

Times-Call Candidate Forum

October 8, 2009

Debbie Lammers Presentation

School Boards shape the future of our students and schools and our communities depend on their guidance. A School Board member is a vital community leader. I offer my experience and leadership in school and community committees. I offer knowledge concerning accountability and public oversight of tax dollars -- and a dozen years of involvement.

I've talked to hundreds of residents throughout the district about many topics. Some examples are -- what does it mean for my school to now be a focus school? Is there special funding for that? Where is it coming from? Does the focus designation create any inequities? How do local property taxes contribute to school funding? Class size and open enrollment – how is that calculated?

I would like to bring that personal perspective to the board. And encourage the district to assist individual schools to provide detailed information to their parents and communities. I would encourage the district to continue to seek community input into any number of decisions and grow the community and business partnerships.

School Boards and districts ultimately strengthen their relationships with all employees by providing open and fair leadership. Teachers, as well as other employee groups, are entitled to compensation increases – increases which can be sustained over time while reflecting residents' expectations. The district has a commitment to insure public accountability for all aspect of its operations including its obligations to its various employee groups.

The priority is classrooms – and today that means curriculum, teachers, and technology.

Opportunities in curriculum options – such as focus and charter schools and magnet programs - will be key to student achievement such as assessments and increasing graduation rates. However, communication and accountability concerning these opportunities are vital. I would engage charter schools in their efforts to enhance their progress in the overall St. Vrain Valley School District community.

But the biggest challenges will be for our district -- as well as all others in Colorado -- to meet the demands of parents and students for academic diversity and achievement. Add to that, of course, financial and taxation accountability in the face of critical funding concerns. No easy task but my record of dedication to our schools and students has shown I am up to the challenges ahead.

I have a good knowledge of the district's working structure and its ongoing efforts in many areas. I was on this stage this time last year advocating for increased tax support that would go directly to our schools for specific purposes. Our schools and students are very grateful for that support.

I would like to continue my volunteer career and add my years of experience and knowledge to the school board's decision-making process.

I'd be honored to earn your vote. I'm Debbie Lammers on your ballot.