



Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers, AFT 1936

School Board Candidate Questionnaire for November 2018 Election

*Please complete and return the questionnaire no later than **August 28, 2018**, to the
Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers, AFT 1936*

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Candidate's Name **Jennifer Holm**

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Occupation and Employer
Clinical Instructor, Cabrillo College

Registered Nurse, Watsonville Community Hospital

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Campaign Name **Jennifer Holm for School Board 2018**

Address **PO Box 2205, Aptos, CA 95001-2205**

Campaign Manager **n/a** Campaign Treasurer **Jerry Heberling**

ID Number **FPPC# 1400539**

1. Why are you interested in serving on the board of Trustees? What is your understanding of your role and responsibilities as a board member?

As a nurse, I know that education level is one of the most significant predictors of health outcomes. Advocating for students is a natural extension of my advocacy for the health of the community. I have lived, worked, and raised my family in this

district, and this is a way that I can contribute to the community that has given me so much.

Given that school boards set policy, and the superintendent and district staff carry it out, my role and responsibility as a board member would be to critically evaluate recommendations from the superintendent, review input from stakeholders, and support or reject proposals based on the best available evidence, with an eye toward the best interests of the students in the district.

2. How long have you lived in the school district? Do you have children in the district or children who have graduated from the district? If so, which schools do/did they attend?

I have lived in the district since 2002. My oldest son attended Rio Del Mar Elementary, Aptos Junior High, and Aptos High School; he is currently attending Cabrillo College. My daughter went to Alianza Charter School, Rio Del Mar Elementary, Aptos Junior High, Aptos High School, Oasis High School, and will start at Cabrillo College this month. My youngest son is currently at Rio Del Mar Elementary—by the time he graduates, I will have been a PVUSD parent for 23 years.

3. Have you previously held any public elected or appointed positions, including school district committees? If so, please explain?

No

4. Please list all of the community groups in which you are involved and what role you have played.

I chair the Central Coast Nurses Metro Council, which was founded by nurses from Watsonville Community College, Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital, and Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital as a way to take our advocacy out to the community. We have met with political leaders, organized donation drives for domestic violence survivor shelters, participated in Monterey Peninsula Pride, and met with a representative from Safe Ag Safe Schools to learn about issues around pesticide use near schools.

I am also an assembly district delegate for the California Democratic Party.

5. Have you signed any pledges or made any promises to any group(s)? If so, what are these?

Yes. I signed the Monterey Bay Central Labor Council Candidate Pledge to support the right of workers to choose a union. I also signed the California Nurses Association Main Street Contract, which supports jobs at living wages; equal access to quality public education; guaranteed healthcare for all; a secure retirement, good housing and protection from hunger; a safe, clean, and healthy environment; and a just taxation system.

6. What are your top priorities for use of school funding in our district? How should the district prioritize in response to funding shortfalls?

The short—but not necessarily easy—answer is to prioritize the needs of the students. The best PR we could possibly have is successful students going out into the world as empowered and contributing members of our community. It means we need to have classroom ratios that allow for individualized attention, the supplies needed for instruction, and buildings and infrastructure that allow for a safe and healthy learning environment.

7. How can the district best serve our English Language Learners, both students and their parents?

Treat them with respect and provide educators who can work with these students and families in their language of origin and support them on their path to English proficiency. The district can also utilize the valuable input of the English Learner Advisory Council as a means for assessing the priorities of this part of our community as well as the effectiveness of intervention strategies.

8. How do you suggest the district incorporate the Common Core standards to better serve our students?

Listen to the needs of the students and those working with them, being mindful of the impact any policy changes might have, and if designated standards are not being met, invest the time and effort to investigate underlying causes for the gap.

9. In light of PVUSD's underperforming schools, how would you suggest these schools better serve students?

The first step would be to look at the data. Why are the schools underperforming? Are there underlying socioeconomic factors that need to be addressed in the student population? Do the teachers and support staff have all the resources that they need? There is no "one size fits all" approach to supporting an underperforming school—you have to take it on a case-by-case basis. But if you can identify the causal issues, then you can develop an evidence-based approach that has a chance of effecting a positive difference.

10. What can the district do to decrease the dropout rate?

Increase interest and attendance at Drop Out Committee meetings through active engagement with the community.

11. What do you think the district policy should be about parent school choice regarding underperforming schools?

Communities benefit in so many ways from strong local schools—from educated and informed community members, to improved local economics, and on to reduced transportation impacts. So again, I feel the answer depends upon what measures are being used to designate a school as underperforming, and the context of underlying issues. If there was a high proportion of parents requesting transfers, I would want to look at what barriers there might be to them fighting for success in their local school and seek out ways to address them.

12. What is your stance on charter schools?

When my daughter went to Alianza, I was able to see firsthand how a charter school that was accountable to the community could offer alternative opportunities to students in our district. That being said, I have a serious objection to public funds going to private interests without public accountability and oversight, and where teachers and support staff do not have access to collective bargaining rights.

13. What is your approach to minimizing cultural conflicts while honoring the diversity of our student population?

I do not believe that conflict in and of itself is inherently problematic, but it can be harmful when those involved do not have the tools to manage differences. Increased exposure to diversity—and a framework of education that honors that diversity—can be a bridge to understanding and acceptance of cultural differences. I believe it starts with a willingness to listen and understand that each individual has a spectrum of challenges and privileges and may live within a plurality of cultures.

14. How can we recruit and retain experienced, competent staff given the high cost of living and less competitive salaries?

Openness and transparency in the negotiation process will be very important. I've had many opportunities to talk to certificated and classified staff—folks aren't ignorant of the financial challenges our schools face, but they do expect to be dealt with fairly and honestly. Showing respect to those who staff the district includes dialogue with stakeholders in prioritizing compensation, benefits, and career development opportunities, as well as seeking out innovative solutions if there is a gap between what the district would like to offer and what it is able to provide.

15. How will you obtain input from faculty, staff and others in developing policies and making decisions?

The elected officials that I have the most respect for are in communication with their constituents. I would love to develop avenues for open communication, from formal events like townhalls, to more casual interactions such as social media and regular "office hours" at a local café. Additionally, I would be happy to arrange ad hoc meetings to discuss specific issues.

16. Do you have a special area of interest that you would like to incorporate into your work as a school board member?

In completing my master's degree, I wrote multiple community health papers, with a focus on diabetes prevention in Santa Cruz County. There are so many preventable illnesses that have their roots in habits established in childhood. I would love to explore ways that the district can expand its support of healthy food choice programs and access to safe physical activity.

17. What is your experience and knowledge of collective bargaining?

I have been on the nurses' contract bargaining team at Watsonville Community Hospital since 2013 and successfully brought a contract to ratification in 2016.

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

Even the most motivated student or staff member is going to struggle if they are constantly managing asthma attacks from mold in a building. Students and staff in the most structurally sound building will struggle if they are under stress from the effects of bullying or losing peers to suicide. Students and staff with a beautiful school and strong community support will also struggle if they are suffering health effects from high levels of pesticide or other toxic exposures. We protect our students and staff by being mindful of all these factors and being willing to intervene appropriately.

19. Given our inadequate education funding, how would you prioritize PVUSD money for Adult Education?

I would talk to the stakeholders, evaluate available data, and prioritize Adult Education spending in a way that best benefits the community. On a personal note, I have a friend who taught preschool for many years through Adult Education. She felt that her work in supporting the adult parents created stronger family networks and gave the little ones a better chance of success. That potential for long-term benefit is the beauty of our Adult Education programs.

20. Do you support Project Labor Agreements? Please state your reasons.

Yes. I read a variety of studies on the subject, and the data indicate that Project Labor Agreements provide greater opportunities for local labor and have a greater likelihood of on-time completion at or under budget, with fewer change-order requests. There are also benefits for local apprentices in having opportunities to work on local projects.

21. List the groups and individuals that have endorsed your campaign.

- **Assemblymember Mark Stone, California State Assembly District 29**
- **Dr. Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent-elect, Santa Cruz County Office of Education***
- **Abel Sanchez, Trustee Area 7 – Santa Cruz County Board of Education***
- **Lowell Hurst, Mayor – City of Watsonville***
- **Felipe Hernandez, Watsonville City Council***
- **Georgia Acosta, Pajaro Valley Unified School District Trustee, Area II**
- **Jenny Sarmiento, Planning Commissioner – City of Watsonville***
- **Deborah Dorney, Principal (retired) – Rio Del Mar Elementary***
- **Casey Carlson, President – Greater Santa Cruz Federation of Teachers***
- **Glenn Glazer, Secretary – Santa Cruz Democratic Central Committee***
- **Natalie Gray, teacher – Foothill Elementary***
- **Alan Haffa, faculty member – Monterey Peninsula College***
- **Sarah Henne, Teacher**
- **Barbara Johnson, Ph.D., MSN, RN, Director of Nursing – Cabrillo**

College*

- Anne Lucero, MSN, Nursing Program Faculty – Cabrillo College*
 - Arlene L. Maki Haffa, PhD, faculty member – CSUMB*
 - Janna Malizia, business owner – Curves Aptos*
 - Sandra Martinez, RN, E-board member – Monterey Bay Central Labor Council*
 - Abel Mejia, teacher – PVUSD*
 - Marty Potkin-Belton, MA, BSN, RN, Nursing Program Faculty – Cabrillo College*
 - Jason Spitzer, Engineer, Delegate – 29th Assembly District for the CADEM*
 - Tyller Williamson, E-Board Rep for the 29th Assembly District for the CADEM*
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- California Nurses Association/National Nurses Organizing Committee (CNA/NNOC)
 - Monterey/Santa Cruz Counties Building and Construction Trades Council
 - IBEW Local 234
 - Pajaro Valley Cesar Chavez Democratic Club

**Organization listed for identification purposes only.*

22. How much will you spend on the election? How much will be your own money?
How much time will you commit to the campaign?

Looking at previous contested elections, the winning candidates spent approximately \$11,000. I will spend some of my own money, but I am keeping that within the limits of my donors. I am seeking financial support from community members and organizations because I believe that a candidate must be in dialogue with stakeholders, and campaign contributions are one measure of the level of support. In terms of time, I'm expecting to spend 20-30 hours a week at a minimum.

23. Do you seek the support of PVFT? If yes, what form of support do you desire?

Yes. Financial support is always lovely, of course, but even more important will be PVFT members willing to canvass the community with me, and those members in my trustee area willing to show visual support with lawn signs.

Candidate Signature _____

J. Holm RN

Date 8/23/18