements:

Beth Ford, Pima County Treasurer

Steve Christy, Pima County Board of Supervisors

(520) 610-5704

P.O. Box 40181-2010

Tucson, AZ 85717-2010

1. A. The desegregation case has been challenging the District since 1974. The original settlement was in 1978, moreover, TUSD has spent over a billion dollars in desegregation funds over the last 40 years. In 2009 the State of Arizona capped the annual funding at \$63.7 million. After all that spending, Latino and especially African American student achievement in TUSD still lags far behind state averages. As a board member, one of my top priorities will be to find solutions acceptable to the Plaintiff's and the school district and close this chapter in TUSD history preferably to all parties of interest. B. While the District has achieved partial Unitary Status, too many Latino and African American students are underperforming and lagging their peer groups in the State. The District needs to improve both academic achievement and integration progress in order to be free of the Court oversight and to achieve unitary status. When the original case began, Latinos were in the minority and today they make up a majority of the student population. It is time to achieve unitary status to both the plaintiffs' and the Districts' satisfaction.
2. A. Yes, I have heard stories of problems with the TUSD HR department. There are numerous stories including "blacklists", nepotism, applicants who never hear back from the District, and those who apply and simply move onto other opportunities while in limbo waiting to receive any response from the HR department. Yes, I would absolutely support an audit of the HR department. But it must be from a qualified HR audit organization who understands the complexities of HR practices. B. I would be willing to sponsor a proposal for an HR Audit.
3. A. I believe TUSD administration selection and evaluation needs to be reformed. B. Numerous performance factors need to be used in hiring and evaluating the performance of principals and administrators. Teacher retention and recruitment as well as enrollment are at the top of the list for performance factors. School site state ADE grades, teacher evaluations, and classroom environment are also equally important. Administrators should be evaluated on overall District

performance, including the number of D & F rated schools across the 89 schools within the District. Also, increasing classroom spending and decreasing administrative costs must be compared against both state averages and other peer districts.

4. One of The School boards' greatest achievement recently was putting measurable metrics in the District Superintendents' annual goals including removing the self-evaluation process the prior superintendent performed. The Board should also expect that the district budget be given to them with enough time to evaluate properly. The Board in the past has not had sufficient time to evaluate the budget properly and therefore has merely approved and adopted summarily without any real input to the overall spending plans. Additionally, the District needs to put more responsibility and accountability at the school site level in adopting their budgets instead of the current "top down" approach that seems to be utilized. Performing schools should be recognized and reviewed for best practices . Underperforming schools need to be monitored more timely throughout the school year and proper resources provided to improve both academic and other metrics as necessary.
5. TUSD in order to stop the loss of enrollment needs to reduce administrative costs to help put more dollars back in the classroom, improve teacher retention and recruitment, create a healthy environment across all school sites, improve hiring practices that emphasize the qualifications of the job applicant. The District must improve the classroom environment, increase teacher compensation practices, improve the overall District academic performance, and emphasize outcomes over processes. For too long, the reputation of the District has declined while many families left the District for better opportunities for their kids' academic experience. Bring back librarians, counselors, and teachers' aides. including providing the necessary classroom supplies teachers need to perform their daily duties. Put the focus back on the "Mission" of the District. Public Education.
6. For TUSD to retain teachers and staff they need to pay teachers appropriately, support and respect teachers and staff, hire based on the best qualified applicants. This will create a different culture that will emphasize better outcomes for students and a supportive atmosphere for the teachers. Again put the focus on the "Mission" of the district. Public Education. Focus on outcomes and not just the process.
7. I support ALL substitute teachers being treated more equitably, financially and that they have access to all benefits afforded to every other employee of the district. This will enhance student achievement by reducing learning inefficiencies. It will also help in teacher recruitment and retention because it will show both temporary and long -term substitutes that the district is supportive of its teachers in order to enhance student achievement. TUSD has a long history of starting the school year without enough teachers to fill all the classrooms. Substitute teachers must be treated equitably as they are an integral part of the District itself.
8. Accountability in TUSD to me looks like this: TUSD will be more transparent in their budget. The Board and Public will know where they spend the District's money. TUSD will also be mindful of Proposition 301 123, Title I, State, Federal and other financial requirements. TUSD must also follow the budget plans and give complete and accurate reports to the board and the public. The District produces their budget in accordance with State Statutes but seldom reports interim budget to actual reports at any meaningful level. School districts will soon be required to report at the school site level, but TUSD should have been doing this all along. These reports should be

produced monthly and published on the district website for the public to see and made available on a timely basis. Current practices have not followed this model.