



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 worked as a teen peer counselor and then as a case manager for Open-Inn Inc. in Prescott from 2000-2005, working with youth at-risk and youth in the juvenile detention center.

- 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?**

The first priority of any legislator or community leader is to ensure that we give teachers and child advocates the tools they need to help out children learn. This requires listening to and communicating consistently with constituents to find out their needs. As a Senator, my first priority would be to make sure that teachers and child advocates have a listening ear in the legislature and to make sure they have the tools necessary to educate and nurture our children.

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

One of the most pressing issues for youth and families is the lack of quality jobs that provide a strong foundation for a stable family life. Poverty and economic stagnation lead to an increase in stress and instability in the home environment. It's difficult to nurture our children when we have to spend so much time worrying about how we're going to put food on the table. The next most pressing issue is the lack of substantive support our legislature has been giving our public schools. Public education in this country is the key to leveling the playing field and giving every child a fair chance to succeed in life. Without proper support, we leave many children and young adults behind, failing to maximize their potential and our communities suffer as a result.

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

Helping children and families is at the forefront of the reason I chose to enter this race. Within the duties of my office I intend to increase our funding for education to the appropriate levels, stop the flow of teachers leaving the state, and give case workers and social service providers the institutional support they need to do their jobs well.

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

This issue is particularly important to me, especially because so much of the district I hope to represent is rural. Our education system requires a hands on approach of constant review and exploration of areas for improvement. I believe we should include additional training programs into our educational process so that students have the skills they need to succeed in any number of areas in the workforce.

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

Early childhood education is what lays the foundation for the further development of our children. The sooner we begin involving both children and their caretakers in the educational process the greater chance of success they have both in terms of schooling and their eventual entry into the workforce.

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?

We must avoid stop-gap solutions and funding situations that result in perpetual fiscal cliffs. Steady and consistent support is needed from the legislature in order to ensure the success of our education system. The business community has been particularly involved in building solutions and I will continue to work with them and others on this issue that should be a top priority for us all.

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

The concern for the welfare of children can be expressed in my legislative agenda by maintaining my promise to promote and improve public education, lending support to social service providers and case workers, and by being a consistent advocate for all of my constituents.