

## Newberg School Board Candidate Questionnaire May 19, 2015 Election

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**Name : Jennifer Fisher  
Candidate Zone 6**

1. Why do you believe that you would be a good member of a School Board? And what called you to run for this position verses other opportunities to run for an elected office *(200 word limit)*?

I was approached last year by a current board member. She asked me if I would be interested in running for a board position. She liked that I have kids in the district, I am involved volunteering in classrooms, on different PTO boards, on the District Budget Committee, and a member of the District Parent Leaders Group.

I am not interested in any political office. I am not the kind of person who needs to be in the spotlight. But I am a person who cares dearly about the education of our children. I have been on several different PTA boards in Washington at the local, council, and regional level. I have volunteered in classrooms since my kids were small. In Washington, I worked as a school nurse, and I currently work as a school nurse in Hillsboro.

I am the kind of person who doesn't mind working hard, asking questions, and getting to the bottom of things. I can be the voice for the parents. I can be the voice of newer community members. I feel being on the school board is a logical step, and a way I can make a real impact and difference here in Newberg.

2. What do you see as the biggest challenge facing the school district today? In the near future? Long term? *(200 words)*

- Funding education in Oregon has been decreasing steadily the last few years.
- The population of Oregon in the next 10 years will only be growing a little bit, and about half of that growth will be for people over 65 years old, NOT school aged children and families.
- Budgets were slashed about 8 years ago, and we are still not back to where we they were before.
- Students in Oregon graduate with approximately one year less of actual instruction time as does much of the rest of the country.
- Our teachers, and other staff members have not had the training and professional development they need.
- The education here in Newberg has not kept up with the technology, needs, or basics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- Our graduation rate is much too low.
- Students in the district do not have the same experiences. If a student is at CV vs MV or Silver School vs Yellow School, it is not the same.

Every student deserves a high quality, diverse, personalized, full educational experience. If we are not preparing our children for college or careers or life after high school, we are failing.

3. What has been your process to familiarize yourself with the current priorities of the school board? In what ways do your priorities align or differ? *(200 words)*

I have been a member of the School District Budget Committee for 3 years. I have served on the AC and CV parent groups. I have been a member of the District Parent Leader Group for 3 years. I have volunteered in classrooms at AC and CV. I have talked to teachers, principals, students, parents, administration, and parent groups. I have read through student handbooks. I have attended forums that the Superintendent has led. I have been a part of the discussion around the new District Vision, Mission, and Goals. I have attended school board meetings.

I like that the District is trying to equalize the educational experience for all students. The middle schools are now on the same schedule. The High School is breaking down barriers that the Small Schools Model caused. For instance, AP classes are now available to every student regardless of which school they belong to. The District is trying to find creative ways to bring unique experiences to Newberg. For example, next year, they will be offering Chinese. The new schedule at the high school will provide more instructional time. Money is being appropriated to fund staff development and technological resources in different ways.

4. Tell us about your experience understanding and working with government budgets or do you have another skill that you feel is valuable to board? *(150 words)*

I have been on the District Budget Committee for 3 years now. Every year I have served, I have reached out to staff and parents asking them what their opinions and perceptions of the budget, the process, and the outcome are. I have used that information when discussing the budget with the committee, and it has helped me make decisions in the budget process.

I have skills I can bring to the table. I am passionate. I am open to discussion and learning. I am a newer community member. I have kids in the District. I have worked and currently work in the educational system. I have some training via PTA in regards to budgets, policies and procedures, being a part of a team, and advocating for education. I want to know what is working, what is not working, and how to be a part of the solution and progress.