

vestments. Throughout this process, transparent and collaborative communication with the community is critical. We must retain our current top teaching talent, while attracting a pipeline of new talent required to meet growing demand. Part of this is ensuring we

are compensating our teaching professionals competitively (currently we are significantly behind D-20 and Douglas County), and part of this is also ensuring our schools are safe, positive environments so our teachers can focus on teaching.

Sherri Hawkins

Accommodating growth will be a challenge during the coming years. Before we make any changes, we need to ensure we are maximizing the utilization of all our space. This will necessitate analyzing boundaries, grade configurations and current building usage. We are working with RTA (a demographic consultancy that works with school districts) and the Long Range Facilities Planning Group (composed of parents, community members, teachers, and administrators) to look at options. They have been analyzing possible options for almost a year and I will look to their expertise and recommendations for guidance. From their initial reports, it appears we will need additional capacity and the lead time for any new building is about two years. A new building means a bond because like families, the district must borrow money to buy a building. I will work with the community to explain the growth and its implications for our schools. I'm sensitive to the implications for taxpayers as we look for solutions to the growth. I hope I can help unite the district, parents, stakeholder, and taxpayers behind the tough decisions we will need to make as community in order to continue the excellence and maintain strong property values.

Christopher Taylor

No response was received from this candidate.

Tiffiney Upchurch

Learning and achievement is our district's highest priority, followed by stakeholder engagement, and long-range planning. Our district is in a unique position that allows us time to be strategic and collaborative in investigating multiple options and perspectives to address long-term growth. RTA is doing a thorough job of giving us an outlook of pros, cons, strengths, and weaknesses as part of a forward-looking solution. Parents and educators in our district recognize the need to address our growth, need for more teachers, and the need for education space. We should continue to listen, explore, and consider multiple ideas and solutions in collaboration with professionals, parents, and educators so as to find the most viable and innovative solutions to ensure our students are learning in a healthy environment that our community of stakeholders can positively support. One example of a solution in the short term could include centralizing our preschools to better serve our Child Find children while freeing up classroom space in individual buildings. We should also be engaged in collaboration with contractors, civil engineers, developers, and the county/town to understand impact to infrastructure as we continue to grow.

Question: How would you balance the need to provide a quality education to our students while recognizing the local taxpayer burden? What are your thoughts for the current district budget?

Thomas De Angelis

D-38 is our community's largest investment. High-performing schools directly correlate to higher property values, and a house is an individual's largest personal investment and long-term wealth creator. It is in our taxpayer interest to ensure the best possible schools. However, more money does not beget better school outcomes – only proper investment ensures better outcomes. We experienced a significant shift in funding sources over the years, moving from being split 50/50 between state and local to now being 70 percent state/30 percent local. The Tri-Lakes area is rapidly growing in families and students. Should we pursue a MLO [OCN clarification: a mill levy override tax increase], we should consider a specific MLO tied to measurable outcomes before renewal, include a sunset clause, and/or a specific, limited MLO for capital expenditures such as clearing our building maintenance backlog. Any MLO should include sup-

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