

● Harrison District 2 School Board: Vote for Three ●



Candidate Questions



Steve Hester

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<p>1. Why are you running for school board, and what are the most pressing issues the school board should address in the coming year?</p>	<p>1. I am running because I can make a difference. I have 10 years experience on school boards including 8 years in Harrison. Issues: Providing a quality education to all students, ensuring accountability, and giving parents choices, not all students are the same so they need options that fit their needs.</p>
<p>2. Do you support instruction and expansion of access to comprehensive health education programs, including age-appropriate, science-based sex education standards created by passage of House Bill 07-1292? Why or why not?</p>	<p>2. I support common sense science based instruction with the emphasis on abstention. Instruction can begin after permission is given by the parent. I believe in an “opt-in” not an “opt-out” program. The district website needs a link to the information taught so parents can make an informed decision.</p>
<p>3. Explain your philosophy regarding prayer in the classroom, school auditorium, and school facilities.</p>	<p>3. Schools are not qualified to teach or lead religious instruction or prayer, but neither are they authorized to interfere with the free expression of a student’s 1st amendment rights. I support the limitation on the schools and the free speech and freedom of religion of the students.</p>
<p>4. How do you plan to ensure your traditionally marginalized students, such as students of color, disabled students, English-language-learning students, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) students receive equal access to education? Please include your thoughts on preventing and disciplining bullying and harassment, ensuring that unique learning abilities and needs are accommodated, and allowing students to participate in support systems such as student clubs and groups.</p>	<p>4.I support equal access where all children are supported. I do not support “special programs” which single them out. Policies should be in place which makes all bullying and harassment wrong. When you make special categories for protection you inevitably leave someone out. The goal is equality not special treatment.</p>
<p>5. Do you think counselors and school personnel in your district should be mandated to provide accurate, non-judgmental information and referrals for youth struggling with their sexual orientation or gender identity? How will you ensure the safety of transgender students, and how will you ensure all students receive appropriate education about diversity?</p>	<p>5. Counselors are for the educational progress of the student. Only medically trained professionals or Clergy are qualified to deal with these issues. Counselors and school personnel should not do referrals but be supportive of children and let the professionals treat struggling students.</p>
<p>6. What place, if any, does the teaching of alternatives to evolution such as intelligent design have in your district?</p>	<p>6. Let us talk plainly about this. Should religion be taught in school? No, I support the teaching of the scientific method which is free to look at all theories and test them using scientific inquiry. You do not advance knowledge by substituting one dogma for another.</p>
<p>7. Explain your philosophy regarding charter schools and voucher programs. How would you decide whether to approve or reject an application for a new charter in your district?</p>	<p>7. I support the right of parents to choose the school that best fits the needs of their children. I want all public schools to be a good option but I support competition which has already made Harrison schools better. I would decide on a charter</p>

<p>8. Do you support random drug testing of high school students involved in extracurricular activities? Why or why not?</p>	<p>school based on its merits.</p> <p>8. No. We are a school not a police department. Many of the questions in this survey are about what should be mandated or forced upon our students or schools. WE ARE A SCHOOL DISTRICT NOT THE SOCIAL WELFARE, HEALTH OR POLICE DEPARTMENTS. I support education not interventionism with our students.</p>
<p>9. The “No Child Left Behind Act” requires school districts to provide the names, addresses and phone numbers of high school students to the United States military for recruiting purposes. The law also requires that schools give both students and parents the opportunity to deny the release of that information. What procedures will you put in place to ensure adherence to “No Child Left Behind” mandates, while also upholding the individual privacy rights of students and parents with respect to military recruitment?</p>	<p>9. I support the law allowing access. I support the right of a student or a parent to “opt-out”. This is already the policy of the Harrison District and I see no need to change it.</p>

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<p>1. I want to continue the work we started 3 years ago with the hiring of our superintendent Mike Miles. We as a board made a decision to put a 5-year plan in place to improve the academic achievement of our students. The district has made huge strides over the last 3 years and I</p>	<p>1. As a Board member the past four years, it’s been rewarding and exciting to help shape HSD2’s growth to become a leader in Public Education. HSD2 is on year three of a five year plan to increase academic achievement and making significant progress. I want to see that plan continue.</p>
<p>2. Sex education is best taught at home. I do not support instruction and expansion of House Bill 07-1292 and believe that families should not be required to participate. If they are required, then parents should have the right to opt-out or opt-in to their child receiving credit if this topic is taught at home.</p>	<p>2. Yes. The district currently provides health education courses. Age-appropriate science-based sex education is also available. Parents may request exemption from such classes.</p>
<p>3. My personal philosophy has nothing to do with my responsibilities in adhering to laws of the land. Our district will be in compliance with those laws.</p>	<p>3. I have no objection to prayer in the school setting as long as it is not disruptive to the students’ education and is respectful of different faith beliefs.</p>
<p>4. Education is about meeting the <u>needs</u> of all children. Our board will continue to provide programs and services for all students in our district. We understand the achievement gap that exists in our schools and have created Individual Education Plan’s “IEP’s” for those students that are academically behind. We also have a huge population of students, approx. 76%, that are free and reduced lunch and have many challenges that our district addresses with in-school and after-school programs. Our district has instituted a behavioral system that addresses bullying and harassment. The administrators and teachers are trained in how to use this system to minimize classroom disruption and</p>	<p>4. Current practice in the district ensures that EVERY student is CONTINUOUSLY evaluated to monitor his or her progress and given the differentiated support each needs. This may initially require pulling a student out of the regular classroom, but he or she is returned to the regular classroom setting as soon as possible. Good teaching practices are utilized for each and every student. Every school is building a culture of respect and responsibility by teaching and modeling positive behavior and works closely with students with repeated behavior issues. There are many student club and groups available.</p>

manage ineffective student behavior. We have reduced the # of infractions of bullying throughout our schools. Our district offers a variety of clubs and after-school activities that provide opportunities that support the whole child.	
5. Our counselors and school personnel are provided training to deal with the social, economic and academic challenges that students may face. We hire staff qualified to work with all types of students. They are also responsible for working with teachers to provide strategies and support for discipline and classroom management techniques. The counselors and	5. School should be a place where children are treated with respect and feel safe to go to a counselor or teacher with a concern. Counselors should be knowledgeable of resources available in the community. Safety should be a result of a school culture of respect and responsibility.
6. Schools should allow for competition of ideas to flourish so that students are taught to think. If the concept is presented in a value neutral setting, as one possibility, students will be able to determine what they believe about this issue.	6. Any inclusion into curriculum must be shown to support science content standards.
7. A new charter school application must be judged on the merit of whether or not it is going to improve the academic education of students. If it is not a quality application it must not be approved. We approved the application of a new charter school and a home school to be part of	7. My decision to approve or reject a new charter school is based on what that school can offer that is not already available in the district. Vouchers take money away from the deserving students who remain in public education.
8. I would support this testing because I believe that athletes are students first and athletes second. If participating in an extracurricular activity would cause them to do harm to their bodies and take drugs, then they should not be allowed to participate in these activities.	8. I do not support random drug testing in extracurricular activities. Behavior issues should be dealt with as they come up.
9. As a board member we will enforce the policies according to State Law in regard to this mandate. Parents will be informed of their rights and we will honor their request.	9. Procedures are already in place requiring parent permission to release such information.

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Ivan Ed Ralston

Did not respond

1. I bring the commitment, leadership, and skills needed to guide HSD2 through the challenges that face public education today. My goal is to see the Five Year Plan fully executed and built on to take student achievement to an even higher level.
Coming year:
 - Student achievement
 - Fulfilling the five year plan
2. Yes – We must continue to educate the whole child and for too long health education has been neglected. Now more than ever the health and safety of today's youth is a critical priority.
3. I do not support prayer in school – classroom,

<p>auditorium, or school facilities. I believe in separation of church and state.</p>	
<p>4. Ample resources should be allocated to support academic achievement for all students. HSD2 has traditionally served a diverse population and has developed and implemented programs and strategies that allow all students to be successful. I fully support efforts to address the diverse needs of all students and will work to ensure that they have access to the best education and support systems to encourage student success and involvement.</p> <p>My first responsibility as a Board member is to have a safe, caring and accepting environment for all students. Anti bullying programs must be in place for students and staff, and training for students and staff need to be in place for the diverse and cultural differences of students and staff. I support the Respectful Workplace Policy in HSD2 which carefully outlines appropriate staff behavior in regards to harassment and bullying.</p>	
<p>5. Yes – I agree. My first responsibility as a Board member is to have a safe, caring and accepting environment for all students. Training for students and staff need to be in place for the diverse and cultural differences of students and staff.</p>	
<p>6. Intelligent design could be appropriate in a comparative religion class or a philosophy class.</p>	
<p>7. The Colorado Courts have found vouchers unconstitutional and as a board member I must abide by the court’s decision. HSD2 has a process to determine approval or rejection of charter application. This process should be followed.</p>	
<p>8. No – My experience as an educator leads me to believe that drug use is not limited to students in extracurricular activities. If there is a concern about drug usage it should be addressed for all students and not with drug testing of a select group of students.</p>	
<p>9. It is my responsibility as a Board member to adhere to all laws and mandates as directed. Each year Board members review I policies, practices and procedures as recommended by District administration to be in compliance with mandates and laws.</p>	