

D65 Candidate Survey

Thanks so much for taking a few minutes to complete the survey! Our goal is to help voters make informed decisions.

Email address *

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1. Implementation of a formal environmental literacy and climate justice curriculum would empower our future generations to be knowledgeable, environmentally aware global citizens. Do you support the development of a Climate Justice curriculum and a general adoption of Environmental Science lessons for kindergarten through eighth grade? (for an example of such a curriculum see: <https://www.zinnedproject.org/campaigns/teach-climate-justice>) *

Yes

No

2. Energy consumption in buildings is the greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Evanston.

a. Would you support electrifying buildings?

Yes

No

b. Would you endorse development of a long-term infrastructure planning process to incorporate facility upgrades and replacements, such as HVAC and lighting systems, that incorporate climate change-conscious approaches? *

Yes

No

c. How can long-term Buildings and Grounds Planning be advocated on schools' short-term budgets? *

Some of the short term goals/things that can be done in the near future would be:

Reduce the operational costs and life-cycle cost of a building

Capital planning and research

Stakeholder Needs & Vision

Learning Environment

Developing the facilities maintenance plan for each school would require:

1. identifying needs (improving cleanliness and safety, correcting deficiencies, addressing 'needed projects', increasing efficiency, decreasing utility bills)
2. Collecting and using supporting data to inform recommendations and decision-making (Chiaravalle Montessori recently in 2015 did their north wing and with that, they put solar panels up on top. Right in the entrance where kids enter, they get to see how much energy is being collected and how much is being used - it's such an amazing learning tool)
3. Sharing the plan to garner support from both district and school administration.
4. Training & Managing staff (and students - at Bessie Rhodes in 2017, the Green Team was an amazing resource that was just built into Bessie Rhodes culture. I learned more about recycling and sustainability from my kindergartener as she would show and tell me what they did for lunch)

3. Would you support events such as a D65 Green Team end-of-year locker & classroom cleanout? *

Yes

No

4. Would you support an official D65 Earth Week to be held every April? *

Yes

No

a. Would you support (D65 Green Team-established) Earth Week programs such as the "10 Second Film Festival" for students to express their environmental ideas and creative solutions?

Yes

No

6. The USDA estimates that 30 to 40 percent of food is wasted in the U.S. Large amounts of food are wasted across the district even though as many as 14 percent of Evanston residents may be food insecure. What are your top 2-3 ideas to help ensure that the school community understands how to implement Evanston's zero food waste goals? *

As mentioned above, I believe that the D65 Green Team parent volunteers have set the standard and it needs to be maintained and implemented across the schools.

In the City of Evanston CARP plan, some of the ideas would include composting unused food or creating "zero-waste sections" where products are sold. Both at Bessie Rhodes and Walker, there was a dedicated section that my kid told me if they didn't eat something and it was untouched, instead of throwing it away, they could put it there and kids could either grab that for their lunch, snack time, or after school.

In addition to the current sustainability recommendations - the ones that I would additional recommendations to would be:

Zero waste policy - Walker PTA had the large jugs for water donated by a local company (branded with their logo), would there be other local businesses interested in doing the same thing - help purchase reusable items whether it is the water containers, cups, or even stainless steel water bottles to our community.

Lunchroom education is such an important thing especially when we have such a significant population of free and reduced lunch students. I just learned at last month's PTA Council meeting that Bessie Rhodes is now at 67% FRL population. In addition to the training on waste sorting for students and lunchroom staff but also, the principal, teachers and school staff, as well. Training could be recorded and shared even further with PTA leadership and parent volunteers so these lunchroom behaviors bleed over into PTA sponsored community events that have food.

Combing the above two on zero waste and lunchroom education, I love the idea of the Community Love Fridge where anyone can put things in and take things out. It would be great if we could get one near/on each school property and make that part of the process of putting remaining food in there. Evanston Black Lives Matter recently raised enough money for their community fridge:

<https://dailynorthwestern.com/2021/02/19/city/leave-what-you-can-take-what-you-need-efbl-to-install-community-fridge/>

During the 2018 year, that was the year that I did my research on school supplies and how much they varied from school to school. Some schools did bulk supplies and some didn't, some schools charged \$50 per child and others charged \$25 and then there was such a difference in how they obtained school supplies. Some purchased these boxes that was such an environmental waste as only half of the item in there would be reused, and then, some gave their teachers budgets to work with. It took me 1.5 years of pushing back to the school board and the district pointing out these discrepancies and how much time it took out of parent volunteers to manage the bulk school supply process. I asked for them to develop a fee structure that would apply to all district students - regular price, reduced lunch price, free lunch price, and a payment plan (especially for someone that has multiple kids - fee time is a tough time!). More importantly, I pointed out to them how stressful the FRL process is - school fees are charged in May/June every year and then in June, if you haven't paid for them, you get this not so nice email saying "You haven't paid your fees. Your child's slot isn't guaranteed" and then, in fine print on the bottom, it reads "If you're on free/reduced lunch, please wait until August 4th or some date in early August to apply for free/reduced lunch" but then, every 3-4 weeks throughout the summer - for a parent who was working 3 jobs that summer, I would get that email. The anxiety and stress that it caused me was frustrating and when I called to talk to someone about it, I was

told 'oh, just wait. don't worry about those emails'

Honestly, for any family that was on FRL the previous year, the district should have a way of marking that and not sending them those emails. And even when the application is available, you don't find out until a week or two afterwards what your status even is. I know one family was sent into a frenzy because they knew going in, they were going to be borderline and one year, they were on reduced lunch and then, another year they were denied because they made \$1,000 too much.

If you have other thoughts/ details to share, please do so below.

I want to acknowledge that when I was Treasurer on the PTA Council, I remember being really impressed by the D65 Green Team and all that they were doing on a little to no budget. To go with the zero waste policy, especially with refreshments, I rerouted funds in our budget from providing snacks and plastic water bottles at the PTA Council meetings to be able to provide a \$500 grant to the D65 Green Team. Since then, we have always invited the Green Team to come and speak at the PTA Council meetings at least once a year. That same year, I know that Walker PTA was inspired by what other schools were doing with their Green Team that they wanted to start our own, as well. We started out with small steps but hopefully, we can get there. I would highly support hiring a district Director of Sustainability. After all, the district just created 11 new administrative positions (totaling over \$2 million in salary alone) in the past 2 years. I think that if the district is committed to sustainability the way that they have been to other issues, a Director of Sustainability should have been part of those 11 new positions. A Director of Sustainability would be able to be the main resource and hub for the D65 Green Teams to turn to, advocate for and support/guide. Having a representative paid BY the district would mean that they are committed to creating consistency and overall lowering our schools' carbon footprint. Consistency in process, resources. If the water mobile is free for one school PTA event, why wouldn't it be free for another school PTA event (that was another thing that came out one of our PTA Council meetings).

I have more thoughts around the Earth week curriculum, energy audits, environmental justice training, and accountability reports, but will be honest, I'm not as knowledgeable about them. However, I am open to learning, listening and learning to advocate because I believe that a school board member is entitled to their opinions but when they vote or make decisions, it is not based on me as Kennedy & Callista's mom but me as an elected official representing my community.

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