

DPS School Board Candidate Survey - February 2013

Response ID: 36 Data

1. Getting started - identification - demographics

Please provide the name of the person completing this survey:

First Name

Antwan

Last Name

Jefferson

Title

Instructor

Email Address

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2. State of Denver Public Schools

1. Denver Public Schools' reform efforts at present are not on pace to meet the needs of Denver's students.

2

2. DPS is moving in the right direction with the district's current leadership.

4

3. The district's interventions in low-performing schools and the development of more high-quality traditional and charter schools (e.g. Cory and McMeen Elementary Schools, STRIVE, Denver School of the Arts, Denver School of Science and Technology, etc.) are important strategies for improving the quality of Denver's public education system.

4

4. The reforms so far are too few and moving far too slowly if we expect students now entering kindergarten to leave elementary school at grade level and prepared for middle and high school.

2

5. I support the turnaround plan in the far northeast Denver neighborhood that includes the phasing out of the old Montbello High, Rachel Noel Middle, and several elementary schools, and the opening of several new smaller schools.

2

6. I support the modified consent decree, the revised plan to serve the district's ELL students, that was recently agreed to by the Congress of Hispanic Educators, DPS, and the U.S. Department of Justice, and if appointed I will support the full implementation of the plan.

4

3. Teaching and Learning

7. In determining teacher employment, performance, and pay, student achievement (growth, test scores, college and career preparation) should play a significant factor (roughly 50%)

2

8. Denver teacher performance ratings as measured by growth and impact on student learning should be available to the public. This information might include the average growth scores for teachers in grades 3-10, or AP test pass rates for a high school teacher.

4

9. DPS should recruit and retain the best teachers whether they come from CU Boulder, Metro State, The New Teacher Project, Teach for America, or other comparable programs.

3

10. Teacher pay should be based primarily upon years of experience and educational attainment.

4

4. School Choice

11. Turnaround interventions for struggling schools as well as the creation/establishment of charters and other new schools are BOTH important strategies to improving student success.

4

12. Denver charter schools should receive bond and mill levy funding equal to other public schools (including funding for facilities).

4

13. DPS should welcome and assist high-quality charter developers with resources (e.g. community investment funds and facilities) when they seek to locate in neighborhoods where academic performance is low. This should include allowing high-quality charters to operate in one of the district's recently closed facilities, or to co-locate in one of its underutilized facilities. Such new options deserve support even if it means nearby schools might lose enrollment.

2

14. DPS should actively support school choice for Denver families, giving them the opportunity to choose the best schools for their children.

4

5. Accountability and interventions for failing schools

15. I support district and state level accountability measures that require schools to show academic growth.

4

16. Schools rated Accredited on Priority Watch or Accredited on Probation should receive additional funds and flexibility for TWO years to help foster progress; by then, if there is no substantial progress, dramatic intervention is appropriate.

3

17. Schools rated Accredited on Priority Watch or Accredited on Probation should receive additional funds and flexibility for FOUR to SIX years to help foster progress.

3

18. After a school has been rated either Accredited on Priority Watch or Accredited on Probation for three years in a row, I support a replacement strategy that might include a phase-out and/or a restart with a new operator and/or model.

3

19. DPS should support high-quality public schools (as determined by Denver's School Performance Framework) in

every neighborhood, regardless of whether the school is managed by DPS or is a public charter school.

2

6. School Finance

20. DPS must have more funding, but the most critical funding issue for K-12 public schools in Denver is to find a way for funds to go directly to schools.

4

21. The DPS school finance system needs to be redesigned so that 70% or more of funding follows students to their school of choice, or to programs based upon their needs. Funding should also be weighted to particular needs such as poverty.

3

22. DPS education spending should be more transparent and have "return on investment" measures so that parents and voters have a clearer understanding of where taxpayer money is spent and what brings the biggest return on public education investments.

2

23. Innovation schools should have control over nearly all of their finances and be able to choose the programs and professional development that meet the needs of their students.

2

24. Innovation schools, like charter schools, should be accountable for results, and their innovation status should continue only if they demonstrate good progress.

2

7. School Governance

25. Check the position below—of the four options—that most closely reflects your own.

8. Priorities for Improving Student Achievement

26.

What do you believe are most important for DPS to raise student achievement? Rate in order of importance, with one being the highest; two, the second highest, etc.

1. community involvement
2. quality teachers
3. quality principals
4. quality curriculum meeting high standards
5. effective ELL programs
6. effective literacy and math programs
7. district support for principals and teachers
8. district ensuring schools are accountable for performance

9. Priorities for K-12 education in our city

27. Rate in order of importance

1. Ensure that the high school degree is aligned with college readiness
2. Reduce class size

3. Increase K-12 funding
4. Provide better support for Denver's teachers
5. Reward and hold educators responsible for student results
6. Increase the level of accountability and intervention for low-performing schools
7. Reform/revise pension system so that it is sustainable into the future
8. Change school finance formula and law

28. What do you believe is the most important role a school board member should play in ensuring all students in Denver's Public Schools receive the education they need and deserve?

Become familiar with (and responsive to) the needs of "all students" by soliciting the input of the families and communities of students in addition to the "needs" indicated through traditional school measures.

Short bio - In 100 words or less, please provide some key information about yourself you wish voters to know. Our final report will include this brief bio that you provide. If you would like to email us a photo, we will do our best to include that in the report with your bio. Thank you.

Antwan is an educator interested in supporting the education of all students by challenging the practices that do harm to students, their families, and their communities. He is a critic of schooling and a champion of education, supporting high quality, neighborhood schools that are responsive to the communities they serve, including experienced teachers, equitable funding structures, mutual accountability practices (district, schools, families, students), adequate resources, and on-going educator and community development. He feels capable of supporting these efforts through educator training, community engagement, and participating on the Denver Public Schools Board of Education.

Antwan is the husband of one wife, owner of one home, parent of two children, and driver of a 12-year old car.

If you have children who do or who did attend schools in the Denver metro area, please list those schools.

Soar - GVR

We welcome any comments or questions you have about this survey:

I have read the comments from previous board members (2012 report) indicating the significant limitations of this Likert style survey. In the case of this survey, those limitations emerge substantially in compounded questions, such as "Innovation schools, like charter schools, should be accountable for results, and their innovation status should continue only if they demonstrate good progress." It is preferable to develop a survey that allows the actual voice of the candidates to emerge, as this survey device prohibits such substantial input, although that is the presumable intent of the instrument.

Please check "yes" if you like to be notified when our report is published and available on our website.

Yes

10. Thank You!

Send email

Feb 05, 2013 01:47:24 Success: Email Sent to: antwan.jefferson@ucdenver.edu

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