



**SaveGirdValley.com**  
**CANDIDATES QUESTIONNAIRE**  
September 5, 2018

**Questions for Candidates for the Bonsall Unified School District's  
2018 November Election**

Good Day, Candidate!

Thank you for choosing to run for office. We appreciate your commitment and would like to know more about you!

We are seeking candidates with the following qualities:

- “The ability to work well with a team and support group decisions, along with an understanding that the board sets a climate for the entire district;
- A desire to work toward a stronger relationship between the district and the public it serves;
- A keen eye toward serving the needs of all students, regardless of abilities or backgrounds;
- A professional, poised demeanor and respectful behavior;
- Respect for diverse points of view;
- Commitment to the time and energy required each week for meetings, phone calls, conversations, visits to schools, and professional development seminars and workshops;
- Knowledge about district policies, guidelines, needs, challenges and strengths.

“At the heart of it all, members of a district’s board of education must believe, unequivocally, in the value of public education. They must be dedicated to serving and teaching all children. They must believe in the democratic process and understand that their role is to act strategically, in line with the interests of the entire school community.”

[Source: [www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/school-board-candidates/](http://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/school-board-candidates/)]

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Please take the time to complete this Candidates Questionnaire. You have unlimited space, can add documents, refer us to your website or URLs. Answer them all or skip questions.

Please confirm receipt and return to [SaveGirdValley@gmail.com](mailto:SaveGirdValley@gmail.com) by 5 PM September 14, 2018.  
Thank you!

## Candidates Questionnaire

**Please tell us about yourself:**

Do you live within Bonsall Unified School District (BUSD)? Since what year?

**Yes, I live in the same house I've lived in since 1982.**

Have you ever run for public office? What was the result?

**Yes, I have run and been elected six times for the BUSD trustee position. I also ran for State Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1970 but was not elected.**

Are you and your family active in community organizations? Which ones?

**I have been active in the Methodist Church for many years. Throughout my career I've been active in various professional organizations.**

Do you have the time to devote to school Board work, estimated to be at least 10 hours a week and often more?

**Absolutely, yes. I spend far more than 10 hours a week. I make sure I have the information I need to make informed decisions for the kids.**

Some Board Members sometimes show up to meetings unprepared. Do you commit to being prepared for meetings?

**Absolutely, yes. Often when trustees are elected they hire a superintendent, sit back, and accept the information given to them by the superintendent and staff as the only information necessary to make their decisions. If the information given is incomplete or biased, the decisions may not be the best for district. I have found it extremely difficult to get information that helps me to make fully informed decisions. I believe the board should have more sources of information.**

Have you prepared yourself by attending school meetings, workshops, reading budgets and audits?

**Yes, definitely. I have missed very few board meetings during my tenure.**

How many Bonsall School Board meetings have you attended in the last year? Did you stay for the entire meeting(s)?

**I am absolutely on time and stay for the full meeting. I attend virtually every meeting.**

What motivated you to run this year?

**There are so many things that are unfinished. For instance, when we build a high school, we have to make certain that it meets the needs of the students in our community. I want all our graduates from Sullivan choosing our high school because it's the best place. I want our high school to be a success. One of the guiding principles for the structures must be flexibility; they must be built to meet current needs as well as future needs of the district. We have big issues, financial, facilities, academic, and transportation. They are ongoing and pretty deep. I believe I have the experience and background to continue to serve the Bonsall community.**

Tell us about your financial acumen:

Are you comfortable reading financial statements and budgets, creating conservative fiscal projections?

**Absolutely. I have an academic and experiential background. I have accounting in my undergraduate background, in my experience as a Dean at a major university, and as the president of a condo and other community associations. These are a good set of experiences. Plus, I've always loved math. One of my majors was business. (I had two majors and two minors.) Plus, I have my business, my farm, 24 acres where we raise avocados and flowers. I've had considerable experience in budget building and budget management.**

BUSD has been deficit spending for over seven years. Its reserves are hovering around the legal limit and it has to borrow millions of dollars short term each fall to cover operating expenses and payroll. What is meant by "legal limit"? What were BUSD's reserves before unification? How much did BUSD's Board approve as a short-term loan in the Fall of 2018?

**As far as reserves, when we borrow, and we're talking about borrowing to make payroll. We should not be borrowing money to make payroll. We borrow money every fall from the County for payroll; this is future tax money. As far as reserves, both Dick Olson and I have been yelling about that for years. It's very difficult to get this fixed. Until recently, the district has carried 5 or 6 % reserve, and we need to get there again.**

The District is financially challenged. How do you plan to set BUSD on the correct fiscal course? Please be specific. For example, to bring more students into the District, do you support high density development like Lilac Hills Ranch? Do you support limiting Board Member medical benefits? Was it excessive for BUSD to pay its Superintendent more than the Governor of California received in 2016?

**From the time I have been on the Board I've asked for a deferred maintenance schedule and fought for reserves. I fought to keep the \$2 million received from Fallbrook (when we unified) in a special fund, but a great portion of that has been spent. We need to pay more attention.**

**The budgeting process does not seem to be working properly. We need to spend more time reviewing how we spend our money. Bringing in more students will bring in more income; however, this year we have a decline in enrollment.**

**We have very little control over the high-density corridor in our district. Projecting the building rates and times are difficult. Therefore, planning for future students in not easy.**

**We should look at every facet of the budget and not one place should be immune from being examined. We have spent an enormous amount on the new tech model (high school). The classrooms should be the most protected.**

What do you think about the financial challenges related to the high percentage of disabled students attending BUSD, substantially higher than the national average?

**We are mandated by law to take care of our special education students. We have a very good special-education program currently; we will continue to provide our special-education students with the best services that we can.**

In August, BUSD's Board approved 11 of its administrators attending a \$16k two-day, three-night cutting edge teaching conference in Long Beach. The conference is to be hold on school days in September, just a few weeks after the new school year begins. The administrators will teach the teachers how to cover their administrative duties including how to address emergency situations (wildfire and other threats). The Superintendent promises to teach the teachers what he learned at the teaching conference, delivering a 10% improvement in student scores in two years. Included in the cost is \$2,000 for mileage and parking for 11 cars, one for each attendee. What is your position on having administrators, who do not teach, attending teaching conferences? Do you support hotel room sharing and carpooling to such events? Do you support/oppose BUSD paying for bar bills at such conferences? As a Board Member, would you have asked for proof to substantiate the claim that a two-day conference will deliver a 10% improvement in student scores?

**When the issue came up, I asked a considerable number of questions. In all my administrative experience, I would never have taken all the administrators at one time. The first issue I raised was the safety issue. We were assured this would be taken care of. Then I raised the budget issue. In my view, we cannot afford to have that kind of travel.**

**In my experience over many decades, I have not found that a top-down program works. The people who have to carry it out have to be involved. I found that the teachers had no knowledge of this trip until they came to the meeting.**

**It seems ill-timed. I voted for it only if they would come back with a safety plan. These plans were already made and came to the Board to be ratified.**

**There is a difference between approval and ratifying. That is an issue. So much comes to the Board to be ratified rather than approved; therefore the Board is not functioning in the**

**way that it should. The Board should approve. The Board should not be ratifying these things.**

Since transportation is the second largest school expense, after payroll/benefits, do you believe the sharing economy can deliver cost reductions? Other thoughts?

**Can the sharing economy deliver cost reductions? Absolutely. It would be important for traffic. Carpooling and staggered starts are options. We have to reduce the number of people at the same place at the same time. We have to think creatively, including carpooling.**

**Transportation has been on the Agenda every year since I've been on the Board. We have several issues. Because we are a rural district, we end up talking about safety and cost. Can we continue to fund transportation? We increase charges but there is no way to reduce the charges for Special Ed. We are obligated to continue transportation for Special Ed.**

Any thoughts on online learning and its current and future impact on brick and mortar learning centers such as BUSD?

**Digital learning is part of the scene and will become an increasing part of the scene. Online learning is not for all situations and all learners. I believe that as universities become less relevant (you can get an online class for \$100), we need to be creative about the learning spaces that we create for online learning purposes. Online learning needs to be part of the discussion about space we need in the future.**

Tell us about your thoughts on maintaining assets and expansion:

According to state projections, student enrollment “will rise until 2021, when declining birth rates and lower in-migration rates will send school enrollment on a continuous decline..”.

[[www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/education/sd-me-enrollment-changes-20180822-story.html](http://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/education/sd-me-enrollment-changes-20180822-story.html)] BUSD is facing declining enrollment in the near future along with competition from dozens of private and public schools plus online learning options. With a 2018 graduating class of just 57 students, do you believe BUSD should invest in large scale brick and mortar expansion?

**We budgeted for 393 at the high school but we have something like 347 and declining enrollment this year. When we build we should satisfy the mission that the kids should be eligible for their career path or college.**

**If you look at the future, we should not be building brick and mortar with five classrooms around a maker room and have administrative and food services in portables. This does not provide the flexibility needed now or in the future.**

**With declining enrollment this year, we need to look at what figures we are using to talk about a new high school. I want to remind people that when we unified we said we'd have the high school on the Sullivan Campus.**

**We need buildings that are flexible. For instance, all the electrical and heating and air ducts should be open so we can use them as learning tools for those who are choosing those career paths. We want them to come out of high school and be able continue in their career path, or use it as a way to earn money while going to college. Every single inch of space should be a learning space.**

BUSD has no Master Plan. Do you support creating one?

**Absolutely.**

What are your thoughts on deferred maintenance of BUSD facilities?

**I have been asking for an implemented deferred maintenance schedule. This way we could have the money to take care of deferred maintenance.**

Bonds to build a high school in Fallbrook's Gird Valley have failed five times, back to 1978 and as recently as 2016 (\$58M Measure DD). Do you support passage of Measure EE, Attempt #6?

**The community should have the right to vote on it. I will serve the entire community. If they decide they do not want the bond, I'll support them. If they decide they want the bond, I think there are real issues on how we move forward. However, I will make every effort to inform the community about the facts relative to the bond. Transparency is an absolute.**

Are you aware that Measure EE is for Phase I of III and will be the first of three bonds needed to build a 1,500-student high school?

**I am well aware that they want to build Phase I and the Phase I Schematics are not forward looking, nor are they flexible.**

If building a new high school increases the financial strain on the already financially challenged District, are you comfortable with overseeing cutbacks and staff/teacher layoffs?

**I'm not ever comfortable in the budget process with staff cuts, not teachers, unless we have a total decrease in enrollment. The teachers who function in the classrooms should be the last place we look.**

Are you aware that San Diego County Office of Education can take over Districts unable to meet financial obligations?

**Yes, I am. Oh, yes!**

During unification, State/County reports recommended BUSD sell the Gird Road property (in Fallbrook, just 1.1 miles from the northern edge of the District) and build in the 13.5 sq. mile Bonsall core area. Members of the Fallbrook Community Planning Group have also criticized the

Gird Road site as being too far north, not a centralized location, inconvenient for most District residents. What are your thoughts?

**People have to understand we inherited Gird Road when we unified. The Gird Road property has been a question. I am going to wait and see what happens with the community vote. If the community passes the bond, they want a high school. If the bond doesn't pass, then I think we have to seriously look at another plan. We need to look at the potential of selling Gird Road if the community says no for a sixth time.**

Should Measure EE fail, will you see this as a mandate for BUSD to divest itself of the Gird Road property, to rethink the situation, possibly build out slowly in the core of Bonsall? Or will you work on Attempt #7, another bond attempting to build in Fallbrook's Gird Valley?

**I think I answered this. See above.**

Should Measure EE pass this November, will you attempt to build a new high school on Gird Road in Fallbrook or in the Bonsall core?

**Answered above.**

What are your qualifications to make decisions on new construction including a new high school in the District?

**I have the business background. I was president of a condo association. I've built several schools, I've studied the issue. I know what learning spaces we need and believe every inch we build should be a learning space. I met regularly with architects during construction at Bonsall West, worked closely when we built the Community Center and when we built the Elementary School. I have been involved with every school in the District and know the mistakes and the successes.**

BUSD has predicted that 30% of its new students would come from the homes to be developed on the Ocean Breeze property and the owner of this 1,400-acre property publicly committed to helping BUSD with building as needed. Do you think building out on this property, located adjacent to Bonsall Elementary School and Sullivan Campus, makes sense?

**We have not been able to get any definitive information for the last few months from Ocean Breeze but what we could do with the land depends on Ocean Breeze. I think we could use some of the land to the east and the north for fields and parking and it would be an asset to take some of the cars off the street.**

If Ocean Breeze becomes the site for any necessary BUSD future expansion, would you work with the County to create good access roads combined with walking/bike/horse trails to/from the residences to the elementary, middle and high schools?

**I think we should have trails wherever we can. One thing we should be doing in Bonsall is equine when you consider the equine area we have. We should have safe pathways for the kids to walk to school. That would take some coordination with Ocean Breeze.**

Transparency:

Do you support transparency?

**I think I live it. It's the only way we can really relate to each other and feel trust.**

Do you support an online archive of key school documents such as EIR/CEQA reports, audits, budgets? Do you support an online archive of recording/videos of meetings and workshops going back at least five years?

**Yes, yes, yes, yes.**

BUSD is consistently late in uploading payroll data to TransparentCalifornia.com. As of August 30, 2018, 2017's data is still not available. Will you work to change this?

**Not sure what I can do but if it should be public, there is no reason not to. It's public or it's not.**

Have you, your family, or any entities owned by you or your family, ever received payment or financial benefit from the campaign committees for Measure BB, DD or EE, Lilac Hills Ranch or other large developers, Erickson-Hall Construction, any of their subsidiaries or affiliates or other entities that have funded BUSD-related Measures?

**No, no, no.**

Are you or your family affiliated with or work at BUSD, any of the teachers' unions or receive funding, payment or any form of benefits from the unions, BUSD, union or BUSD employees?

**I have health benefits, that's it, and we have the small mandated CDE payment, \$200 or so dollars per meeting.**

Share your thoughts on student/teacher safety, efficiencies:

The Sullivan Campus in Bonsall is located in a Moderate Wildfire Zone while Fallbrook's Gird Valley is in a Very High Wildfire Hazard Zone. Do you think moving the students from a Moderate to a Very High Wildfire Hazard Zone makes sense as far as safety is concerned?

**How they're zoned, I do not know. But I do know we'll have problems that will be equaled at Gird Road.**

BUSD's proposed high school designs include only one entrance/exit. Do you support having one entrance/exit for any school located in a Moderate to Very High Wildfire Zone? What are your thoughts on wildfire and evacuation plans or other safety-related issues?

**The issue is ingress/egress, to make certain that the people can get in or out. It is important to not create an absolute traffic jam. We absolutely have to have two entrances that you can control for safety. But anywhere in California, the risk of having one entrance tied up in traffic is enormous.**

Traffic generated by schools is a key concern to District residents. During the Draft Environmental Impact Report process (ongoing) required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), it was estimated that a 1,500-student high school would generate a 73% increase in traffic. Do you support a reduction in traffic, accidents, parking and greenhouse gases (GHGs), District-wide, via the use of carpooling apps?

**I support trying to figure out how to not have too many in the same place at the same time. If that supports some collaboration of people, carpooling, whatever, I support that.**

The Fallbrook and Bonsall School Districts do not have aligning school years. This puts hardships on Bonsall District single parents and dual income parents without adequate vacation time. If elected, would you support, aligning the Bonsall School year with Fallbrook?

**For years, we had aligned school calendars. It's not just BUSD aligning with Fallbrook; it's Fallbrook aligning with Bonsall. It takes two to tango. The teachers and administrators work it out. I think it would be great if we could.**

At the present time, school paperwork for parents is done via hard copy. Do you commit to supporting an option to have school paperwork submitted electronically?

**My sense is, it will all go electronically and I don't know why we still do that. I thought there was a digital option. I will look into that.**

Do you have any other ideas you'd like to share about how to improve student/teacher safety or efficiency?

**We need to create learning spaces that are flexible, so students have opportunities that enhance what they bring to us in the first place. Test scores are one thing but my feeling and my passion is that students come to us with God-given talents and special things that they bring. Our job is to enhance that, to create a safe environment. Our job is to make certain that what we add is adding to what they have, whether they come out of high school with a career path or go on to college.**

And finally:

What do you offer District residents? Why should we vote for you? Anything else you'd like to add?

**I offer 70 years of passion and experience for learners. I offer a varied past, academically and experientially. I have been Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean of Administration. I've taught at every level. I offer my experience and my passion.**

**What I share with the District is my experience and am grateful that the parents have trusted me with their kids for all these years.**

**I offer a varied background. I offer the depth and breadth of my experience. Honesty, integrity. I am always thinking about the children first.**

**If I continue, my commitment will be as deep and passionate as it always has been.**

Thank you for your time!

The Volunteers at [SaveGirdValley.com](http://SaveGirdValley.com)