

GREAT CHOICE DOUGLAS COUNTY ACTION, INC.
DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE SURVEY

Meghann Silverthorn, District G
27 September 2013

1. What about you will make you a good school board member?

I am focused on ensuring that our education system is about educating children. Systems, interest groups, and other entities are not what education is about. The district has become a true partner for families in ensuring that children can receive the education that is right for them. I have established a history of working with individuals of all backgrounds and viewpoints, and will continue to do so for as long as I am on the Board of Education.

2. What is your history of attendance at school board meetings?

Excellent; I have missed very few meetings during my tenure.

3. What other school and district committees have you been involved with?

I am the Board liaison to the District Accountability Committee and the Student Advisory Group.

4. Have you regularly voted in past school board elections?

I have voted in local school board elections since moving to Douglas County.

5. What is your position on the district's Blueprint for Choice?

I support it.

6. What is your position on charter schools?

I support charters and all of the ways the district goes above and beyond the requirements of state law to treat charters as true partners. The district has done things including but not limited to equalizing mill levy funding for charters, included them in local ballot questions, provided incentives for charters to locate at places advantageous to the district, and provided services at cost to charters (instead of using the statutorily permissible formula).

7. Do you believe charter schools have a fiscal effect on neighborhood schools and if so, what is that effect?

That would require the assumption of a zero-sum game, meaning that any student that attends a new charter must have left the neighborhood school, causing a gain to one and a loss to the other. Neighborhood schools may see a net decline of students in an area where new charters open. However, this may be ameliorated by effects such as a decrease in class sizes, relief in overcrowding, and/or gain in economies of scale.

8. What is your position on the Choice Scholarship Program?

I support this public-private partnership to provide another avenue for the delivery of education to children.

9. If implemented, do you believe the Choice Scholarship Program would have an effect on district schools and if so, what would be the effect?

It would permit us to keep students who would otherwise leave the district to attend private schools who are also partners. The district would benefit from funding received for these children.

10. If you do not support the Choice Scholarship Program, would you seek to end it, if elected?

N/A

11. What is your position concerning the local teachers union and its value to teachers and students in the classroom?

Teachers may choose to join any organization they believe is of value to them. The district, under Colorado law, may choose to recognize and bargain with any entity it chooses. Such a relationship, in my opinion, should be beneficial to taxpayers, teachers, and the local community. Since any union is a labor union, as an organization, it is by definition solely concerned with its members and promoting their employment interests.

12. What is your position on the district's pay for performance and market-based pay programs for teachers?

The district's previous pay for performance plan was not a true PFP plan; rather, it was an extra payment for producing a portfolio of one's work. Nor was it consistently funded. The current PFP plan is based on evaluations created by teachers and designed to maximize teacher quality. Market-

based pay has helped to attract hard-to-fill positions at the highest rate ever.

13. What is your position on the district's teacher evaluation program?

I believe that the current evaluation program is an essential part of a focus on teacher quality. I want to put the best teacher in front of every classroom. In DCSD we are fortunate that teachers have told us how to find those among their profession who are the best.

14. What organizations have endorsed you in this race?

I am aware that the Douglas County Republican Party has endorsed me but I did not solicit or interview for this endorsement.

15. Is there anything else our supporters should know about you?

They should feel free to contact me at any time with questions, ideas or concerns.