



## Candidate Questionnaire 2016

**1. Please list no more than three children, youth or family focused causes or organizations that you have supported as an employee, donor or volunteer.**

I am strong advocate for children, youth and families. Children, youth and families have been the priority of my life's work and volunteer efforts.

- 1) I am the founder of the Back Pack Program for Chronically Hungry School Children in my district. This is a partnership effort with United Way of Northern Arizona and the Flagstaff Family Food Center/Food Bank. Children are provided a back pack filled with food for the weekend on Friday of each week. There is enough food for the child and any siblings in the home. The back packs are packed by community volunteers. In my role as County Supervisor, I have provided significant funding from District 2 for the program.
- 2) I serve on the Commission for Excellence in Education - a group of community, education, and business leaders who are working to create a world-class education for ALL students in Flagstaff and I serve on the Northern Arizona Head Start Council to ensure low-income children and families in northern Arizona have access to Pre-K Early Childhood Education.
- 3) I am a strong supporter of parents and individuals who are seeking their GED. I have provided funding for evening GED preparation classes for parents and community members. Having a GED provides a pathway for increased educational and employment opportunities.

**2. What do you believe the role of elected officials is in their communities when it comes to serving and advocating for children and youth?**

I believe it is a primary responsibility of elected officials to serve and advocate for children and youth. Elected officials make decisions every day that affect our children/youth. I believe we should expect our elected officials to heighten community awareness of the needs and issues facing our children/youth, to develop policy that positively impacts our children/youth and to allocate funding for programs to support our children/youth.

**3. What do you think the two most pressing issues are for youth and their families?**

- 1) The high cost of living and level of poverty experienced by our youth and families. One of every four children in Coconino County live in poverty.
- 2) Mental and behavioral health and wellness for youth and families.

**4. Within the duties of your elected office, how can and will you support children and families of our community?**

I will continue to support the children and families of our community by being a strong and fierce advocate for children and families and formulating policy that positively impacts children and families. I will allocate resources to create opportunities for children and families and fight to oppose legislation that is harmful to children and families.

**5. How would you as an elected official support an equitable school system for ALL students, cradle to career?**

I will continue to represent Coconino County on the Commission on Excellence for Education with the goal of creating a world-class educational system for ALL children.

I will also continue to make funding for the FACTS program a priority and continue to support Early Childhood Education and the United Way of Northern Arizona Kinder Camp Program.

Equally important, I will continue to be a strong advocate for funding for K-12 and post-secondary education and internships, training programs that lead to career placement and attainment for all students.

Lastly, and this is an issue that is very personal to me, I will continue to be a fierce advocate for children with Special Needs and will do all that I can to fight for educational equity.

**6. Please share your thoughts on early childhood education and its role in the educational system.**

Early childhood education is critical to a child's development and preparedness to enter Kindergarten. Research show that a child's brain is significantly developed by age three, thus is important that all children be provided experiences and opportunities to learn from birth. This includes education and support for new parents.

**7. Even with the passage of Prop. 123, Arizona is one of the lowest states in the nation on per pupil funding. As an elected official, how would you work with other elected officials at any level to ensure an increase in per pupil funding as the next step to Prop.123?**

I will work with elected officials from all levels of government and community stakeholders who believe it's critical to the future of our state and our economy that funding for education be a priority. New and additional revenues must be identified to support education. A plan to build community buy-in and stakeholder support is needed. Arizona's future, the vibrancy of community and a robust economy depends on the success of our children.

**8. How can concern for the welfare of children be expressed in your legislative agenda?**

There is great opportunity for the welfare of children to be expressed in both our federal and state legislative agenda. We can support legislation that promotes and advances the welfare of children and we can oppose legislation that is counter to the welfare of children. Letters and resolutions of support or opposition can be drafted by Board of Supervisors and forwarded to the State Legislature or U.S. Congress. We can also provide testimony at legislative hearings.

Over the past decade, I have successfully fought on the national level for the reauthorization of Secure Rural Schools by the U.S. Congress which provides \$2 million annually in funding to schools in Coconino County.