

Date: March 28, 2019

Name: Devlin, Pamela L.

Business Address:

Home Address:

Voter Information: I am a registered voter at this address.

E-mail:

Occupation and Employer: Santa Rosa City Schools educator for 31 years; I retired in 2011

Number of Years Residing in Trustee Area 3 of the District: 33 years

Children in the District's schools: Yes – three children in the past (Burbank Elementary School; Steele Lane Elementary School; Santa Rosa Junior High School; Santa Rosa High School; Comstock Junior High School; Piner High School; Proctor Terrace Elementary School; Slater Middle School; Montgomery High School) and two grandchildren currently (Hidden Valley Elementary School; Santa Rosa Accelerated Charter School; Rincon Valley Middle School)

1. Why do you want to be a school board member?

Albert Einstein once acknowledged: "Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile."

Having devoted most of my adult life to the field of education... and to nurturing learners - young and old alike - in a variety of settings, the desire to continue in this work remains a driving force.

Because of my son's work schedule, I watch two of my grandchildren five days a week after school and all day during the work week in the summer; in addition, they stay overnight at our home two to three nights a week. This has certainly curtailed the travelling I expected to do with my husband in my retirement (as has rescuing a dog six years ago!); both have put some restrictions on avocational pursuits. As a result, I have much more "free time" to explore ways of being actively engaged in life, and serving as a school board member would be one such way.

I have a unique depth and breadth of experience (as outlined below and in the attached resume) to offer as a school board member in the year and half remaining in the term for which I am applying. My learning curve in the position would not be as steep - as is the case for many elected to the Board, since I am very familiar with myriad facets of the SRCS District: the schools within; staff roles and the responsibilities associated with them; Board policies and administrative regulations; college and university admissions, including "a-g" requirements...

If selected in this process, I would be able to view the work of the District personally with a different lens than any of my prior experiences have allowed. This new venue would allow me to continue my pursuit of life long learning. Serving on the SRCS' Board of Education might be the capstone to my work as an educator.

2. What do you see as the basic purpose of the public schools?

The word "educate" comes from the Latin root *educere*, or "to lead out." I think this meaning should be the central principal of any educational endeavor.

Since EVERY student must be seen as the north star of a public school, it is essential EVERY one be "led" to fulfill her/his full academic, social and personal potential. This, in turn, will help manifest for each a versatile, gratifying life... both in school and beyond. Santa Rosa City Schools' (SRCS) Board Policy 6000 actually references this obligation for all who work within its system.

But EVERY student also must be "led" to embrace the following ideals: to find a vocation that is meaningful; to commit to the public good for all people; to become an engaged, informed and discerning democratic citizen; to honor diversity. These values are not separate from fulfilling one's full potential rather they are embedded in that complete process of student "becoming" from kindergarten to twelfth grade.

3. What is the role of the school board in the fulfillment of that purpose?

The role of the school board is to advocate for the fulfillment of the aforementioned integrated purpose(s) while engaging with all interested stakeholders – students, staff, parents, community members...

Such advocacy includes but is not limited to establishing a vision, developing policy, approving key staff, ensuring accountability, making wise financial choices, highlighting equity, seeking divergent viewpoints, and being visible in the schools as well as the community.

4. Briefly describe your commitment to public education and our local school district.

For thirty-one years in the Santa Rosa City School District, I was employed as an educator.

During that time I taught at Comstock Junior High School, Piner High School, Santa Rosa Junior High School, Santa Rosa High School and Maria Carrillo High School; I facilitated learning at every grade seven through twelve and in a full spectrum of English courses from *English As a Second Language* to *Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition*. In addition, I was a teacher for numerous English electives, such as *Reading for Pleasure* and *Drama*, as well as for two *Film Study* and *Advanced Film Study* in the Fine Arts department. Other roles I had during this time include acting as English Department Chair at several sites and serving as the founding Data Coach at MCHS (a position I designed and which remains in place today.)

I also was selected as both a site and District administrator, serving as Assistant Principal at Comstock Junior High; Assistant Principal at Montgomery High School; founding Vice Principal at Elsie Allen High School; founding Principal at Maria Carrillo High School; Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction 7-12.

My tenure as either a teacher and/or an administrator included work at each of the five comprehensive high schools and at two of the five middle (junior) high schools.

While employed with the SRCS District, I also taught in the Education Department at Sonoma State University. I also served as the co-director of the North Bay Writing Project as well as the regional acting director of California Literature Project; I provided professional development throughout the state for these two organizations. In addition, I served as the Lead Trainer in the North Bay region for the California State University's *Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum* (ERWC).

I retired from SRCS District in 2011, but for the last two years I have been employed as an instructor for the following three courses at the Sonoma County Office of Education's "Be A Teacher" Intern Program for the North Coast School of Education: *CURR 114: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment*; *CURR 245: Content Area Pedagogy*; *CURR 201: Introduction to edTPA*.) This has allowed me to stay current in my field, to work collaboratively with stellar educators and to continue to work with those entering the profession (as I have done in the past, serving as both a mentor teacher and a master teacher.)

To better illustrate my educational career, the attached resume highlights other endeavors with which I have been involved.

5. What do you see as the strengths of the school district?

As a former employee, as a parent/grandparent and as a community member, I see the teaching staff at each site as the greatest strength of the SRCS District. Their exemplary work with students within classrooms is the most essential work of the enterprise; most do this with a commendable dedication to the demands of teaching and to staying current in their craft.

Supporting teachers in this work are dedicated classified staff; they, too, are assets of the SRCS District. At every site with which I have been involved, their unfailing willingness to help students and adults alike was always appreciated.

Site and district administrators also are committed to serving students well. One who especially stands out is Superintendent Diann Kitamura; I admire her greatly. Her leadership has been inspirational to many and is very much a strong point of the District. What is especially notable is her pledge to minimize the achievement gap and the work she has initiated to make this a reality. Also the outreach she has fostered to engage parents, who traditionally have not been involved in schools, reinforces that their voices are welcomed, necessary and valued. Recently I shared with her that I wished I had had the opportunity to work for her. Her many admirable qualities - as a visionary, an advocate for the underrepresented, an attentive listener, a direct speaker, who lets you know her stance; a visible presence in the community, a person of integrity, a woman with a sense of fun and humor - make her the finest superintendent I have known in my almost five decades living in Santa Rosa.

6. What do you see as the area(s) most needing improvement in the school district?

Since I cited teachers as the greatest strength, I think it is paramount that attracting and retaining them must be a high priority for the District. Diversifying the teaching staff in this process is also of great importance; the diversity found within the SRCS student population requires that the teaching staff is reflective of this variety so that all students see the rich composition of the Santa Rosa community.

And although much has been done regarding equity in the last several years, much remains to be addressed, especially with regard to a richly diverse and culturally responsive curriculum - at *every* grade level and in *all* subject areas. Even though each of the California Subject Matter Standards includes references to an inclusionary curriculum, professional development (PD) is key in assuring that teaching and learning occurs with it at its core. Training in the practice of differentiation must also become part of PD; this is especially necessary to assist high school students who are struggling in "a-g" required courses. Additionally, more support systems need to be in place - at each elementary, middle and high school - to insure student success with increased rigor in the curriculum.

The needs of accelerated learners, too, must become a priority; they too have special needs that that Board Policy 6172 recognizes. Some support and PD has been offered at the elementary level for these learners, but I do not know of little at the secondary level. I remain very much concerned about the potential elimination in two years of an accelerated science course for District ninth graders. Open access for students interested in challenging themselves in higher-level courses should be established as a District expectation.

Communication is always challenging to do well. And while there have been improvements in this area in recent years, informing and engaging stakeholders must continue to be a priority and thus greatly enhanced.

7. Do you have prior experience serving on a governing board, specifically a school district board? Please list such prior experience.

I have served on a number of Advisory Boards in the past, but have not had the opportunity to serve on a governing board of any kind.

8. Have you worked on any school committees or participated in any school activities recently? Please list them.

- Classroom and school volunteer (every grade K-4 for both of my aforementioned grandchildren) at Hidden Valley Elementary School 2010-2016
- Community member on Santa Rosa Accelerated Charter School's Advisory Council 2015-2018 (and I also helped revise and edit the SRACS' application for Blue Ribbon Distinguished School recognition, which was awarded to the school several years ago)
- School volunteer at Santa Rosa Accelerated Charter School 2015-2018 (e.g., I have graded English papers weekly from 2015 to present)
- Community member on *SRCS English Instructional Materials Adoption Committee* 2017
- Community member on the *SRCS Ethnic Studies Subcommittee* 2019
- For the past nine years I have attended multiple activities of my aforementioned grandchildren (e.g., music performances, fundraisers, athletic competitions, classroom exhibitions, etc.)

9. Describe any other community, business or faith-based activities in which you have participated, describe your role, and whether your work was volunteer or employment-related.

- Santa Rosas Teachers' Association: Secretary (volunteer)
- *Leadership Santa Rosa*, Class XIV: member (volunteer)
- Sonoma State University *President's Advisory Board*: Board member (volunteer)
- *Tomorrow's Leaders Today* Advisory Board: Board member (volunteer)
- *Schools Plus* Advisory Board: Board member (volunteer)
- *Listening for A Change* Advisory: Board member and also chair (volunteer 2015-2019)
- Girl Scouts: Co-leader (volunteer 2010-2016)
- Boy Scouts: Cub Scout Den leader (volunteer 2012-2015)
- Boy Scouts: Boy Scout (volunteer 2017-2019)
- Maria Carrillo High School's *California Scholarship Federation* consultant (volunteer 2015-2019)

In closing, I would like to share a favorite quote about education. Harry Edwards, American sociologist and civil rights activist, believes that "education takes place through the collaboration of the school, the home, the community and the receptive mind." I believe it is the charge of a school board member to help make this statement a reality.