

Rick Petersen
Restore the Balance's School Board Candidate Survey

1. What motivates you to run for school board?

Having spent the last 4 years as the Board treasurer, I find it to be both a challenging and rewarding position. Much of my adult life has been dedicated to youth service, and this position is an extremely important extension of that. We have a great team of directors, and I want to continue the great work we are doing.

2. What qualifications do you bring and how are you preparing to serve if elected?

Four years experience as a Durango School Board Director and Board Treasurer.

3. Do you agree with the seven principles Restore the Balance feels should guide political conduct in Colorado? If you do not agree with one or more of these principles, please identify and explain why. I do agree with the seven principles. They seem very common sense to me.

4. Durango School District and its board members have been the target of misinformation campaigns and legal threats. How should the school board address controversy, misinformation, and public criticism? Each of these subjects and situations are unique in each instance. Some cases require direct and clear messaging in response. Some deserve no response at all. As a Board we discuss these events and decide a course of action, speaking with one voice.

5. What does "common ground" mean to you in the context of board decision-making? Common ground means focusing on the areas groups agree on, not dwelling on the differences. Too often in modern society groups square off with black and white all or nothing positions. The act of compromise requires clear, honest and direct communication so an outcome can be reached where everyone gets some of what they want and all can "live with" the outcome.

6. If elected, how will you listen to and represent the concerns of constituents who don't agree with you? I approach each situation with calm and thorough listening. Respect and understanding of where they are coming from is key. Unfortunately, listening to and "hearing" someone's concerns does not always mean agreeing or implementing their solution. As Board members the impact on the students is always our first concern.

7. **What are the top two to three issues facing Colorado and briefly how do you plan to address these issues if elected?** Insufficient and inadequate funding of schools in the state of Colorado is absolutely the number one challenge we face. As the treasurer, this is my number one area of concern. Inadequate funding of schools negatively affects everything we do in the school district. I plan to continue working with this board, the Colorado Association of school boards, and our elected representatives to advocate for adequate funding for our Public Schools. The politicization of schools is also a major threat. The President has weaponized so called “culture war” issues to the absolute detriment of public education in this country, and his base of followers is all too eager to bring these challenges to Durango School District.

Thanks for the opportunity to share my views.

Sincerely,
Rick Petersen