

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

Name Walter Woodland Zone 2

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)?

What makes "a good member of a School Board" is rather subjective depending on individual perspective. I believe that the Board's duties are primarily fiducial - being stewards of the public's financial investment for the purpose of educating the next generation (and that parent choice should be the primary driver regarding content of instruction). That being the case, my view is that the position of school board director is to represent the electorate/taxpayer to ensure the most efficient, responsible use of their provided resources. The publicly administered system has a role but parents should be allowed options for the education of their children using public resources outside of the publicly administered system with an open and welcoming policy on charters being just one of the alternatives available.

The fact that only the incumbent was likely to run for the position was the reason I chose to file my candidacy. The electorate should have alternatives to the status quo, even if they find that status quo desirable. Had another qualified candidate filed for this position I would have gladly supported them instead.

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

The primary, looming challenge facing the Newberg School District - like many that are similarly structured - is the model, based on bureaucratic priorities, that create expanding operating costs coupled with the history of pushing labor liabilities forward through actuarially unsound retirement promises and - as those liabilities come due - the crunch this will place on the ability to provide current services...without mentioning the possibility of diminishing state and federal resources.

A secondary challenge, but no less serious in its impact on the primary mission of education organizations is the tendency of the publicly administered systems to seek to retain and control every dollar of public funding while expanding mandates as well as limiting direct responsibility to the parents of the students they are charged with instructing and to the taxpayer providing the funding.

Also, the desire to create and implement/impose "new and interesting" methods of education tends to short change the educational opportunities of the students who

are subject to the experimentation as well as the taxpayer whose investment underwrite much of the structural cost of the experimentation - especially where third parties offers "seed money" enticements for the implementation/imposition of their "freshly minted educational" model.

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 suspect I have a reasonable grasp of current Newberg School Board priorities garnered by attending a number of school board meetings as well as following district events via their distributed e-letters and other informational dispatches.

I see the current board priorities being supportive of and driven by the bureaucracy of the publicly administered system rather than to the priorities of parents, taxpayers and the community generally. My priority would be to advocate for inverting this relationship.

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)*

Government budgets tend to be similar to private sector budgets excepting their maddening scale (being compared to the caliber and quantity of their output) and general capriciousness. I'm confident I can work within those parameters. Whether those parameters can be changed is entirely subject to the will of the electorate.

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