

My name is Ron Silverman. I am running for Governing Board Member of the Payson Unified School District #10. This message is for PUSD taxpayers, students, staff, and citizens.

I was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; I moved to Tucson, Arizona, in the spring of 1997, where I received my second degree in education and history. In Tucson, I taught Social Studies at the middle-school level and at the high-school level in self contained, regular college prep and AP History classes.

In 2010, I chose to relocate to Payson, where I taught high-school Social Studies at PHS for two years. I am certified and highly qualified. Currently, I am in my eleventh year of teaching Social Studies.

Although I worked in the private sector for many years, and thus gained much "real-life" experience, my life's passion lies in working with young people to support their future. To support this belief, I am running for membership on the PUSD Governing Board. I feel the current Board lacks any semblance of true and realistic leadership.

In my experience as teacher in the Payson Unified School District, I watched many Board decisions made concerning administration, staff, and students, which have caused great harm to both, as well as to the local taxpayers, who pay the bills of the District.

I, and others, watched official written District policies replaced with unwritten "practices." We saw key decisions made based upon blatant favoritism and cronyism, rather than upon what would truly benefit students in terms of scholastic rigor and support for their future as citizens of our country, all of this behind closed doors. This lack of transparency in the school board meetings that appears to regularly flout the law should be replaced with open and honest communication.

The PUSD Board-stated goal of a rigorous academic atmosphere to prepare students for today's demanding world has covertly been replaced with the cynical machinations of a "diploma mill." I believe more educational rigor for all is necessary to meet the 21st century global challenges.

Students must realistically be supported to achieve success in today's world. Four-year college-prep programs are vital - and so are the strengthening of a core vocational base to support non-college-bound students to hold jobs vital to our country's future and economy. These needs must be realistically addressed.

Due to a change in Arizona State statutes, which allow administrators complete autonomy in hiring and firing of staff, dedicated teachers and staff can now routinely be replaced or displaced based on the personal whims of school administrators. All of our teachers need to be supported as professionals - and neutrally evaluated as such.

Because our middle school consistently receives sub-standard assessments, rigorous new middle-school standards will need to be addressed and implemented, including a credit system for accountability.

The recent financial problems regarding how the District handles its accounting methods and budgeting also needs serious revamping. Tighter standards and oversight need to be implemented to keep past monetary debacles from happening again.

I know it is not possible to easily "fix" the problems of the District, and I don't claim I can do so by myself. But I can claim I have the understanding of being a teacher in this District to work toward solutions to resolve a District that deserves better in leadership than the current Board.

I want to help solve these problems.