

**Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers
and the
California School Employees Association**

School Board Questionnaire for November 2010 Election

Please complete and return the questionnaire by September 5, 2010, to the Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers, 90-A Mariposa Ave, Watsonville, 95076. Fax (831) 722-3009.

Background and Expectations

Candidate's Name Leslie L. De Rose

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Phone Numbers 831-332-6053

Email Address leslie4schools@yahoo.com

Occupation and Employer: Marketing/Business Development. Coast Financial Services

Work Address 655 Capitola Rd, Santa Cruz

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Campaign Name Committee to Re-Elect Leslie De Rose

Address 801B E. Lake Avenue, Watsonville, CA 95076

Campaign Manager: Mary Ann Gomez Campaign Tres. N/A

ID Number Pending

1. Do you have children in the district or children who have graduated from the district? If so, please explain: I have a 20 year old graduate of PVUSD and a 16 year-old Junior in High School.

2. Explain what motivated you to seek office and what qualifications and experience you bring to the position? My motivation was born out of my desire to continue being an involved parent and help to focus our district towards increased student achievement. As a current Board member, I have continued to increase my understanding of what the responsibilities of a Board member are. I have also become very familiar with public funds and the complications that surround school budgets. I feel I have a connection with my constituents and I am hopeful I can continue serving them and our District.

3. Explain the duties of a school board trustee:

- a. Work with fellow Trustees to set District Policy
- b. Work with fellow Trustees to set District Goals
- c. Work with fellow Trustees to set direction for Superintendent to carry out policy and goals
- d. Work with fellow Trustees to ensure a balanced budget
- e. Evaluate Superintendent's performance

4. Have you signed any pledges or made any promises to any group(s)? If so, what are these? Please list your endorsements: None

5. What are your top priorities for use of school funding in our district? How should the district prioritize in response to funding cuts?
My priorities are the students of our District. Fair and equitable funding across the district is critical. Every teacher and student deserves to have the same opportunities. Meeting student needs everyday should be everyone's priority in PVUSD. We should be very proud that even with the immense reduction in funding to our schools, our students remain on an upward trend. Continuing to put as much of our budget into the classrooms will be the key to continuing the progress that has been made.

6. What is your understanding of the impact of "Race to the Top" on PVUSD students and teachers? "Race to the Top" has created an opportunity for School Districts to receive federal funding to better prepare teachers and students for success. However, the funding is tied to strict mandates that are not necessarily the most appropriate to guarantee our success. Funding is scarce and I feel that this "offer" of additional funding is a "carrot" being dangled. It has created stress and low teacher moral. Although it is critical that we

bring as much funding into our district as possible, we must treat our teachers and all staff with respect. Students will not respond in a negative atmosphere, no matter how much money is thrown at us. Of course there is room for improvement, but I'm not supportive of this plan.

7. What is your understanding/opinion of the District's English Language Master Plan? The EL Master plan is a comprehensive plan that was developed with the input and experience of community, teachers and administration to address the needs of students struggling with language barriers in our District. I believe when fully implemented and with consistency it will be successful. The Plan allows for modifications to ensure the needs of all ELs are being met.

8. In light of the PVUSD's program improvement status, what would you do to turn the situation around? I think our Program Improvement Schools are turning around. Continuing with the support and training that has been implemented and building on that, we will continue to see success. I feel it is important to continue to monitor progress and work together with teachers and staff to identify areas that need improvement, but also to celebrate success.

9. PVUSD's drop out rate is higher than the state average. How should this be addressed?" Of course any number of drop outs is too high and we should never stop working to reduce the number. But, the drop out rate has been a topic in the forefront for quite sometime. I don't believe our drop out rate is above state averages. It is widely known that the tracking and reporting of student attendance from District to District is flawed. However it is being addressed in Sacramento and our District is working alongside City officials and concerned community members to address the issue locally.

10. What is your position on school vouchers and charter schools? I am not a supporter of school vouchers. This is a system that would segregate our students and cause schools lose even more funding.

11. I do support Charter Schools. I am a firm believer in the availability of alternatives for education. No two students learn the same and many thrive in these environments, where they could potentially be at risk for failure if their individual needs aren't met. We are required to present opportunities for ALL students to learn to their highest potential and Charter Schools are one resource that allows that to happen.

11. What is your approach to minimizing cultural conflicts while honoring the diversity of our student population? I think educating students about the different customs and beliefs in our society are of the utmost importance. I believe fear of the unknown contributes to cultural conflicts and learning about our classmates and neighbors creates the opportunity to learn to embrace our differences.

12. How can we recruit and retain experienced, competent staff given the high cost of living in our area? I think working and living in Santa Cruz County is a wonderful opportunity. Creating affordable housing and partnering with local businesses and non-profits can and do help. I am a supporter of new housing developments that include affordable housing for teachers, police officers and other public sector workforce. I believe there is more that can be done and I would welcome the chance to explore it further.

13. How will you obtain input from certificated and classified staff in developing policies and making decisions?

One of the responsibilities of Board members is to work collaboratively with all stakeholders in the decision making process. That would include working with committees, visiting school sites, and making myself available for discussion in matters that affect our District.

14. What do you view as the 3 most important issues that the school board will face during the next 4 years?

- a. Raising student achievement
- b. Retaining highly qualified staff
- c. Identifying additional sources of revenue/ balancing the budget

15. Would you support moving from the three-zone administrative structure to a more traditional administrative structure? Explain: Our District has had the "Zone" system for many years and in my opinion, it has been successful. I have personally talked with students, teachers, parents and site administration and it is supported. The Zone systems allows these groups to communicate with each other about the students needs at all levels of their education so they are better prepared to be successful as they move through from elementary to secondary schools.

15. How can our district best protect and preserve the physical, mental and environmental health of our students and staff?

- a. Maintaining and exceeding guidelines for a nutritious school breakfast and lunch program
- b. Retaining highly qualified counselors and nursing staff
- c. Fully implementing conflict resolution training for students and staff

17. What is your position on contracting out school services such as cafeteria, custodial, maintenance services, etc? This is something I haven't given much thought. Clearly it would mean people in our district losing their jobs and I would exhaust all options before considering outsourcing.

18. Why do you seek the support of PVFT & CSEA? What form of support do you desire? I would like the support of PVFT and CSEA because I believe we are all here because we want to provide our students with an excellent education. How we do that is by talking to each other, respecting differing opinions and being open to compromise. It is in the best interest of our students and the community to witness a collaborative spirit in our District's leadership.


19. How would your trustee work result in improved working conditions for CSEA and PVFT members? By working closely with the Superintendent, giving her guidance in negotiations and supporting policy that creates and maintains a safe, friendly and secure environment for all staff.

20. Given the fact that the state is in a budget deficit, what commitments can you make to protect health benefits?" I believe that we must continue to offer health benefits even in the fiscal crisis we are in. I am interested in looking at ways to save the District on related costs with a modified package, but *without* reduced benefits. I am excited about the Fringe Benefit Committee and they work that will be done to accomplish this task.

21. List the groups and individuals that have endorsed your campaign?
Doug Keegan, Kim Turley, Nick Rivera

22. Given our inadequate education funding, how would you prioritize PVUSD money for Adult Education? Adult Education in PVUSD has been a truly magnificent program. I have had the opportunity to take classes and commend the important work that is done there. However, our funding priorities have been put to the test with the recent reductions and cuts have been made across the board. I believe that Adult Education should remain

funded. I will work with other Trustees to find a way to keep funding Adult Ed without sacrificing K-12.

Candidate Signature 

Date Sept 4, 2010