

Somers School District 29 Trustee Candidate Questionnaire

1. Why are you seeking to be a school district trustee?

Over the last several months I have considered how I might become involved in local government, then I was made aware of this opening. I am seeking to use my abilities and knowledge in service to my community. I previously spent six years on a board, the last three as board president, for a non-profit that served at risk youth with therapeutic foster care and counseling services.

Upon graduating law school, I began working for the Oregon School Boards Association partnering with school district leaders across the state providing support, guidance, and professional advice in the areas of labor relations, employee relations, and policy implementation and compliance. Becoming a school district trustee seems a meaningful progression of my past experience.

I desire to have a meaningful voice at the policy level regarding the education of our children and oversight of the employees tasked to serve them.

This opportunity seems perfect fit.

2. What issues are motivating you to apply for trustee?

To be sure, there are many issues effecting the district such as the COVID pandemic/endemic, progressive school curriculum, and the local growth our community is experiencing. However, my single motivating issue is the desire I have to serve the community in which I live resulting in an immediate, lasting, and substantial impact on the youth attending Somers School District as well its employees.

3. Why should you be appointed as trustee?

I should be appointed to the trustee position as my experience, education, and record of service to both school districts and youth, demonstrate my ability to serve and contribute to the board in a powerful and meaningful way.

4. Please describe your experience and involvement with your school district.

My experience with school district has been in my role as a parent of two children attending Lakeside Elementary. I have participated in their academic growth, met with staff and teachers, and attended extracurricular activities.

5. What do you believe is the proper role of the school board?

The board's role is to represent the interests of the local community in oversight of public education, Lakeside Elementary and Somers Middle School. The board develops and sets policy consistent with and required by state legislation and regulation. Furthermore, the Board has a close relationship with the Superintendent who oversees the administration of educational policy.

6. Is there something that your school board should be doing differently to fulfill this role?

Before articulating my thoughts about whether the board should be doing something differently, I would need a much more intimate look at the school board, seeking understanding from the inside as well as the outside.

7. What is the role of the school district with regard to parents and the community?

The role of the district is to ensure the safety and education of their children, carry out its duties transparently, and communicate timely and effectively matters impacting the same.

8. What do you think are the most important challenges and opportunities facing your school district?

Certainly, the national issues as noted above, are relevant to our district. But unique to the district is the growth our community is experiencing. With growth comes concerns about staffing, revenue, responsible fiscal priorities, resource allotment, and relationships with adjoining districts.

9. What do you think are the most important issues facing school districts across the country, and what do you believe is the proper approach to resolving them?

As noted above, COVID protocols and concerns remain an issue. As well, there appears to be nationally an increasing emphasis on more progressive educational priorities influenced by developments in critical theory and gender identity. And another issue faced by districts across the nation is learning loss.

I believe the proper approach is strong communication between the community and board, data gathering, and evidenced based responses.

10. Please include other relevant information about yourself.

My wife and I live in Lakeside with four children, 6, 9, 16, and 19. Two of our children attend Lakeside Elementary and one attends Flathead High School. My wife began working for Lakeside Elementary this year as a paraprofessional. She previously worked for Creston Elementary as the school nurse for a very brief time (less than one month), resigning after learning our youngest had Leukemia. That was more than two

years ago, and he has done very well since. His last hospital treatment was this past week.

I've attached my resume as well as it gives greater detail to my educational and professional background.