

Hello TUSD Governing Board Candidates!

As some of you well know there was a time when Tucson newspapers were much bigger and focused more than they do now on local, school board candidates. There also was a time when there would be three or four forums for school board candidates during an election season.

We at CARE do not expect to see that in this election. We feel incredibly lucky to have met with each of you for at extended time, and to get an idea of your various positions. Now we would like to bring your positions to the general voting public. We hope you will answer the following questions--considerably shorter than our initial interview with each of you-- and allow us to post your answers on our website and Facebook page. We ask that you answer in up to 150 words per question--shorter is better!

We would also like to hold a Zoom forum sometime around when ballots drop, as people this year may well be returning mail-in ballots quickly upon receipt. For that forum, we are considering doing a lightning round of questions that each of you would like to ask the other candidates as our final round of questions. If that is something you would like to participate in, please send us a question you would like to see asked at that time (that will not be published on our website, etc.)

We hope you will see this as an opportunity to get the word out about your various positions to the voting community. We will do everything we can to send out your responses to media outlets, and hope that you will do everything you can as well to share the information. We are a diverse group unified by our commitment to TUSD and the value of a qualified governing board.

We ask that all answers be returned to us by September 13<sup>th</sup>.

Name: Ravi Grivois-Shah

Link to Website: [DrRaviForTUSD.com](http://DrRaviForTUSD.com) / [DrRaviParaTUSD.com](http://DrRaviParaTUSD.com)

Endorsements: National Organizations: Victory Fund, Run for Something, 314 Action  
State & Local Organizatiosn: Tucson Education Association PAC, Pima Area Labor Federation / AFL-CIO, AzAFP, AZ Democratic Party AAPI Caucus, CWA 7000  
Local Leaders: Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick; Former Congressman Ron Barber; Former Mayor Jonathan Rothschild; City Council Members Lane Santa Cruz, Paul Cunningham, Paul Durham, Nikki Lee, Steve Kozachik; TUSD Governing Board Members Bruce Burke, Kristel Foster, Adelita Grijalva; AZ State House and Senate Members Dan Hernandez, Adrea Dalessandro, Andres Cano, Alma Hernandez, Randy Frise, Victoria Steele, Domingo Degrazie, and Kirstel Engel

Contact info if a voter has additional questions:

[ravi@drravifortusd.com](mailto:ravi@drravifortusd.com)

520-261-3611

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

I have spent my career as a family physician fighting for health equity and access for communities of all backgrounds. I will take this same drive to my work on the TUSD

Governing Board fighting for educational equity and to reduce disparities inherent in our district.

While there is still work to do on a number of issues, such as diversity and integration in each school, academic achievement across race and region of TUSD, recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce, and more, a court order with supervision outside our district and outside an elected Governing Board will not help improve outcome for the students who most need support.

As a member of the TUSD Governing Board, I'm committed to addressing disparities by ensuring financial accountability and transparency so we can understand opportunity gaps throughout the district; focusing on recruiting and retaining minority teachers and staff; supporting culturally relevant curriculum that better engages students; advocating for arts, music, PE and other programs in each and every school; ensuring proper behavioral supports and fairness in discipline; and by working collaboratively with the community *before* important decisions are made.

2. A. Have you heard stories of problems with the HR department? Would you support the idea of an audit?

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

When my husband, Tim, was a principal at a TUSD elementary school, he would lose teachers to other districts because of delays in hiring. A teacher would get an offer of employment, and weeks would go by without confirmation. Other districts have streamlined the hiring process and as a result can recruit teachers that may have excelled in TUSD. I would support looking into the TUSD hiring process to ensure it is streamlined and effective in quickly hiring and onboarding qualified teachers and staff.

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

B. If so, how? What performance factors should carry the most weight?

I think TUSD needs to support principals so that they can truly serve as the instructional leaders of their schools. When my husband, Tim, was a principal at a TUSD elementary school, he wished he could spend more time in classrooms supporting his teachers and staff. Instead, he was tasked with paperwork, meetings, managing behavioral issues with students, and other tasks that could have been handled by others, as they are in other districts. Before we reform hiring / evaluation of principals and administrators, we need to make sure they are actually able to do the job they're hired to do.

4. Evaluate the actions of the current Governing Board. What action or actions were their greatest achievements in the last four years? What actions do you wish they had taken but did not take?

Like so many TUSD parents, I very much want my third grader to be in school. However, as a family physician, I know the devastation Covid is having in our community. I believe the Governing Board is making the right decision in listening to public health experts while navigating the current Covid pandemic. There are going to be very difficult decisions ahead regarding when to open schools, what hybrid model keeps students, teachers/staff, and the families they come home to safe, how to reduce technology and other disparities, and more. We need to look at best practices and experts in the field to ensure a safe and appropriate response continues.

On the flip side of the coin, I wish the Governing Board and district leadership used the current Covid crisis as an opportunity to reimagine what education can look like remotely. Instead of trying to replicate in person learning on Zoom, we are missing a chance to create a new type of learning that meets our students' and families' needs.

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

When I speak with parents around our district about why they chose TUSD, I hear about the computer science program at this middle school or the dance program at that high school. My husband and I love the OMA programs at Lineweaver where our daughter goes to school. We can't balance the budget by cutting programs that engage students and families. It are these programs that help TUSD compete with small charters and other districts.

We must also address the middle school problem, when enrollment drops after 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Whether we take Superintendent Trujillo's proposal for 7/8 campuses, moving 6<sup>th</sup> grade to elementary schools, or have single grade campuses, or go back to the drawing board to reimagine our middle school campuses and curriculum, we need to find a solution that works for TUSD families.

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

Before Covid, I was able to visit about a dozen schools and speak to front line staff. What I heard from teachers and staff throughout TUSD is that our district needs to respect them for the professionals that they are. We do this by ensuring professional development time is actually useful, that they have buy-in into their evaluation process and that it is fair and transparent, and by ensuring they have appropriate autonomy in their classrooms. If we can accomplish these, TUSD will succeed in recruiting and retaining the best and brightest.

7. What do you know about issues facing subs? 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?

In the eyes of students and parents, long-term subs are their teachers. When my husband, Tim, was a principal at a TUSD elementary school, he had to use long-term substitute teachers when he could not recruit permanent teachers. Some of them taught for weeks, months, or even the majority of the academic year. They were part of the grade level collaborations, participated in trainings, and formed lasting relationships with students and their parents. There should be a special provision so that long-term substitute teachers are given equity in pay and benefits with permanent teachers.

8. What does accountability in TUSD look like to you?

The first step of accountability is ensuring financial transparency. As a member of the TUSD Audit Committee, I've seen how our financial accounting meets state and regulatory requirements, but doesn't meet the needs of our district. We need financial information that is accessible, understandable, and useable. We need to be able to answer detailed financial questions about our district in just a few clicks. And we need a Governing Board prepared to ask the tough questions and answer the tough questions so the public trusts that our funds are best spent for student achievement.