

Letter: Thanks and clarification from candidate

To the community,

With the election over, I am writing to congratulate the new LTUSD board members, to respond to some of the claims Derek Allister made public in the final days of the election, and to reaffirm my commitment to volunteer my time and talents to this school district into the future.



Annie Davidson

First, congratulations to my opponent and neighbor, Larry Reilly. Matt and I know from experience how much time and devotion he and his wife, Michelle, have given school districts on both sides of the state line. I congratulate Bonnie Turnbull and Troy Matthews as new members, honor Mike Doyle and Larry Green for their many years of committed service, and fully support the new board and district leadership going forward.

Second, to Derek Allister, I respond for the record.

• The issue of a conflict of interest is not personal, as you have suggested; it is a legal one. Since Larry's spouse, Michelle, earns a paycheck from the school district, Larry is required by law to recuse himself from any board discussions that affect salaries and benefits if their household income could be impacted. It remains to be seen how

much this conflict will affect board activities. However, with approximately 80 percent of the school district budget going to salaries and benefits annually, this is a serious consideration. Having been raised in a family of teachers and being former classroom teacher and association member, this issue gets my attention with regard to representing teachers' interests.

· You suggested that because I have children in one school in the district, I would not be fair in my decision making, favoring one school over another. Does this argument hold for the many other past and current board members with children in schools, too? Because my nephew is in the middle school, does your argument hold? If you are questioning my character or fair mindedness, I hope you would check with those who know me around town and my references. I will let my record and reputation demonstrate that I am committed to all children in our community (and state and nation, for that matter).

· I am proud to bring my professional experiences to benefit this district, including what I have learned about standardized testing. I was a classroom teacher in elementary school in 2001, deeply troubled when No Child Left Behind brought on the heavy requirement of standardized testing. I began studying the issues, went graduate school to study statistics and education policy to empower myself in the face of federal laws. I then worked for McGraw-Hill's CTB where I learned how tests are made, managed, and reported. However, because I wanted to be in public service, I left CTB (which has since shut down because this industry is in such shambles) to take a job at the Department of Education in Nevada to make a difference for schools, teachers, and students while troubling teacher accountability pressure was coming on strong with Race to the Top. Child bearing and making a living have affected my career, but in all my experiences, I have argued for fairness and equity, healthy systems, and support to

teachers and students. I believe our federal education laws are flawed, that there is way too much testing, and that we need to work for change in the next rewrite of ESEA.

Finally, to the LTUSD board, district leadership and staff, parents and students:

I promise my continued support for all programs and efforts in our schools. I gladly volunteer any of my time or talent that could benefit our children going forward, whether coaching or classroom volunteering, explaining how tests work or what the data mean (or don't mean), helping to evaluate assessments or curriculum, serving on committees or boards – or tying a child's shoes.

Thank you to the hundreds of people who voted for me, for the hundreds more who supported my campaign who could not vote for me, and for the opportunity to share who I am this election season. I am grateful to be part of this engaged community and look forward to other ways to serve it.

Respectfully,

Annie Davidson, South Lake Tahoe