

Ossining Teachers Association

School Board Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Cindy Winter

Date: May 13, 2010

Please type (in a different font) your responses to the following questions. Feel free to exceed the space provided. You may email your completed questionnaire as a word document or a pdf file. Your responses will be made available to members of Ossining Teachers Association.

- If elected/re-elected, what would you consider a priority in the upcoming year and how would you address it?

As always, I keep a watchful eye on enrollment not just in the elementary grades but also at the middle and high school level. A manageable class size is important to me for our teachers. Since many TA positions have been scaled back over the years, it is in our best interest to adhere to our class size policy. We kept two emergency teacher positions in the budget for this very reason.

- There are natural budgetary constraints when devising programs for schools (curriculum, instruction, class size, etc). What do you feel is the school board's responsibility to both the students of the district and to the taxpayers? How do you balance these resources and needs so that Ossining's students can be provided with the 21st century skills necessary to be successful?

I feel that this year we did our best with how we handled the budget. The administration and the board looked at every single area and choose not to eliminate one particular area but a little across the board. This way, most programs were kept in place for the education of the whole child which I think is important for going forward in the 21st century along with the newer ways of technology. I think that we will need to look more into internet/virtual classrooms to fulfill the needs of the students and the budget as we move forward.

- Why do you believe that the achievement gap exists and what do you feel should be done to decrease/eliminate it?

Unfortunately the achievement gap is in the schools. It is evident by the reports from when a child first enters school, through 8th grade and into high school. As I believe that we are addressing this issue with AIS and RTI models, I was pleased to see the latest test results in Math and ELA. There is still room for improvement by bringing the students from 1 to a 2 level and bringing both into the 3 and 4 level on the elementary level. On the High School level, it seems to be more difficult. There are plans for advisors at the HS, but budgetary constraints seem to always be in the way. Some of this is being addressed by after school help and particular after school clubs.

- As a school board member, what would you do to attract and keep the most qualified faculty and staff for the Ossining Schools?

First of all, we have some great teachers that I don't want to see retire yet. As in the past, we try to keep faculty and staff close to the middle to upper quartile of the wage scale in Westchester County. I hope that the staff development and mentoring that we offer is helpful to the newest members of the staff and also helpful as a pick me up to the more senior faculty.

- What else (specific ideas, characteristics, etc.) should the Ossining voters know about you that would make you the best person for this position on the school board?

I believe that I have shown myself to be dedicated to the schools and sensitive to the needs of the district. By having children in the schools, I know first hand the changes that have taken place, especially at the middle school. My involvement with Ossining MATTERS also keeps me in touch with the schools on a different level. On the board level, we are always looking for ways to improve and to strive to do the best for the children in the district.

- Do you support the proposed 2010-2011 Ossining School Budget? Yes No