

Newberg School Board Candidate Questionnaire May 19, 2015 Election

Name Debbie Hawblitzel Zone 7

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 have been on the School Board since 2005 (before that I was on the Budget Committee) so I have experience in the position. As well, my interest is in education and my goal is to help all children to be productive, contributing citizens.

I have four children, all of whom have or are attending Newberg public schools. For some of my children, high academic achievement has been a hallmark of their educational experience (i.e., TAG, AP courses, Valedictorian, National Merit Scholar, etc.); for others, struggle and overcoming has been theirs (i.e., ELL-English language learners, learning disabilities, emotional disabilities, adoption issues, etc.).

I work in higher education at George Fox University

Being an advocate is my avocation. My goal (as stated above) is to help all children be productive, contributing citizens and I feel that I can do this best by being on the School Board, advocating for education.

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

Graduation rate and budget. These two things go "hand-in hand". In January, a report released by the U.S. Department of Education shows Oregon at the bottom of the list when it come to the percentage of children who graduate from high school in four years.

The graduation rate in Newberg is not what it should be, nor what it can be, and it is a priority. As I wrote in my statement for the voter's pamphlet: I believe that quality public education is essential to our community and our society; that all students can learn and become productive, contributing citizens, and that none should be allowed to simply "fall through the cracks" because today's students are the future of our community and tomorrow's leaders. I strongly support and am committed to achieving success for every student specifically through data-driven decisions, policy development, and resource allocation (think budget).

If you have been reading or listening to the news, you know that the budget for education is a concern. As a state, we are spending an increasingly smaller percentage of the state's budget on our most important resource, our children and their education. This is a trend that needs to be reversed.

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 go to all of the meetings, read information available online and that I have been sent, visit the schools when I can, etc. My priorities align completely with the goals as I was on the school board and involved when the priorities and goals were set.

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)

My experience is that I have been on the School district's Budget Committee for the last eleven years, first as an appointed member for my zone, and then as an elected School Board member for my zone.

After I graduated from college I worked in middle management in banking for many years before raising a family. There I worked with accounting. Also, in my current position at George Fox University I work with budgets. Both of these have helped me in being able to read and understand the School district's budget.