

**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.**

As the Executive Director of the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association I worked in partnership with United Way of Northern Arizona and other members of the community to administer the Read-On Flagstaff initiative (funded in part by the Helios Foundation). The goal of the project was to help establish an environment of learning within homes with children 0-8 years old.

I have also served as a member of the United Way Early Education Committee and on the Flagstaff Unified School District FACTS Advisory Board.

**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 that I was elected to serve and advocate for all residents of our city. This includes children and youth (those that are too young to vote).

For the past eight (8) years I have consistently worked to support youth/children and families of our community as an elected official.

The most important role of Flagstaff City Council is to preserve and improve quality of life in Flagstaff for future generations. That has been my priority for the past 8 years. I've worked with residents across Flagstaff to improve neighborhoods, maintain critical social services funding, support businesses, preserve open space and parks, and protect the homes of youth/children.

As Mayor I will lead efforts that further these goals through effective and collaborative leadership which engages the community, Council, and staff.

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

- a. The cost of living – Cities thrive when people can raise families in them. Land cost, housing shortages, high rents, student loans, high childcare costs--all collide to make it hard to raise a family here. Furthermore, bad fiscal policy has shifted city revenue to fees and (regressive) sales taxes. The consequences of which are heavy fees that disproportionately impact youth/children, working families, small businesses and contribute to the high cost of living.
- b. Diminishing quality of life – What bring people here to Flagstaff is our quality of life. The past 4-years has seen continuous support of development projects and zoning-code

changes that fail to preserve and improve our neighborhoods, and repeated attempts to cut funding to agencies that serve families, women, youth/children, and victims of crime.

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

For the past eight (8) years I have consistently worked to support youth/children and families of our community within the duties of my elected office.

A good example of this was the work that I did to save the Cogdill Recreation Center (an underfunded city recreation center located within the Brannen Homes Housing Project. I not only worked to secure monies to keep the Center opened during the recession but also worked to establish a private-public partnership (P3) with the Boys & Girls Club. The Boys & Girls Club now operate the Center on behalf of the City and greatly increased the level of service for children and families in that area.

I have also fought to save our public libraries and add to their hours of operations. This year I was able to secure funding for Sunday hours at the library in the City's FY 2016-2017 budget. I understand that access to books and information technology (computer) is critical for the development of youth and the growth of families.

Every year I advocate to provide financial support to the City's social infrastructure (provide money for social services in our city). Over the past eight years I have been the strongest advocate on the Flagstaff City Council regarding the necessity of our contracts with United Way and FACTS.

I worked to keep City Parks open during the recession when some members (currently) on Council wanted to close parks. I believe neighborhood parks are a critical part of a neighborhood. I also worked with members of the community to try and get a new City Park in the area of Woodlands Village Blvd. This area of town does not have a City Park.

Additionally I have advocated against raising Parks & Recreation fees. I understand having access to recreational facilities (e.g. the AquaPlex, the Jay Lively Ice Rink and Ball/Soccer Fields) is important for children and families and many in our community cannot afford to pay to use these city facilities.

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

I feel elected officials are in the unique position to use their titles and position to advocate for an equitable school system for ALL students (cradle to career) and to help educate others about the importance of education.

I actively do that. I have publicly support school overrides and initiatives such as the Coconino Community College bond (which I will be supporting again this year).

Additionally I am the vice-chair of the Coconino County Workforce Investment Board (career and technical training is one of our areas of interest). I served as a member of the United Way Early Education Committee and was a Coconino Association for Vocations, Industry & Technology Governing Board member. I have served on the Flagstaff Unified School Dist. FACTS & Equality in Education Advisory Boards, and on the Northern Arizona Adult Education Advisory Board.

I have also made it a point to send letters of support and/or concern to our State and Federal representatives regarding specific bills and/or actions concerning education. These include the privatization of our community colleges and public universities, the need to reestablish all-day kindergarten and the necessity of funding our public school system.

I have met directly with top business organizations in Arizona (through a partnership with the State of Black Arizona [SBA]) among which included Microsoft (Tempe, AZ) where I presented the need to turn STEM into STEAM (the importance of teaching arts alongside science, technology, engineering and math). I wrote the Postscript (titled; Where are the arts?) for the SBA volume 3 ([http://stateofblackarizona.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/SBAZ+Book+2012\\_4a.pdf](http://stateofblackarizona.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/SBAZ+Book+2012_4a.pdf)).

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

Early childhood education is critical to the long term success of a child. Here in the State of Arizona if a child is not reading at grade level by grade 3 they will be held back. There are many statistics showing that children who are behind at 3rd grade are most likely to stay behind, and if they are behind at grade 6th they are more likely to not finish high school. Additionally there is a strong link between not succeeding in school and adult incarceration levels.

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I support KinderCamp (a United Way program that gets children ready for kindergarten. I have helped educate families in the community about its importance. I also believe in all day Kindergarten.

**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?**

Again, I feel elected officials are in the unique position to use their titles and position to advocate for an equitable and appropriately funded school system for all students.

For the past eight (8) years I have been very active in advocating for such and as Mayor I will continue to do so. I have sent letters of support and/or concern to our State and Federal representatives regarding specific bills and/or actions concerning education. Matters of concern included the privatization of our community colleges and public universities, the need to reestablish all-day kindergarten and the necessity of funding our public school system. I will continue to do this as Mayor.

I have also meet one-on-one with State and Federal representatives to discuss educational needs across the spectrum. I will continue to do this as Mayor. Nor will I be endorsing legislators that have refused to fund our schools.

As Mayor I would like to work with the Greater Arizona Mayor's Association (GAMA, created by previous Flagstaff Mayor Sarah Presler with help from myself, is a coalition of mayors from northcentral and northwestern Arizona joining together to create a stronger voice at the legislature and to identify, develop, and advocate for common interest, for the greater good, in Arizona's intergovernmental arena). I believe that GAMA can be much more active in advocating for an increase in per pupil funding (the next step to Prop. 123) than it has been.

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

I believe that we can be much more specific within our State and Federal Legislative agenda about our concern for the welfare of youth and children within our city.

Specifically we can state within our City's Intergovernmental Relations Program (and subsequent legislative documents) guiding principles that "the welfare of youth and children and the quality of life that they experience is extremely important to us and that we are supportive of legislation/policies that further this goal/ideal and discourage those that do not.

Council can issue resolutions in support of legislation and policies that promote the welfare of youth and children. We can also take stances against bad legislation.

Coral Evans, 2016 Mayoral Candidate  
Coconino Coalition for Children & Youth Candidate Questionnaire 2016

Furthermore, we can actively work as a team to lobby (encourage) our State and Federal representatives to enact policy that is reflective of our guiding principles.

In the past (Federally) we have lobbied for an increase in HUD funding (monies which assist with certain programs that target youth and children).