



JASMINE LEE FRY

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QUESTION #1

**As PTA leaders we believe that our children's education is a team effort. Describe ways in which you have contributed to this effort, and communicated with district staff, the administration, organizations, government officials, and other stakeholders to share ideas and solve problems for our students and community.
Bonus question: which PTAs do you belong to?**

RESPONSE #1

I started volunteering in Northshore schools when my eldest started kindergarten. I initially started helping out so I could make a difference in my children's education. But through volunteering, and specifically my experience with PTA, I became passionate about advocating for a better educational experience for all kids.

Over the years, I have swept up after school events; served on a school leadership committee that helped facilitate the closing of a campus to general education; and most recently, worked with other parent advocates to push district officials for a common course catalog across NSD high schools. I am committed to public service and I have a proven track record of collaborating with the community, teachers and administrators to make things better for our students.

I have served on the board of the NSD HiCap Parents Council and on the board of several PTAs. I have chaired Reflections, the national PTA's arts program, for several years at two different schools, because I love seeing our students express themselves through art. With other volunteers, I helped establish our district's newest PTA, the Innovation Lab High School PTSA. I am currently a charter member of the ILHS PTSA and a member of the Timbercrest PTSA, and in the past I have been a member of several other local PTAs.

QUESTION #2

One of Washington State PTA's top legislative issues is: "Supports and Funding for Students with Disabilities and Their Families". Do you think this needs more attention and if so, what would you do to advocate for supports and funding for Special Education?

RESPONSE #2

Yes, I agree this needs more attention. Covid highlighted and exacerbated problems that already existed for many students with disabilities. In speaking with families of students with disabilities, I was dismayed to hear about students who were denied services or exited from their IEPs without the family's approval. I would immediately look into creating a centralized approach to Special Education, instead of the current system that divides oversight of special education by the district's four regions. In centralizing Special Education, we could prevent inequitable treatment that results when criteria and implementation for IEPs and 504 plans vary widely from school to school. A centralized approach would also provide more accountability.

Additionally, I would advocate for the state to remove its cap on funding special education services for only up to 13.5% of a district's population. I would also push for the federal government to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

QUESTION #3

Northshore School District has a Strategic Plan with Four Building Blocks. "Building Block 1: Equitable Access to Personalized and Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning. Teaching and learning is the central function of our school system. We will advocate for standards, practices and programs that engage every student in challenging work, regardless of their current level of performance. And, because 'one size does not fit all,' we will differentiate and scaffold instruction and supports to meet the unique strengths, backgrounds, readiness, and learning styles of each student." What does Building Block 1 mean to you and how would you approach it as a school board director?

RESPONSE #3

For me, Building Block 1 means we view all aspects of education through the lens of equity. We bring the education to the student and meet our students where they are at. Our district has made some amazing strides in this area. Where the district's highly capable program was once critiqued by a consultant as a "country club" program, by taking a measures which included removing roadblocks such as off-site weekend testing and a nomination process, NSD is now a state leader in the equitable identification of HiCap students. Our new Ruby Bridges Elementary School is one of 16 demonstration sites funded by a state initiative that supports inclusionary practices for students with disabilities in general education classrooms. We need to apply these standards of equity to all aspects of our district. Our district has the right words and ideas about diversity, equity and inclusion, but there is still much work to be done to ensure that racism and bigotry has no place in our schools.

As an immigrant who didn't speak a word of English when I first came to the U.S., I was the first Asian student to ever enroll in my school district. I experienced more than my share of racism and xenophobia. More than 40 years later, this is still going on in my children's schools.

Teaching our students (and grown ups) about anti-racism is fundamental for nurturing a culture of inclusion and acceptance.

QUESTION #4

Two of Washington State PTA's top legislative issues are: "Increase Access to Nursing, Mental Health, and Social Emotional Learning Staff" and "Prevent and Reduce Gun Violence and Suicide". This coincides with the concerns of many Northshore families as well. The district has mental health supports at every school including staff and curriculum. For example, every elementary school of at least 500 students has a full-time mental health counselor and smaller schools have a half-time counselor. What is the district doing well? What should it be doing to better to support students' mental health and safety?

RESPONSE #4

Our youth have been in a mental health crisis since before Covid. Our district recently increased funding to add more mental health staff, and that is a wonderful and necessary step. As a parent of two students, I found that the schools provided many extra supports last year, such as executive function lessons, weekly counseling sessions with a mental health professional and frequent check ins from staff.

I would like to see staffing for mental health and nursing be a response to need, not simply numbers. If there is a greater need for mental health support at a particular school, we should find a way to add additional support.

I'd like to see improvement on how we determine what a student with mental health concerns looks like. Before the pandemic, my student was told she could not possibly need school supports for anxiety because she was a straight-A student. In order to fully and equitably serve the mental health needs of our students, we must abandon these preconceived notions.

QUESTION #5

Funding is basically fixed and so new spending in one area means making cuts somewhere else.

Some of the things that Northshore has chosen to spend their money on are: the 7-period day for high school, and staffing for nurses & counselors beyond what the state provides. Where do you think we need to spend more of our resources and where would you cut spending to make it work budget-wise?

RESPONSE #5

At least in the short term, the extra financial burden of Covid is an area of immediate concern for our budget. According to OPSI, our district received significantly less per pupil in federal Covid relief dollars than some other districts, so we must be very thoughtful and creative in finding ways to pay for Covid safety precautions and extra support due to learning loss. Public schools also face the financial challenge of implementing voter- and legislator-approved unfunded mandates.

About 75% of the district's expenditures are on instruction and in facing a potential budget crunch, the goal should be to prevent cuts that would limit student opportunities and also teacher layoffs. I believe there are a few measures we can take -- such as maximizing purchasing power by coordinating buying throughout the district and eliminating underutilized edtech. But in order to make our budget whole, we need to focus on pressing the state and federal governments to fulfill their funding obligations. As an advocate and volunteer with the PTA, I followed the McCleary decision closely, and although the 2012 McCleary decision ordered the state to fully fund K-12 public education and the state Supreme court in 2018 found that the state was finally in compliance, it is still not enough. I have advocated that state legislators identify new funding sources in order to amply fund public education. The federal government has yet to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, passed in the 1970s.

QUESTION #6

What is a school board member's role and responsibility under the law and under Policy Governance? How does that role differ from the role of the superintendent or the administration?

RESPONSE #6

It is a school board's job to work together to oversee the district. A school board member's role is to represent the community; establish a vision and set goals; adopt and maintain the budget; implement policy; and hire and evaluate the superintendent.

Policy Governance, simply put, allows the board to focus on the "ends" and places the superintendent in charge of the "means." It is intended to keep the board focused on policy and not on management. As the chief executive, the superintendent is responsible for the day-to-day operations, managing employees and carrying out school board policies. The administration is responsible for managing the district's resources and instruction under the direction of the superintendent.

QUESTION #7

Within our school district, there is a lot of residential building. Overcrowding is a major issue in many of our schools as well as portables and buildings that are old and need maintenance. What are the steps you would suggest the district take to alleviate these issues?

RESPONSE #7

There is no easy answer to this. Spending on public school facilities is woefully insufficient and inequitable. Across the nation, half of the public school buildings are reportedly in need of major repair. Bond measures are an uncertain and inequitable solution, but one of the few available methods of funding the construction and repair of public school facilities. I like how our district has come up with some creative and less costly facilities solutions, like renovating an office building to create Innovation Lab High School, and the construction of a flexible learning space between two existing campuses, Skyview Middle School and Canyon Creek Elementary School.

We need to partner closely with the city and county governments, make sure we are growing wisely and growing together. We also need to keep communicating with voters about the upcoming bond measure.



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