

Questionnaire To Be Filled Out By District 300 Board of Education Candidates

This questionnaire is meant to gather information relevant to the voters of District 300 in choosing Board of Education members in the upcoming election (April 17, 2007). Each answered questionnaire will be posted on our website, advance300.org no later than March 17, 2007. If you are submitting your answers via hardcopy, either type your answers or write neatly and in black ink. We will also post a copy of this questionnaire on our website. If you would rather answer electronically, go to our website at: www.advance300.org/GetEducated_BOEQuestions.html.

A questionnaire has been sent to you and each of the other candidates via certified mail, hand delivery or via e-mail, if an e-mail address is available. **Responses are due no later than March 16, 2007.** No responses will be accepted after that date in fairness to candidates that answer by the March 16th deadline. Responses may be mailed to: **Advance 300 at 2303 Randall Rd., #146, Carpentersville, IL 60110-3448.** Or submitted via e-mail at advance300yes@yahoo.com.

Advance 300 will not endorse any particular candidate. A blank questionnaire with the candidate's name on it will be posted for any candidate who does not respond by March 16, 2007. This will be done simply to notify the public that the candidate was given the opportunity to respond but chose not to.

While we will post each candidate's answers as they come to us, we reserve the right to reject responses that contain profanity or other offensive language.

1) Name: Dennis Cleveland

Address: 7 E. Lincoln Ave., East Dundee, IL 60118

Township/County of Residence: Dundee/Kane

Date of Birth: March 12, 1948

Years living in District 300: 34 years

2) Have you had or do you currently have school-age children or grandchildren?

If yes, please check the type of schooling that your children receive(d):

Public School in District 300

Private School in District 300

Public School outside of District 300

Private School outside District 300

I home school my children

Other (please explain)

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- 3) With regard to question #2, please explain why you chose the venue of education for your children that you did.

With all due respect for private schools in the area, it was my belief, and my wife concurred, that the District 300 schools provided the best educational opportunities in the area for our children. We were not disappointed during the course of our children's public school education.

- 4) Please describe your educational background from elementary school through post-graduate work, if any. Please include the dates of attendance and date diploma or degree, if any, that was conferred.

Big Rock Elementary, Big Rock, IL K-8

Genoa-Kingston H.S. 1966

Northern Illinois University - BS.ed 1971

Concordia University, River Forest - MA 1985

- 5) What, if anything, about your educational background do you believe makes you a good candidate for the Board of Education?

My educational background is in education. With the exception of my master's degree, I've always attended public schools. My bachelor's degree is in education with a major in History and a minor in English. My master's degree is in Curriculum and Instruction.

- 6) Please list your employment history for the last ten (10) years. Please include what positions you currently hold and have held with each employer and what responsibilities that position entailed.

Ten years ago I was the Modular Technology instructor at Dundee Middle School, CUSD

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300. My responsibilities included maintaining a modular technology lab and facilitating modular technology instruction for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at Dundee Middle School. From 1998 – 2005 I was on special assignment in District 300 as President of LEAD 300. Responsibilities included but were not limited to bargaining, representation, curriculum work, quality review, professional development, communication with legislators, insurance issues, feasibility studies, and evaluation process revision. I have been retired since June of 2005.

- 7) What about your employment background, if anything, do you believe makes you a good candidate for the Board of Education?

As a career educator, I would bring to the board experience and expertise in the areas of curriculum, instruction, technology, school improvement, collective bargaining, lobbying, quality review, best practice, evaluation, professional development, and District 300 history. My years as an educator, parent, and observer of the workings of the Board of Education also give me a familiarity with school finance and the types of decisions that have to be made in the best interest of the schools of the community.

- 8) Why are you running for a Board position?

Seven member Boards of Education permit communities to have the opportunity for diversity of expertise and experience in the governance of public schools. In addition to the other voices, there needs to be a voice on the board that speaks from experience in education. From a representational point of view, there also needs to be a voice that while mindful of the needs of all of the communities of District 300, can relate to and represent the needs of the Dundees and east Carpentersville.

- 9) What is your understanding of the time commitment required of a Board of Education member? How much time are you able to commit to your position as a Board member on a weekly basis?

Having attended hundreds of school board meetings, study sessions, committee meetings, and hearings over the years, I am fully aware of the time commitment. Now as a retiree, I am prepared to devote whatever time is required to fulfill my duties as a school board

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member.

- 10) Please list at least three positive things about District 300. In other words, what is working? Be as specific as possible and provide sources for any factual information that you rely on in forming your opinions.

We are beginning to see positive results from the actions taken based of the recommendations of the curriculum audit that was conducted in 2003.

School facilities in District 300 are in the best condition ever and thanks to the support of the community through the recent referendum, we can continue to maintain, expand, and improve upon them. Our children deserve nothing less than clean, safe, appropriate learning environments.

The financial condition of the district is improving through sound management practices, the ability to borrow from ourselves with the referendum-fortified Working Cash fund, and the recently approved increase in the Education Fund rate.

- 11) Please list those things that you would change about the District and why. Please be specific and provide sources for any factual information that you rely on in forming your opinions.

The manner in which we fund education in District 300 and other school districts in Illinois is in need of reform. The over-reliance on property tax does not reflect a basic consideration of taxation and that is the ability to pay. I am in favor of the A+ Illinois platform of education funding reform, which can be accessed at www.aplusillinois.org

The education of a child is a cooperative effort. It requires the efforts of teaching professionals, education service professionals, and administrators. To that end, I would like to see a better working relationship between administration and employee groups throughout the district.

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- 12) Have you volunteered to work with District 300 in the past? If so, please list your volunteer activities including the nature of your work and the dates that the volunteer work was performed and where.

Dundee Middle School SIP team – Inception to 2000 - assisted in deployment of middle school philosophy, participated in development of DMS Mission Statement and Goals. Chaired DMS SIP Technology Committee.

Member of the District 300 Year Round School Study Committee and chair of a subcommittee – 1999

Member of the District 300 Boundary Committee – 2000

Member of Facility Advisory Committee for Education (FACE) Steering Committee

Presented for the Connect 300 Committee

- 13) Please name three things that you would do to improve the education of the children of District 300 and explain, in detail, how your proposed improvements would be implemented.

It is assumed that these suggestions for improvement could be implemented with existing financial resources, reallocated resources, or creative means of funding.

Expand summer school opportunities – Having educational facilities vacant for 2 ½ months and students, particularly at the high school level, disengaged from productive activity doesn't make sense. Additional summer school opportunities could enable some students who desire to do so to graduate in 3 – 3 ½ years and others, who experience difficulties, to graduate on time.

Full day Kindergarten – The research indicates that children benefit academically and socially when they participate in full day Kindergarten. Initially, I would favor giving parents a choice on whether their child would attend full or half days.

Expand Pre-K program – The success of the deLacey Early Childhood Center as well as the growth west of the river makes it seem likely that it is time to beginning looking at establishing a second early childhood education program. Perhaps a grant could be obtained to fund a need assessment and feasibility study.

- 14) What, in your opinion, is the function of the Board of Education?

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The function of the Board of Education is to see that the Administration's conduct of the operations of the school district, under the direction of the superintendent, is in accordance with the District 300 Community's requirements and Board Policy, as well as state and federal code.

15) What is the single most important duty of a member of the Board of Education?

A member of the Board of Education must remember that the mission of the District is that "District 300's students will reach their potential as self-directed learners and responsible citizens". Any goals set, any directions taken, any decisions made, must be mindful of this mission.

16) Are you a supporter of public education? If yes, why? If not, why not?

Yes. I am a product of great American public schools as are my children. I am a career public school educator as is my wife. I believe that the American dream begins in our public schools and that they produce a responsible productive citizenry that enables our democracy to endure.

17) Are you a supporter of District 300? If yes, why? If not, why not?

Yes. Supporting a community's public schools is making an investment in the community's future. I have a record of support for District 300 both professionally and as a resident of the district that spans over three decades. Whether it has been overcrowded schools, boundary issues, financial issues, or any other problem facing the district, I have supported District 300 in finding the best possible solution possible.

18) Please set forth what, if anything, sets you apart from the other candidates running for the Board and that you feel is a good reason for the residents of District 300 to vote for you.

I am the only candidate who is a career educator. In its capacity in providing governance for the school district, the Board must make a wide variety of decisions. Some of them

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are of a business/financial nature; many of them are of an educational nature. Given the complexity of some of the educational issues facing school boards today, the presence of a career educator would be, in my opinion, a welcome addition to the collective wisdom of the seven member board.

As a candidate who resides in East Dundee and the only candidate who resides east of the river, my election would mean that a substantial portion of the district, the Dundees and east Carpentersville, would have representation on the board. Whether it is based in fact or not, there is a feeling in areas east of the river that the board has not always been responsive to east side concerns.