

**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: ***Kimberly De Serpa***

Home Address: ***Private Aptos***

Phone Numbers: ***689-0221/588-7388***

Email Address: ***kimdeserpa@hughes.net***

Occupation and Employer: ***Medical Social Worker- Dominican Hospital***

Work Address: ***1555 Soquel Dr. Santa Cruz 95065***

Phone Numbers: ***462-7859***

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Campaign Name: ***Friends of Kim De Serpa for PVUSD 2010***

Address _____

Campaign Manager: ***Gigi Kelbert*** Campaign Tres. ***Janie Shoemaker***

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 two children in the district, a 9 & 12 year old attending Valencia Elementary School and Aptos Jr. High School.

2.Explain what motivated you to seek office and what qualifications and experience you bring to the position?

I have served on Site Council, North Zone Council and attended board meetings. I have a desire to improve sites, so children and staff have a better quality educational experience. I have served as a Social Worker in the Monterey Bay area since 1994, with children, youth and families. I have helped countless families improve their quality of life, by using creative, out of the box thinking. I would like to use those same skills to apply to the challenges the PVUSD faces.

While at Valencia, I have helped to establish grants for a track, new playground equipment that children with disabilities can use, and technology among others things. I have helped to make a positive change in the site to assist the teachers which in turn directly benefits the children.

3.Explain the duties of a school board trustee:

The duties of a school board include working together as a group to ensure a fiscally sound budget. School boards supervise the Superintendent so that she/he may implement policies that improve the district. They also set goals and work together to oversee those goals, i.e. student achievement. School Board Trustees represent the district and as such should use decorum and treat others with respect. All trustees much follow the Brown Act.

4. Have you signed any pledges or made any promises to any group(s)? If so, what are these? Please list your endorsements:

No I have not signed any pledges. My endorsements are pending.

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

The top priorities for school funding would be funding directly to the sites in the way of teachers or support staff to reduce class size, provide support aides, office staff, janitorial, maintenance and operations. The district should not prioritize without stakeholders and parent participation. There is and has been a process for this and I would support this to continue, if more cuts were needed.

6. What is your understanding of the impact of “Race To The Top” on PVUSD students and teachers?

Race to the Top is essentially a non issue since it was not funded for the state of California. Although it would have brought more money into the district, the trade off would have been many strings and more mandates to teachers.

7. What is your understanding/opinion of the District’s English Language Master Plan?

I understand that the Master Plan was developed by 45 stakeholders, and is being rolled out in the district. It appears to be a way to standardize the way we teach and transition children who are acquiring English. Instead of different programs and methods being used, there is one program built with consensus of the stakeholders. We will be able to monitor and gage the progress of this program and look to the data to tell us if it is working successfully.

8. In light of the PVUSD’s program improvement status, what would you do to turn the situation around?

I would support using evidence & best based practices to implement change. I would highlight schools that are doing well, and emulate those practices at lower performing schools. We have a few schools currently in the district that are making good gains. I would advocate the continuing use of outcome data, to base our decisions and recommendations.

9. PVUSD’s drop out rate is higher than the state average. How should this be addressed?”

If this is true, I would try to build morale in staff, so that their spark for teaching and working with youth is reignited. When staff make a connection with youth, it often makes the difference between those kids who just give up, and those kids who because they had a mentor, stay in school.

I believe vocational education, sports, art and music also assist kids enjoying school so that they have a reason to stay in. School should be fun as well as educational.

I would also advocate looking into creating a virtual high school, so that youth that aren’t successful for a number of reasons, can still access school via an internet connection. This would keep the ADA in the district, and perhaps kids in school.

10. What is your position on school vouchers and charter schools?

I think charter schools can be a good fit for children and youth that aren't well served by the regular ed. I think they also help to spur competition, making other sites reach for excellence as they compete to keep those same children. Schools have the opportunity to take a look at their own curriculum & teaching methods and to make changes based on the great things that may be happening at a charter school. To some extent I think choice is good.

I'm not for vouchers.

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

Honoring the diversity of the student population will minimize cultural conflicts.

12. How can we recruit and retain experienced, competent staff given the high cost of living in our area?

First time home buyers programs, and lower interest rates can help. We can also offer competitive salaries, so that staff won't be lost over the hill or to neighboring districts that have higher pay scales. We have lost great numbers of senior staff to golden handshakes and retirements.

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

I will have an open door policy, and will try to be as transparent as possible. I will attend functions as necessary to gain their input. I will also make sure they are stakeholders and have access to committees on behalf of their members.

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

1. Student Achievement 2. Budget 3. Morale and Retention

15. Would you support moving from the three-zone administrative structure to a more traditional administrative structure? Explain:

I think we have already moved from this structure. I really miss it! I think the zones were great, to take the needs of each area to the district management for consideration. I felt the communication to the sites was more effective.

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

Our district can start by changing the school lunch program from fast food items every day to healthy real food items.

Our district can be sure that children have time in their day for recreation and PE. The school day is so rushed.

Our district can reinstate and ensure that our counselors continue in their positions when the funding comes back on board. They provide needed mental health services that can be billed for from the Federal Government, in addition to guidance counseling.

Our district can rehire janitorial staff and Maintenance and Operations staff so that our school sites are in good repair, keeping them safe and clean for the students.

17. What is your position on contracting out school services such as cafeteria, custodial, maintenance services, etc?

No out sourcing of these services!

18. Why do you seek the support of PVFT & CSEA? What form of support do you desire?

The endorsement of PVFT and CSEA are important because of the numbers of your membership. Teachers and staff are the core of any school, and I would be honored to have the endorsement from these important union associations.

19. How would your trustee work result in improved working conditions for CSEA and PVFT members?

I would support increases in pay as budget allows.

20. Given the fact that the state is in a budget deficit, what commitments can you make to protect health benefits?"

With health benefits increasing in cost up to 18% this year, we have to be careful about containing these costs. I would encourage members to participate in preventative medicine and wellness so that health care costs could be reduced. Perhaps programs for gym memberships, massage, yoga etc could be built into the policies as wellness incentives.

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

Pending

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

I would fund Adult Education to the extent necessary. First priority must be to the children and youth of this district until further funding can be established. I need to learn more about funding streams for Adult Ed.

Candidate Signature: *Kimberly De Serpa*

Date: 09/05/10