

Candidate Answers



Nonpartisan

Cristina Martinez

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TOWN WHERE YOU LIVE

Mercer Island, WA

EXPERIENCE (300 CHARACTERS MAX)

Education: Medical Doctor (MD), Anahuac University, Mexico; Master of Public Health (MPH), University of Minnesota, Minnesota. Occupation: Early Childhood Educator; Public Health Consultant; Community Volunteer

How has your experience prepared you for this position?

As a Physician and Public Health professional, I've established a solid foundation for understanding community needs. I believe in addressing issues at their root, employing an "upstream" approach for lasting change. In addition to my education, I've been actively involved in various district roles, from PTA to Superintendent advisory boards, gaining valuable insights into our schools and community. This experience has been instrumental in preparing me for this role. It provided me with invaluable hands-on experience and offered firsthand insight into the unique challenges faced by our schools and the broader community. Through this engagement, I have actively supported initiatives aimed at enhancing the overall well-being of our students in the district. If elected as School Board Director, I am committed to continuing these efforts.

What, in your opinion, are the three most pressing issues facing your school district currently?

In my opinion, these are the three most pressing issues facing our school district: 1. Navigating budget constraints and addressing the long-term facility plan. 2. Ensuring relevant, rigorous academic curriculums and resources to meet all students' needs, including providing support for students who learn differently, so that they have what they need to succeed. 3. Focusing on mental health for all students and ensuring a sense of belonging for each and every student in the district.

How would you respond to the issue you consider the most important?

The way schools are funded poses a significant challenge in meeting the needs of all students. It is important to work together with the other board members and also to advocate at the state level to make sure we have the money we need to help students learn and grow. Furthermore, I want to understand the reasons why some families choose to leave our district and work on solutions to keep them engaged that directly impact our finances. In addition, a significant issue related to our budget is ensuring that our older school buildings meet state regulations and having a long-term facility plan in place. I want to listen to the people affected and find answers that will help our community and schools in the long run. This includes finding ways to preserve the close-knit environment and strong community ties that smaller neighborhood schools provide, which I really care about. Together, we can make sure our community has a bright future.

Please describe your approach to evaluating and holding school administrators accountable for their performance.

Evaluating and holding school administrators accountable is a complex process. It requires a detailed plan with clear standards and goals. This includes keeping track of performance metrics, such as observing data about different aspects of school management and finances, ensuring that education programs meet high standards, creating and implementing long-term plans for the school district, and regularly assessing student progress. Of course, the board does not directly evaluate any staff member other than the superintendent. However, the board effectively evaluates their work whenever it receives reports or discusses what they are doing in their respective departments or schools. Accountability isn't just about judgment – it's also about taking proactive steps to make any necessary changes that will improve students' learning.

How would you work to balance the needs and interests of students, teachers, and parents within the school district?

To make our schools the best they can be, it's crucial that everyone - students, teachers, school administration, and parents - work together. If elected, my job will be to listen to each other's ideas

and find common ground. Success in schools depends on everyone being involved and part of the process. We must listen to what each perspective brings to the table, from needs and wants, to facts, best practices and other crucial information needed to make decisions to make our education system excellent for our kids. Furthermore, doing well in school is a constant team effort. We need to make sure our students have what they need to succeed, support our hardworking staff, and ensure our community and families are taken care of. Sometimes, we'll have to make tough choices. But our main goal is to support every student in the short and long term, without sacrificing their education or well-being.

All above responses come directly from the candidates and are unedited by LWV. The League does not support or oppose any candidates or parties.