

1. What meaningful experiences in the arts (dance, music, theater, and visual arts) did you have growing up? Why do you remember these?

In a school setting I was exposed mostly to visual arts. In high school I took elective classes in drawing, painting, architecture, and calligraphy. My parents made a priority of exposing our family to a broad variety of experiences in the arts. My high school had a strong drama program. I did not participate, but many of my friends did, and I know many of them would say their drama experiences were the most formative part of their high school experience. Same for band, choir, and orchestra. My most memorable experiences with the arts mostly came in college and later in life. In college I enjoyed attending our college theater and went to every play offered. I also took classes in art history, music history, and ceramics. Later in life I've had the opportunity to visit some of the great museums in New York, Washington, Boston, Chicago, London, St. Petersburg, and elsewhere. I haven't had to integrate the area under a curve or balance a chemical equation since college, but my appreciation and enjoyment of the arts has continued to develop and add to my quality of life.

2. What role do you think the arts can play in supporting key education priorities such as closing the opportunity gap, reducing the dropout rate, and preparing more students for college eligibility and the creativity needed in the 21st century workforce?

I like the Plutarch quote that "the mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled." Some students don't respond enthusiastically to core academic subjects, and for them the arts can be a good way to get that fire kindled. For other students, the arts are a way of developing a part of the brain, and therefore a part of the whole student, that otherwise might not ever be developed. I agree with the unstated assumption in the question that creativity is needed in the 21st century. People who look at technology success stories like Steve Jobs should think about the role that creativity played in his success.

3. The arts are defined as a core subject in the state definition of basic education, but the reality is that many schools are not providing adequate arts instruction*. What do you see as the School Board's role in ensuring the equitable provision of sequential, standards-based arts instruction to all Seattle students?

In my view, the school board's role is to provide direction to the administration based on representative input from the community. Part of that input should be institutionalized in the form of clearly stated, measurable district goals that, collectively, represent the values of the community. At present, I think the Bellevue district's goals are too one-dimensional and don't leave much room for the arts. Personally, as the author of seven books, I would like to see our district's goals broadened to recognize the importance of non-standardized-test skills including social emotional learning, creativity, and the arts.

4. If elected or re-elected, how will you help the School Board lead engagement of the greater community (including administrators, classroom teachers, arts specialists, students, families, artists, and community arts organizations) to help inform the education conversation and shape school board policy for arts education?

My campaign has focused on three areas: openness, accountability, and community engagement. I agree with the assumption in this question that it is important to engage the greater community and that the Bellevue District can do a better job of that. I believe our community has shown that they want to support the arts (e.g., by supporting 7 period days). The school board should work to get a clearer sense of just how strongly our community supports the arts through surveys, focus groups, prioritization workshops, and other methods of community engagement, and then we should reflect that prioritization clearly in the goals that the board uses to manage the district.

**Statewide data shows that 33% of elementary students are getting less than an hour of arts instruction per week and 47% of schools offer instruction in only one of the four primary arts disciplines. Source: Washington State Arts Commission, Arts Education Research Initiative 2009.*