

Freedom Watch

School Board Candidate Survey Issue

Colorado Springs School District 11 Candidates VOTE FOR THREE
October 2005

Candidates in Ballot Order (Candidates without hyperlink did not respond to the survey):

Bob Lathen

[Sandra Mann](#)

[John Gudvangen](#)

Reginald Perry

[Tami Hasling](#)

Carla Albers

Colorado Springs School District 11 Questions:

1. Why are you running for school board?
2. What are the most pressing issues the school board should address in the next two years?
3. Explain your philosophy regarding charter schools and voucher programs. How would you decide whether to approve or reject an application for a new charter in your district?
4. How do you feel about sex education programs that are abstinence based and include age-appropriate information about contraception and sexually transmitted diseases? Are you supportive of inviting community service providers into classrooms?
5. Would you support the inclusion of intelligent design in the science curriculum?
6. What role should the school board play in curriculum development and textbook selection?
7. In your opinion, what do your district's CSAP (Colorado Student Assessment Program) test scores reveal about student achievement in your district?
8. Is there an achievement gap between minority and white students in your district? If so, what is the role of the school board in addressing this?
9. What are appropriate expressions of religion in schools by teachers and students?
10. What ideas do you have for ensuring a safe school environment for the diversity of students and teachers in your district?

11. Are teacher salaries in your district

- A. too high
- B. appropriate
- C. too low?

12. How will you ensure that your district has adequate state and local property tax funding?

13. What role does school nutrition have in supporting student achievement? Do you believe there should be any changes made to current food service?

Name: Sandra Mann

Education: University of Southern Colorado, 1974-1978

Occupation: Director of Public Relations/Media, Adelpia Communications

How long have you been a resident of your district: 20 years

How can citizens contact you if they want more information (phone, email, website)? mannmedia@yahoo.com or 548-0503

1.

It is time for our community to come together and support District 11 and the students we serve. I want to be part of the positive change and continued improvement of D-11. I will bring years of professional experience to the board with a commitment to help all students prepare for a successful future whatever may lie ahead for them.

2.

A. Continued improvement of standardized test scores with a focus on student achievement. B. Attract and retain the best teachers. C. Lower the drop out rate and develop early intervention programs to keep students engaged in education. D. Expand vocational and technology curriculum giving all students more educational options. E. Maintain and preserve District 11's aging infrastructure.

3.

Charter schools are another public education choice, but one should only be approved if it can provide something District 11 cannot. I do not believe in charters just to have them and would prefer keeping the badly needed resources in the existing schools. D-11 already has choice for parents and students. Vouchers are not in the best interest of public education. I would only approve a Charter School if it could provide something that D-11 cannot provide.

4.

Knowledge is power and the more age-appropriate information we can provide students the better. It is also important to include parents in the process so that there is an open dialogue about the subject. I am interested in providing the best information possible by the people most qualified to present it.

5.

Again, I believe knowledge is power and students should be exposed to a variety of information in order to better form their own opinion. I do not think Intelligent Design should be taught in a science class, but would support it being taught in a theory class.

6.

Educators are the experts regarding curriculum development and textbook selection. The school board should set the vision and direction and then provide the financial support for teachers to determine what material is best for their specific instruction needs.

7.

There is a place for assessment tests as a measurement of improvement. I believe they can give an overall assessment of how the district is doing. However, I do not believe they are the best measure of an individual student's improvement.

8.

I believe all children can learn, but that they do not all learn the same way. It is the role of the School Board to monitor the progress of all students and provide support and direction in areas where an achievement gap may exist.

9.

I do not believe that religion belongs in public education. I feel that is best left up to a family's individual preferences and is better suited for the religious organizations that provide the avenue for that type of personal expression.

10.

I think it all starts with respect for one another and the unique and different life experiences from which we all come. Everyone deserves to be treated fairly, but no particular group should get preferential treatment.

11.

Teachers have a very important and demanding job. I would support exploring new ways to better compensate teachers. However, it is important for the school district to show taxpayers that their money is being well spent and that they're getting results for their increased investment.

12.

I will work with elected state and local officials to make sure we fight for the money for which we are entitled.

13.

Research indicates that everyone performs better when they eat breakfast. That's why I support breakfast programs for students. I also believe it's important to offer a wide variety of healthy foods, educate students about nutrition and encourage them to eat at school, not at fast food restaurants.

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Name: John Gudvangen

Education: Harrison High School valedictorian; BA, Chemistry, Colorado College, cum laude; MPA, UCCS

Occupation: Associate Director of Financial Aid, Colorado College

How long have you been a resident of your district: I have lived in Colorado Springs District 11 since 1998 and in Colorado Springs most of my life since 1967

How can citizens contact you if they want more information (phone, email, website)?

Gudvangen for School Board
P.O. Box 7824
Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7824
227-1907
JohnGforD11@adelphia.net
www.JohnGforD11.com

1.

I bring eight years of school board experience and 16 years of respected leadership on education issues in Colorado. My values center around public schools, community, and families. We need civility in governance, and real reform, not disruptive personal agendas. I bring integrity and trust to a fractured school board and a proven ability to help kids and support teachers.

2.

I will focus on results and opportunities for all students. Schools must welcome and involve all parents in their child's education. Every classroom needs a trained and supported teacher. We need smaller class sizes, neighborhood schools, and fiscal accountability. We must stop the disruptive personal agendas and the arrogance of some board members and we must support public schools.

3.

Charter schools are public, vouchers are private. School boards must support public education. Charters can provide opportunities to learn from new ideas and less regulation, but we must balance that with equity across the district to ensure great neighborhood schools for all children. We want high achievement, great choices, and accountability to tax dollars, not private gain for the few.

4.

Schools, in partnership with families and the community, should provide age-appropriate accurate information on these important topics to help students make responsible decisions. The school board should engage the public and community experts to offer programs on these topics in the best interest of students, the schools, and the community. Community service providers can continue to play an important role.

5.

We should teach science in the science classroom, and leave teaching about religion to the history and humanities classrooms. A strong science curriculum, including evolution, is not in conflict with religion. Misrepresentations of scientific theory, lack of credible scientific evidence, and the strong sectarian nature of ID should make us wary of undermining science education.

6.

In Colorado this is a main role reserved for the local board of education. The Colorado constitution provides explicitly for local control of instruction and prohibits other state bodies from selecting textbooks. Good school boards constantly engage the public on these issues, and they hire the best superintendent to implement curriculum development that leads to success for all children.

7.

CSAPs help us measure our progress toward standards-what students should know and be able to do. We must do much better but we're not a failing district. I serve as chair of the D-11 Advisory Accountability Committee where parents and citizens work hard to measure achievement in multiple ways, help schools implement meaningful school improvement plans, and hold them accountable.

8.

We have an achievement gap, and it's our obligation to close it. The school board must hold high expectations for all and provide the fiscal resources needed for schools to succeed. We should build partnerships with families and community groups to reform schools and focus on proven methods to raise achievement, prevent dropouts, and close the gap.

9.

Parents and families are responsible for religious upbringing. Americans accept the fundamental right to follow our conscience on religion. We do not expect schools to engage in government-sponsored devotionals. As one Supreme Court justice noted: Our religious beliefs are too precious to be either proscribed or prescribed by the state. Students have a right to pray on their own.

10.

School safety is key to student learning and is a part of every school improvement plan. The board must support the work of every school to maintain or improve their safety plans, stop bullying and intimidation, and protect teachers' academic freedom. Respect for our multi-faceted community is essential. We should apply these policies to the behavior of school board members.

11.

Great teacher salaries help us attract and retain great professionals. We place high expectations on our D-11 teachers and they are on the front lines between student performance and constant pressure from all around. Teaching today demands more than ever. I'm willing to explore all options to provide the very best salaries to have the best teaching professionals in Colorado.

12.

I have years of expertise in dealing with school funding laws and accountability of state and local tax dollars. We as a board must work with other districts to influence our state legislators who have the control over equity in school finance. District 11 needs its fair share, and I have the knowledge and experience to help make this happen.

13.

School nutrition programs must provide healthy nourishment so kids perform at their best. Food service is often a necessary part of improving learning. For some

students, the good people in D-11 food service provide the best opportunity for a balanced diet. In these cases especially we must ensure that food service meets the learning needs of students.

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Name: Tami Hasling

Education: Doherty High School

Occupation: Self-employed small-business owner

How long have you been a resident of your district? 39 years

How can citizens contact you if they want more information?

522-1186 or TamiForD11Board@aol.com

1.

I believe the focus of the Board needs to be on students and schools, not on personal political agendas. I want all children to receive a quality education that will give them the opportunity to be successful in employment, college, trade schools, military service, etc. I will encourage parent involvement, demand fiscal responsibility, and support smaller class size.

2.

We must continue to expand opportunities for all students and improve graduation rates. To continue on our path of improved student achievement we must adequately fund programs to assure the availability of sufficient classroom resources. Providing each student a safe, comfortable learning environment staffed with quality teachers is also a priority.

3.

While charter schools can provide opportunities for students with diverse needs, the costs and benefits of charters must be balanced against the needs of all district students. Charter school decisions must be made within the district not delegated to outsiders. Vouchers have been ruled unconstitutional by Colorado courts.

4.

The district's educational mission should include providing accurate information to students regarding all aspects of their health. If community service providers can assist in this mission I would welcome their participation. However, parents should always have the choice of voluntarily keeping their children out of such programs.

5.

Intelligent design theory is not science and would be more appropriate in a philosophy or world religions curriculum.

6.

The role of the school board is to establish district policies and procedures regarding curriculum development and textbook selection. Education professionals, i.e.,

teachers and administrators, are tasked with choosing appropriate textbooks and materials for delivering board approved curricula.

7.

While our scores are improving, we still need to do more. As a board, we need to stay focused on students and classrooms, not on personal political agendas. Increased parental involvement and smaller class sizes, particularly in high schools where students begin to drop out, are key factors in raising achievement.

8.

Yes. The board must make closing the gap a priority and must create the expectation that all students can and will be successful. We must make sure programs and resources are in place to allow success. We must hold employees accountable for the success or failure of their students.

9.

All individuals have some freedom to personally express their religious beliefs, but such freedom is not without limits in public schools. Teachers, because of their influential positions, should not impose their beliefs on students. In a compulsory education system our curriculum and teaching must remain free from religious doctrine.

10.

All students and teachers are entitled to a safe and secure school environment. As a district we must support and promote diversity, tolerance, and understanding of others. We can do so by being a forum for open dialogue and by creating safe opportunities for expression and learning.

11.

I'm not sure. However, our district must offer competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain high quality teachers. They are the foundation of our success. As in any business, we must continually monitor the teacher job market in El Paso County and the Front Range to assure we remain competitive.

12.

Funding for Colorado schools is a state legislative issue complicated by TABOR, Amendment 23, and the Gallagher Amendment, so we must be sure our legislators understand our needs and the practical consequences of their decisions. My priority on the board will be to require fiscal responsibility and accountability within the district.

13.

Improved student health correlates with improved student achievement. Students who are well fed and rested will learn better than those who are hungry and tired. Changes should be made if we are not meeting the nutritional needs of our free and reduced lunch student population.

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