

Vallay Varro – Candidate Questionnaire

1. Will you abide by the DFL endorsement and support the DFL endorsed candidate?
 - Yes I will abide by the DFL endorsement
 - Yes I will support the DFL endorsed candidate
 - As a lifelong DFLer, I believe that the DFL endorsement process, at its best, gives neighbors the opportunity to be involved in the electoral process, it gives those who chose to be DFLers a chance to examine and filter the best possible candidates our party has to offer, and holds DFL endorsed candidates and elected officials accountable to the DFL platform.
2. Why should the DFL endorse you? What values do you share with the DFL?
 - I believe in a strong system of education, with equal opportunities for all our children.
 - I believe Education is a pathway / prerequisite for success.
 - The strength of our school system is directly correlated to our strength as a community.
 - I also believe that teachers need to be given the right resources to be the very best they can be and that parents and communities need to be full participants in the education of all children.
3. What qualifications do you possess for the office that you seek?
 - Educational Skills
 - Policy Experience
 - Unique perspectives
4. Thinking about your participation in other groups, how would you describe your contribution as one of several decision makers?
 - I am a convener and consensus builder with a proven track record to get people to work together for the common interest of St. Paul's children.
 - I operate best under a strong leadership model where I am able to be both a leader and a follower, with the caveat that leadership means being willing to make the tough decisions and taking on tough issues assertively.
 - I believe in governance with transparency, especially when there are multiple stakeholders who may each have opposing interests. My philosophy is to listen, be open to hearing

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people's differences AND their common concerns, be responsive AND honest even if it means that people will be angry.

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?
 - As I stated above, I'm committed to transparency, which is especially important for community involvement, input and understanding of leadership decisions at all critical points-- before, during and after—and how they may affect the lives of the children, their families, the teachers and administrators.
 - There are some areas, such as labor negotiations, which are not appropriate to be discussed in the open while negotiations are ongoing, but we must be upfront about what and why certain things may or may not be appropriate or permissible for public discussions.
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?
 - We must find a way to bring the district's budget into permanent structural balance, but must engage the larger community to be part of that solution.
 - The Board needs to move towards a more active and deeply involved role in its role as the governing body. This means that the Board needs to be the policy, political and public face and voice of the district whether that is with the public, up at the Capitol, among other elected officials or with the media.
 - We need to be willing to contemplate big solutions for big problems and be willing to be challenged, defend and fight for ideas and solutions that will maximize opportunities for St. Paul's children.
7. What criteria would you use to make the selection for next St. Paul Public Schools superintendent?
 - Someone who is an administrator. The board's responsibility is to set the vision and the superintendent's responsibility is to execute on that.
 - Someone in tune with the policy at the state and federal level, because they are the ones that will have to interpret that and determine how that meshes with the boards vision.
 - Someone who has the political wherewithal to work with the larger community and recognizes that the overall solution will require outside collaboration with the larger community. Someone that recognizes they "can't do it alone"