

Freedom Watch

School Board Candidate Survey Issue

Harrison School District 2 Candidates VOTE FOR THREE
October 2005

Candidates in Ballot Order:

[Paul O. Lastrella](#)

[Richard L. Price](#)

[Ed Ralston](#)

[Deborah L.Hendrix](#)

[Si Bruner](#)

[Linda M. Pugh](#)

[Kay C. Mast](#)

[Cindee Will](#)

Harrison School District 2 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 felt 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: Paul O. Lastrella

Education: BS, Physician Assistant Studies; MBA, Healthcare Management

Occupation: El Paso County Emergency Medical Services and HIPAA Compliance Administrator

How can citizens contact you if they want more information (phone, email, website)? polastrella@aol.com

1.

I am concern that the quality of our children's education in District Two is being compromise by budgetary issues. I am very surprise and disappointed, as a nation of great wealth and resources that we rather spend more to keep people in prison than to invest more in our children's education.

2.

The most pressing issues the school board should address in the next two years are the budget and increase academic achievements for all students.

3.

Charter schools and voucher programs provide choices to families and students and must be evaluated as presented by supporters.

4.

Because different value system and beliefs exist in our society, I feel that sex education in general, to include information about contraception will be best left to parents or guardian to discuss. This type of dialogue is an opportunity for parents and children to interact and create trust between parents and children that can strengthen their relationship.

5.

I don't think I can support something as confusing as the Intelligent Design (ID) theory. If I'm confused I'm sure that my kids will be confused. There are bazillions of things that exist on earth and in space that cannot be explained by both science and technology. I believed that God is the reason that everything exist.

6.

The role of the board in regards to curriculum development and textbook should be

to provide guidance and directions to the school administrators. The school administrators should provide the facts and figures to the board for decision.

7.

District Two Colorado Student Assessment Program revealed an interesting fact, the district scored better than the state in regards to minority students.

8.

Yes, but the districts achievement gaps are being raised for all students.

9.

Religion should not be promoted in the classroom because we all have different religious belief, however I do believe that spiritual wellbeing should be nourished for the sake of the student as a whole. We focus so much on intellectual, emotional, and physical needs of our students that we neglect the student's spiritual needs.

10.

My idea is to respect, promote, and embrace cultural differences and celebrate those differences.

11.

C

12.

By being actively involved and well informed board member regarding financial accountability that deals with property tax funding and expenditures.

13.

I believe school nutrition play an important role to students learning ability and their overall physical wellbeing.

[back to the top](#)

Name: Richard L. Price (Rick)

Education: BA, Education, University of Northern Iowa; MA, Education, University of Northern Iowa

Occupation: Retired School Administrator, last 18 years as Principal of Carmel Middle School in HSD2

How long have you been a resident of your district: 19 years

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

phone at 719-540-9949 or by email at rdlprice@adelphia.net

1.

After 38 years as a public school employee and as a product of public education I believe I can bring the commitment, leadership, and skills needed to guide HSD2 through the challenges that face public education today.

2.

Student achievement

Decreasing in student enrollment that directly effects funding, staffing and programs

Improving the public image of HSD2

The status of "academic watch" for HSD2

Outside groups focusing on personal, political agendas and not focusing on educating students

3.

The Colorado Courts have found vouchers unconstitutional and as a board member I must abide by the court's decision. Harrison District 2 has a process to determine approval or rejection of charter application. This process should be followed. At this time Harrison District 2 has four charter schools.

4.

I am in full support of an abstinence based curriculum with age-appropriate information about contraception and sexually transmitted diseases. I am supportive of inviting community service providers into district classrooms.

5.

Intelligent design is not a science and therefore should not be part of a science curriculum. Intelligent design would be more appropriate in a comparative religion class or a philosophy class.

6.

It is the board's responsibility to ensure that teachers, community members, and the District Accountability Committee are involved. Teachers, administrators, and curriculum staff should take the lead. The board should have confidence that staff will adhere to the process. The board should be well informed, ask questions and discuss curriculum ensuring that district, state and national standards are met.

7.

Although many schools are making progress, there continue to be a few schools that are not meeting the designated levels of achievement. Math is still a challenge for many of our students. CSAP is showing that there is a significant achievement gap between minority and white students.

8.

Yes. This should be a high priority for the school board. There should be ample resources allocated to support district personnel in addressing these achievement gaps through research based strategies and programs.

9.

Any teaching of religion in public schools should be done in a comparative religion course. Students have the right to express their religious beliefs while in school. Since there is separation of church and state, staff can not be involved in school activities or teaching that directly reflects their religious beliefs or practice such beliefs in school.

10.

I support the Respectful Workplace Policy in HSD2 which carefully outlines appropriate staff behavior in regards to harassment. Anti bullying programs must be

in place for students and staff, and training for students and staff need to be in place for diversity and cultural differences.

11.
HSD2 must become competitive with surrounding school districts

12.
I will be an advocate at the local and state level to ensure that HSD2 is fully funded to support the best learning opportunities for all of our youth. As a school board member I will support district efforts for improving services to students and staff through well researched and community supported bond initiatives.

13.
Good nutrition programs are important to student achievement. It is imperative that children have access to high quality school meals so they can be active and engaged learners. With the ongoing concerns with juvenile diabetes and obesity I believe that HSD2 needs to examine the current nutrition program to ensure that all student nutritional needs are being met.

[back to the top](#)

Name: Ed Ralston

Education: BSBA, Finance; BS, CIS

Occupation: High School Teacher - ACE Coordinator

How long have you lived in the district? 10 + Years

How can citizens contact you if they want more information?

(719) 390-6063 (H) (719) 232-9093 ieralston@msn.com

1.
To provide each child's "WANT" to learn in an environment safe from harm. Giving every child a place they know will be safe so they can expand their knowledge. Guarantee every child has all the resources (books, tutors, technical support, etc) available to help them so become a valued, educated and contributed member of the community.

2.
First item of concern is finding a highly qualified superintendent to guide the district through a transition period. The second concern is helping our students overcome their specific deficiencies so they can become proficient on their CSAP tests.

3.
I have strong feelings about charter school. Charter schools should have the same accountability as the public school systems until this happen I can not support them.

4.
I strongly support the school board policy as it stands with regard to this program.

5.

I believe the school board has a responsibility to look at both the pro and cons of any teaching method and make a final decision as a group.

6.

The school boards is required to enforce that state standard are being taught in all schools but individual schools are responsible for text book selection.

7.

They show a continuing progress in all grades.

8.

Yes. Currently the school board is continually reviewing the status and developing a plan.

9.

I again refer to the current school board policy on this subject.

10.

I believe the current school board has established a strong policy on this subject.

11.

no response.

12.

I believe it is the responsibility of the school board to ensure the promotion of the school district is ongoing with state and local representation. In addition, make sure voters within the school district are well aware of where their money is spent.

13.

With free and reduced breakfast and lunches has influenced the student's achievements. No.

[back to the top](#)

Name: Deborah L. Hendrix

Education: BS, Howard University

Occupation: Owner, CD Global Enterprises; Dale Carnegie Instructor

How long have you been a resident of your district? 10 years

How can citizens contact you if they want more information (phone, email, website)? (719) 380-7505, dhendrix635@msn.com

1.

I believe it is important to be involved and give back to my community, school district and state. Running for the school board is an honor that this country gives

us. I am willing to allow my ideas be evaluated by the community and see if they agree they are the best for Harrison School District Two.

2.

I believe HSD must work with the Colorado Department of Education to get the district off Accreditation Watch. The district must concentrate as never before, on the academic achievement and growth of all students in the district. I am also very concerned that Harrison School District has a very high drop out rate of high school students, especially minority males.

3.

Charter school applications must be judged on the merits of whether or not it will improve the academic achievement of students. If not a quality application, it must not be approved. Competition in delivery of educational services is important. Vouchers, like HB 1160, have been ruled unconstitutional. I support working with private sector to bring educational services to all students.

4.

Sex education is best taught at home. I believe that students should opt-in to sex education programs as opposed to opt-out. Parental consent should be given first. School based programs must encourage abstinence as the only safe sex.

5.

Schools should allow for competition of ideas to flourish so that students are taught to think. Too many times in our schools, the conservative position is never discussed. If the concept is presented in a value neutral setting, as one possibility, students will be able to determine what they want to believe about this issue.

6.

I believe the school board has the ultimate authority for governance of a school district. They should allow for input to see what the community values. However, I believe textbooks should formally be adopted by the school board before they are used in the classrooms.

7.

I believe CSAP is one of several measures that help us meet the academic needs of students in our district. I believe we must work to improve the academic achievement and growth of students in our district. Reading is essential for all our students. My goal would be that all of our students be proficient at grade level in reading.

8.

I believe that school board must be concerned about the achievement gap between minority and white students. I am especially concerned that minority boys are falling behind. I am also very concerned that we have too many minority children in special education. I would work to lower that during my board service.

9.

The bill of rights extends to students in our schools. A student has the freedom of speech and freedom of religion in our schools. If students want to belong to a volunteer Bible study or club, the school district must not discourage it. President

Clinton during his Presidency, encouraged appropriate religious discussions in schools.

10.

I believe that character education should be a part of every classroom discussion in the district. Values are caught and taught. Character education is essential for students to succeed academically.

11.

I want to increase the amount of money that we are spending on a percentage basis in the classrooms. That would include looking at the teacher's salary and rewarding teachers who do the best job for students - regardless of tenure. I would like to pay the teachers who are effective a lot more than they currently are getting.

12.

The state under Amendment 23 has increased education funding for K-12 schools. Locally, school boards are involved in mill levy overrides and bond elections. As a board member, I want to make certain that each dollar collected on the local level is being well spent.

13.

Students need to be in a learning environment that is free from hunger. Because Harrison receives at-risk funding, I believe some of that must go to students who are eligible for free and reduced lunches. Healthy students do better on their school assignments.

[back to the top](#)

Name: Si Bruner

Education: AAS, Northeastern Junior College; BA University of Northern Colorado; MA University of Southern Colorado

Occupation: Teacher-- 12 yrs at Harrison High School & 21 yrs at Sierra High School

How long have you lived in the district? 33 Years

How can citizens contact you if they want more information?

Phone-719 392-5964 Email svb369@hotmail.com

1.

I will represent the students, parents, community and employees of Harrison School District # 2 by working for: High Academic Achievement, Increased Parent and Community Involvement, Improve CSAP Scores, Attract and Retain "Highly Qualified" Staff, and Responsible Spending of all Tax Dollars.

2.

Improving academic achievement
Development of a district wide technology replacement plan

3.
Discuss the application with the entire Board of Education and rely on the expertise of the central administration staff who work in curriculum instruction. Vouchers were defeated by the voters and I agree with the decision.
4.
The district currently has programs to address these issues. The use of community service providers are being used to supplement this instruction. A permission slip should be provided and signed by parents before students are allowed to participate in community service provider instructional activities.
5.
Investigate the current board policy that relates to this topic along with reviewing the proposed curriculum with our Science Curriculum Committee. It would also be necessary for community and parental input. The Board of Education would make decisions based on pros and cons of the proposal from the Curriculum and Instruction Department.
6.
Follow the norm of proper curriculum planning. Complete a needs assessment, develop a Philosophy, a scope and sequence and topics of instruction that meets standards. Investigate appropriate textbook and materials for the classroom. Input from parents and community is needed. Finally, the school board would study the results and provide a decision.
7.
Our schools are showing growth and improvement. We must continue to close the gap by reviewing the data from past and current CSAP reports and develop strategies and interventions to help all students move to the next level.
8.
The board should be supportive of the programs currently in place and continue to develop new strategies that would assist in closing the gap.
9.
Some limited access may be appropriate depending on the situation.
10.
Maintain a Safety Program that students, parents, and community are aware of that insures a safe learning environment. Continue to use Student Resource Officers in schools and utilize an appropriate Discipline Policy.
11.
B-appropriate-comparable to surrounding districts in our area.
12.
Be knowledgeable of current Colorado State Finance Laws. Rely on the expertise of the Finance Department and provide an adequate support structure.
13.
Students who eat regular and healthy balanced meals are able to learn better. Our

Nutrition Services Department serves breakfast and lunch meals that comply with Federal guidelines. Therefore, no changes are necessary.

[back to the top](#)

Name: Linda M. Pugh

Education: Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degree in nursing

Occupation: Registered Nurse, Nursing Instructor, Pikes Peak Community College

How long have you been a resident of your district? 20 years in October

How can citizens contact you if they want more information?

Linda Pugh for D2 School Board
P.O. Box 38486
Colorado Springs, CO 80937
Phone: (719) 271-4669 Website: www.lindapughford2.com

1.
For seventeen years, I have been an active parent voice in Harrison School District Two (HSD2). I support public education and want to see decisions made in the best interests of our kids. I know how to work with a group in a collaborative manner and the importance of hearing all sides of an issue.
2.
CSAP scores, retention of quality staff and negative image. The district must continue its work to increase academic achievement and get off academic watch. The board must ensure that our staff is receiving the support and professional development they need to best serve our kids.
3.
My decision to approve or reject a new charter school would be based on what that school could offer that is not already available in the district. Vouchers take money away from the deserving students who remain in public education.
4.
Parents have the primary responsibility in setting moral values. Schools provide factual family life and sex education information and the opportunity to discuss questions. Parents in HSD2 may request exemption from such classes if they feel it conflicts with their beliefs.
5.
Any inclusion into a science curriculum must be shown to support science content standards.
6.
The school board has the final approval authority for curriculum changes and textbook selection.

7.

I am not convinced that CSAP scores are the best measure of our students' success but they are the measurement upon which the district is being evaluated. HSD2 is making steady progress in improving those scores.

8.

There is a gap although our minority proficiency exceeds the state average in many areas. The school board must ensure that the staff receives the necessary professional development and support in implementing successful teaching strategies to meet the needs of ALL students.

9.

Information about religion can be shared in an informational manner without promoting any particular religion.

10.

Schools in the district have programs in place to promote positive behavior to include appropriate resolution of conflict and respect for others. Each school has a security guard; administrators carry walkie-talkies and monitor outdoor activities of students; and entrance to the buildings is limited to the front door.

11.

C. too low. To retain quality staff, we need to be competitive with other districts in our city.

12.

Attracting and retaining more students increases the district funding. Board members need to be aware of legislative decisions that affect educational funding.

13.

Students perform better when they are rested and properly fed. The district provides a breakfast opportunity as well as lunch to its students at a very affordable price. A free and reduced lunch program is available to those who qualify. The foods offered provide nutritional variety and consider student preference.

[back to the top](#)

Name: Kay C. Mast

Education: 1969 graduate of Harrison High School; BA, Adams State College; MA, UCCS

Occupation: Elementary teacher in Harrison School District Two

How long have you been a resident of your district?

I have been a resident in the district since 1963.

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

3895 G Strawberry Fields Grove, 80906

579-5630

kcm4boe@yahoo.com

1.

I have been on the Board for 4 years and would like to continue the positive trends of the district.

2.

Our immediate future holds the hiring of a new superintendent who will need to know HSD2 and continue in the positive direction of the last 10 years. We need to continue the upward trend of our CSAP scores and implementing a variety of educational "choice options" for our students and parents.

3.

I will support the current charter schools in the district. I do not support adding more charter schools. Voucher programs take students and money from the public school system - a system I have devoted my entire adult life to making work for students and parents.

4.

I support the current programs offered by HSD2.

5.

I don't know enough about this to give a qualified response.

6.

I believe the Board needs to rely on its expert staff members to do the research and background on curriculum and textbooks. Then with careful listening and questioning at presentations, Board members should give respectful consideration to the work that a committee or department has prepared for them.

7.

Our district has continually shown slow and steady progress while continuing to educate the "whole child". We must find each child's strengths and interests as well as addressing their needs. Teaching to the test is not appropriate. Teaching for life-long learning is.

8.

Achievement gaps are everywhere. HSD2 has been closing the achievement gap at a faster rate than the state average. The School Board can show its commitment by providing support and training for staff members on how to continue making progress in this critical area.

9.

I have no problem with jewelry or clothing for students or staff showing a personal belief as long as it is not derogatory to another religion. Teachers should not express their religious beliefs to students as they are in a position of influence. Students should converse with their peers about issues, showing respect to those of different opinions.

10.

We survey students and staff to see what areas are in need of attention. We offer many programs that address the need for respecting others and finding alternative solutions to disagreements.

11.

Teacher salaries in HSD2 are competitive to surrounding districts. We have a process called Collaborative Decision Making and a team of 22 employees that addresses salary and benefits, working conditions, and terms of employment. Issues and solutions are decided on collaboratively looking globally at what's best for the district.

12.

There will never be adequate funding as long as the state and the federal government keep mandating laws that cost additional money without funding them. What I do know is that HSD2 spends its money very carefully and does better than most other districts in keeping the money as close to the students as possible.

13.

Current data has shown over and over how important nutrition is in the learning process. A body and brain need fuel to do their best work. Our nutrition program has many regulations to meet to be considered adequate for growing bodies. I feel we need to revamp our menus with more "student friendly" foods that won't be thrown away.

[back to the top](#)

Name: Cindee Will

Education: BA, San Diego State University; Elementary Education credential, Point Loma College

Occupation: Assistant Principal, James Irwin Charter Elementary School

How long have you been a resident of your district? Six years, May 1999.

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

Did not provide.

1.

Having been in education as a teacher for many years, I am very concerned about every student who we educate in our classrooms. I believe I can bring a perspective to the board that addresses how important each student is. My goal for each student would be that they would be proficient or advanced in their academic skills.

2.

High expectations must be maintained for all students. Harrison School district serves a high percentage of at-risk students. Every student can learn and wants to learn. I do not believe that students should be pre-judged for low academic achievement because of their race or social-economic background.

3.

I am a strong supporter of public education. I also support competition of educational delivery. Having worked in one of the highest performing charter schools in the state, I believe charter schools can deliver an excellent education. Public-private partnerships such as residential treatment centers are also very valuable to our students and help strengthen our public education delivery.

4.

Sex education programs must be very concerned about the values of parents who send their students to our schools. In a very limited way, sex education programs must be abstinence based and not encourage sexual activity. I prefer opt-in programs instead of opt-out. I also prefer no sex education programs in the elementary schools.

5.

In our schools, I believe in teacher directed instruction. For a teacher to discuss several points of view about an issue, and then encourage the students to draw their own conclusions is quite appropriate. Especially in the areas of political science, I believe that it is important to allow for a healthy discussion of issues from several perspectives.

6.

Because I am a teacher, I believe there should be a process that allows for input from parents, teachers and when possible, students on textbooks. It is also important for the textbooks to align themselves with the state standards. Selected curriculum must help all students to be the most academically successful. The board needs to vote on major textbook adoptions.

7.

I believe the CSAP test scores reveal that we must do a better job with our minority students. I am very concerned that we have too many minority students falling behind grade level on academic achievement. I would work hard to improve the achievement of those students the most.

8.

As previous mentioned there is an achievement gap. I believe the district should look at the student weighted funding formula. We need to allocate more resources to those students that are behind. The district receives at-risk funding from the state. These dollars must be ear-marked for the neediest students. Title One federal dollars must also serve these students.

9.

All of us live in the best country in the world. Each is given the freedoms expressed in the Bill of Rights and this includes teachers and students.

10.

I believe if every student must be treated with dignity and respect, they will respond accordingly. We must emphasis basic values of character for all students. Students must conduct themselves in a safe and respectful manner to their fellow students. A fair and strict discipline code should be understood by all the students and enforced by the administration.

11.

As a former teacher I would like to compensate teachers more. However, I do not believe all teachers are equally successful with their students. There should be a part of a teachers pay that is awarded, based on the academic success of the students in their school. The John Irwin Schools of Excellence is a program that exemplifies this concept.

12.

The school finance act is very complicated. Amendment 23 was passed by the voters to increase the state wide base for educational funding. Since the passage of the amendment, funding has begun to catch up. If money is raised locally, in a bond or mill levy override, we must communicate with voters how this will boost academic achievement.

13.

Students who are hungry have a difficult time concentrating on their studies. Because of the number of students who are eligible for free and reduced lunches, we must make sure all those students receive a nutritious and balanced meal from the district.

[back to the top](#)