

# Utah Parents In Action School Board Candidate Questionnaire

Please read the following statements about education policies and programs and indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

Name \*

Melanie Mortensen

Seat you are running for \*

State School Board District 4

Phone # \*

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Melanie@VoteMelanie.org

School District \*

Davis

Website \*

VoteMelanie.org

Current Occupation/Position \*

mom :)

Previous Elected Position

n/a, this is my first foray!

Parents and citizens should have complete, unhindered access to all of the teaching materials that are used in their children's education.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should establish parental review processes for all policies, products, and programs that are being considered for use in the schools before those materials are introduced into schools and classrooms.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should proactively inform parents when parental consent is required by state law for surveys, curriculum, etc.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School facilities (bathrooms, locker rooms, hotel rooms, etc) use should be determined by biological sex.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Participation in school sports should be based on biological sex.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Educational material that suggests that an individual's thoughts or character can be determined by that individual's race, religion, sex, or national origin, should not be taught in schools.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Schools should expand educational programs that enable students with special gifts and talents to develop their individual capacities in a more demanding academic environment.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

No School Board or School shall agree to, or renew, a contract with any provider of educational products or programs if that contract, in any way, restricts parental access to the contents of those products or programs.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should lobby the legislature to provide more money to fund education in Utah.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

No School Board or School shall agree to, or renew, a contract with any provider of educational products or programs, if that contract, in any way, allows the sharing of individual student information with any other entities unless that sharing is specifically approved, in writing, by the student's parents.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should establish policies and procedures that ensure that parents have access to all the details of the proposed district and school budgets and the opportunity to provide suggestions and recommendations before those budgets are finalized.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The State has the ultimate medical jurisdiction over children

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should terminate memberships and cease contributing funds to any national, state, or local education organization that is contrary to the laws, regulations, or values of Utah.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



School Boards and Schools should establish policies and procedures that affirm the educational excellence of our teachers and support their complete independence to select educational material they choose to use.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should establish policies and procedures that affirm the need to teach and practice social justice in the classroom, school, and community.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should establish policies and procedures that promote the adoption of educational programs supported by the current U.S. Department of Education, such as the New York Time's 1619 project.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should establish policies and procedures to promote and expand social and emotional learning policies, procedures, practices, and programs to better prepare our children to live in this turbulent world.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

School Boards and Schools should establish policies and procedures that incorporate the emerging best practices of the educational excellence promoted by the national education organizations and federal government

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Do you support Governor Cox vetoing HB11, which would prohibit biological boys from competing in girls sports?

- Yes
- No

Parents should have reasonable time to give public comment in every school board meeting

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Adaptive Learning Programs ought to be used in classrooms

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Parents have the fundamental right and duty to exercise primary control over the care, supervision, upbringing, and education of their children.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Local School Boards should utilize federal grants when possible

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The USBE rule regarding educational equity is adequate and will prevent CRT and other divisive ideologies from being taught in our schools? \*\*\*Here's where you can find the educational equity rule: <https://bit.ly/3jusaS> \*\*\*Here's the link to the rule: <https://bit.ly/3JzFosd>

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The current Utah State Civics Standards, as written by the Utah State Board of Education, are sufficient. \*\*\*See proposed standards here: <https://bit.ly/3rlomrD>

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Schools ought to teach Comprehensive Sexuality Education.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Local School Boards should have authority to issue mask mandates for their school district

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Education funds ought to follow the child, at the direction of the parent, to meet the educational needs of the child

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

What would you like to tell UPU parents about yourself and how, if elected, you will represent Utah parents?

First and foremost, I am an advocate for parental rights and parental control. Being able to determine what is best for my children has allowed me to determine the formula for their success. My kids have all attended public and charter schools, and we did homeschooling for a bit as well. I am a firm believer that parents are the first and final educators of their children. I also believe that a student's success increases immeasurably when parents and teachers work together, and as such I am a proponent for communication and transparency going both directions.

I would like to add some clarifying points from the questions:

I love the idea of having parents comment on curriculum, budget, and decisions that affect their students. I think there is a place for that in every level of education. I am an advocate for not only increasing parent comment time at board meetings, but also to have follow-up and accountability from the board to respond to those comments in a timely manner.

My daughter is a swimmer for her high school and I earned my UHSAA official certification this last year. I recognize the vast disparity between biological ability in sports, and I fully understand the desire to participate on and belong to a team. Therefore, I would advocate for a compassionate solution for transgender athletes. I believe that we can find ways to include them (for example, including a transgender event during a swim meet) where they can compete fairly, against other transgender athletes, and still have the belonging and camaraderie that a team sport brings. I would advocate that they always have separate locker rooms, and also have separate hotel rooms on away events. I believe that we can find ways to accommodate those students with separate bathrooms at school as well.



I am strongly opposed to CRT, DEI, SEL, and whatever new label they come up with for the latest social ideology. Those absolutely should not be taught in schools and I will work to excise them completely. Our current rules are inadequate and need to be more precise and comprehensive.

Our legislature has increased the amount of money given to education over the past few years, and I think that is a good trend to continue. My concerns are when we start dividing that fund with other entities (such as people with disabilities, although we definitely need to take care of them) and reduce the amount going into the fund (such as lowering the income tax). I believe that we need to shore up those funds for when the economy falls again, and as the population increases. We need to protect our education funds and limit the number of hands in the pot.

No student information should ever be shared outside of our state. I will work to protect our students data.

AMEN on terminating memberships with organizations that are contrary to our state constitution!!

Supporting our teachers is a huge priority. We need to take all of the extra programs and responsibilities off their plate and allow them to do what they love!!

No social justice, no social nuances, see my comment on CRT. This also applies to my thoughts on anything the DoE is suggesting—we need to remove their hold on our system.

On educational excellence, I don't mind researching what the best practices are, but I would be opposed to taking any recommendations from the NEA and Federal Government. I think we can find educational excellence in every level without their input.

On Adaptive Learning Programs, I think there are ways to help students who are not grasping concepts, but I believe in our teachers and their training and their creativity to do so. I don't think we need yet another program for them to have to follow. If they see a distinct and widening gap, I would encourage them to talk to the student's parents and find a way for them to support the student at home to close that gap and attain comprehension.

On my initial read-through of the Civic Standards, I don't have any large concerns. I would want to ensure that teachers are teaching "real" history, not revisionist versions, without any clouding from alternative lenses or viewpoints. I would want to study that in more depth to be positive, and I want to get this survey back to you asap so I'll look over it more and be better prepared next week!

Comprehensive Sex Ed is such a tricky issue. On the one hand, I think that should be taught at home and not involve the school at all. On the other hand, I realize many parents don't teach it at home. As such, and especially with the incidents recently happening at Muir Elementary, I would recommend including some kind of sex vocabulary education. I wouldn't go into detail, but would stick with definitions and why it isn't appropriate to be using those terms. I would absolutely need parental involvement, and offer an opt-out, but this issue needs to be addressed so that our kids have a concrete understanding of what is and isn't appropriate language.

I am against mandates for anything from our district or government. I think if there is a safety issue, it should be left up to individual choice.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond and share my thoughts and priorities! I look forward to next wednesday's meeting!

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