

UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

2012

1. Describe the qualifications and experiences you would bring to the State Board of Education and how they would be an asset to the work of the Board.

I have 9 + years in education with experience at the local district level as a school counselor and at the USOE as an Education Specialist supporting the use of technology in the schools. I have 8+ years in the private sector as a business owner/employer in real estate development. I reside on, and operate, a farm in Box Elder County. I have undergraduate and graduate degrees in Psychology from Utah State University with an emphasis in School Counseling and a Drafting certificate from Bridgerland Applied Technology College. The breadth of my experiences will provide perspective and valuable insights to many issues the board will consider.

2. Name three key things you would like to accomplish as member of the State Board of Education.

I would like to see that the use of technology to deliver education to students keeps pace with changing technology while still protecting the vital role of teachers.

I would like to see the transition between secondary education and higher education start earlier and be more seamless. In other words, high school students should have increased options of working towards applied technology certificated programs and college degrees during their high school experience. There seems to be some threat that higher education may want to pull programs, such as concurrent enrollment, and I would want these programs protected.

A recent national task force cited that "State Department and U.S. intelligence agencies face critical shortfalls in the number of foreign language speakers, and that fields such as science, defense and aerospace are at particular risk". Utah has been a leader in the areas of foreign language and aerospace, and I'd like to see that continue.

3. What do you think are the two biggest issues or challenges facing public education in the state of Utah? Why?

Even with gains in the legislature in 2012 to fund the growth in Utah Schools, funding still remains at the top of the list of critical issues for myself, and rates second on the list of top concerns for the people of Utah in the recently released 2012 Utah Priorities Survey. Education in Utah is very efficient with the funding it has, but there is long way to go before it can remove itself from the bottom of the list in per pupil spending.

Another significant issue, in my opinion, is that there are some indications that teacher morale is at an all time low in the state. The reasons are many and varied, but without question we need to be careful that as changes are introduced into the system that we do it in such a way that teacher feels empowered. Otherwise, we risk losing the very people we need to make our educational system strong.

(Continued on Reverse)

4. Describe the efforts you would make to communicate with your constituents and bring all stakeholders (state board, local boards, legislature, educators, parents) together to enhance public education.

I would attend local board meetings, visit schools, talk with teachers, administrators, parents, and students within my represented district. I would communicate with legislators to make certain they understand the needs and objectives of the public education system in the state.

5. What would you do to improve the academic preparation of students as well as their transition to higher education or other post-high-school training?

As I mentioned in my response to question #2, I would like to see the transition to higher education and post-high-school training begin earlier during a student's high school experience. I would work to resolve the concerns with higher education with regard to continuing these programs.

As an employer in the state, I have concerns about the deterioration of work ethic and the associated loss in productivity and ability of employees to stick to job. I also have concerns about an entitlement mentality that seems to be gaining a foothold the attitudes of many youth. In addition, technology can be a indispensable tool in creating greater productivity and effectiveness of the modern workforce. However, misuse and/or abuse of technology, that now permeates almost every aspect of our lives, drag on productivity. I would like to ensure that our schools, as they face the challenge of increasing expectations and standards, don't lose sight of these important issues.