

Questions submitted by Mike Dunn to board candidates:

**1. Assume you were a board member when staff asked for a vote to close University and Meadows elementary schools. Would you have voted YES or NO?**

**I would have voted No** to close University and Meadows elementary schools. I believe that closing neighborhood schools is fundamentally wrong. There has been a trend over the years of losing students to other districts and local private schools. There are those that will not face up to the fact that **we are not doing a good enough job educating our children, which is one of the main reasons we are losing students**. Instead, those that want to close schools want to blame the decline in enrollment to other factors and then put the burden on just a few select neighborhoods. Dividing the community by closing schools is not the right answer. **Closing schools will not save us money in the long run**, and when we don't listen to the community and blindly dictate short-term solutions, the parents will turn to what they see as their last hope - Charter Schools. Of course, this negates any potential savings and would force more cuts. **Small schools are not a scourge to be closed, but must be embraced** because of their many advantages including being safer, children achieving higher GPAs, lower drop-out rates, greater teacher satisfaction, and better community involvement (see Dollars & Sense, The Cost Effectiveness of Small Schools and Dollars & Sense II, Lessons from Good, Cost-Effective Small Schools at <http://www.dollarsandsense.org> ). We can make each school financially stable. This will not be easy in the short-run as we are now in the position of having high expenses and a lower budget, because of poor planning and low state funding. However, if we all come together we will find the solutions to bring all our schools up to a truly excellent level. Let's strive to become the best district in California and keep our schools open. **I will oppose all school closures**. Everyone seems to want to put off the hard decisions to the future generations. Closing schools is not a hard decision when you are not personally affected and are trying to compensate for the inadequacies of your planning. Most parents feel they don't have a voice in how to save or improve our schools, but one thing some parents do have is the money to move their children to private schools and also the energy to start up charter schools.

**2. Do you support or oppose parent notification before their child is allowed to leave campus for a non emergency medical procedure?**

I support parent notification for a child leaving for non emergency medical procedures. **Parents should always be informed** if their child leaves the school and really the child should not be able to leave without the parent's or guardian's prior consent unless there is an emergency.

- 3. Assume you were a board member when the MATES charter request came up for a vote. Would you have voted YES or NO on the MATES charter school application?**

I would have voted Yes, assuming that they have met with the state requirements of forming a charter. It is a shame that **some members of the school board have forced this decision on these parents, by closing their school.** However, now that they have done so, it would be irresponsible not to help them establish their charter. If elected, I hope to reverse the decision to close University and Meadows Elementary schools and hope that those parents will change their minds about starting a charter and instead reenter our district in their own neighborhood schools.

- 4. YES or NO. Will you refuse to accept political monetary contributions from the unions? Yes, I will refuse to accept political monetary contributions from the unions.**

In fact, **I am not taking any monetary contributions from anyone but my family.** Regretfully, even non-political campaigns such as running for the school board are mired in politics to get elected at any cost. I look forward to the day that we can elect people based on their issues and platforms rather than electing those who have the most money to advertise their name.