

1. Will you abide by the DFL endorsement and support the DFL endorsed candidate?

I will absolutely abide by the DFL endorsement and will give my full support to the endorsed candidate.

2. Why should the DFL endorse you? What values do you share with the DFL?

The DFL should endorse me first because I will work tirelessly to win a school board seat that has previously been held by a Republican candidate. I am a life-long DFLer. I share the core values of the party – i.e., a commitment to equality and social justice.

In the realm of education, I have a strong and personal interest in vitality of our public schools. I am a candidate who has attended public schools at every step of her education – from kindergarten through my last day of graduate school. I also will be sending my child to St. Paul’s public schools. I think it is crucial that DFLers demonstrate through word and deed their support for an institution that is the cradle of our democracy.

3. What qualifications do you possess for the office that you seek?

I am a strong and articulate advocate for the issues, people, and principles that I support. Being a school board member – or a member of any deliberative body – requires one to have two important skills. The first is persuasiveness, and the ability to bring colleagues around to my point of view. The second complementary skill is the ability to participate productively in a group setting. As an attorney whose job often involves committee work, I am certainly sensitive to when each skill should be deployed.

I am also an engaged student of public policy. As a graduate student at the Humphrey Institute, I was immersed in literature examining the effectiveness of various anti-poverty strategies. That coursework has made me a more sophisticated consumer of statistical and analytical materials that educators and administrators draw upon in evaluating the effectiveness of educational policies and practices.

4. Thinking about your participation in other groups, how would you describe your contribution as one of several decision makers?

My contributions include my preparation for the decision making process and my ability to help groups reach a mutually agreeable consensus. As an attorney who has had training in interest-based decision making, I can contribute to a group dynamic by helping to tease out group members’ interests and the ways in which those interests might be compatible or even aligned. It is not always possible to reach a solution that makes every decision maker happy, but it is substantially more likely if at least one party to the decision making process can gently push the group to identify their interests and the potential similarities between them.

5. What is your commitment to public transparency? Do you believe that the school board and superintendent should be totally transparent in all decisions, both as decisions are being made and after decisions are made?

I am committed to public transparency for most decision making processes. There are some decisions, particularly those relating to personnel actions, that are nonpublic under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, and those decisions must appropriately remain “opaque.” On the other hand, it is crucial that the District maintain transparency in making its operational decisions. This is not only because the public will not have confidence in decision making that is presented as a *fait accompli*, but also because openness allows public input during the decision making process. Generally speaking, more input is preferable because it will increase the amount of ideas to draw upon in resolving difficult issues.

6. With an expected decreasing budget for at least two years, what three things do you think that you could accomplish as a school board member?

Notwithstanding the decreasing budget, I am confident that I can 1) assist the District in realizing administrative and operational efficiencies that do not result in laying off teachers and other front line education personnel; 2) assist the District in collaborating with nonprofits and colleges to expand co-curricular programming – which is important because it provides students with a productive and safe outlet for afterschool time and energy; and 3) develop revenue-neutral ECFE programming that broaden parent participation in District activities beyond school age children.

7. What criteria would you use to make the selection for next St. Paul Public Schools superintendent?

The next superintendent needs to be able to work collaboratively with the Board in implementing the Board’s vision for the District’s future. That individual must also be prepared to lead District employees while also relying upon them for input and feedback. The superintendent must recognize that those on the frontlines – whose work is most impacted by managerial decisions – can often provide the most informed views about the implementation of those decision.

It is also crucial that we select a superintendent with staying power. Frequent turnover in this position is costly in a direct financial sense as well as in terms of the ability of the District to implement strategic planning. To that end, searching nationally for a candidate with no ties to the community (and no tolerance for Minnesota winters) might simply buy the District another three-year term.