

2009 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Joanna		Cullen

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

3.

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Seattle School Board, Director Position #5

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No NO

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

32 years

5. How long have you resided in King County?

32 Years

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan Nonpartisan

Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party: _____

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:	Joanna Cullen for Seattle Schools
Address:	975 21 st Avenue
City/State/Zip:	Seattle, WA 98122
Campaign Phone:	206-329-8514
Campaign Fax:	
Campaign E-mail:	jfoxcullen@gmail.com
Campaign Website:	http://sites.google.com/site/voteforjoanna/

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
PCO	Elected	1989 to 2000	vice chair Chair, political

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
 - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
 - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
 - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
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1. **In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)**

The chaotic and rushed process of opening and closing schools destabilized many of our public schools and their communities. Students, families, educators, and communities need stability and continuity to thrive. We can do a better job as the District considers a new student assignment plan. School Board members must insist on a fair, equitable and inclusive strategy. We must ensure a thoughtful and solid approach if we are to successfully move toward a neighborhood focused plan to produce sustainable and continuous attendance areas and path ways.

Through my extensive involvement in Seattle Public Schools I know that building strong, engaging, successful educational programs requires cooperative efforts involving all stakeholders. I served two terms as Seattle Council PTSA President and on the Board of

Schools First, along with working on many oversight committees. In addition to the District-wide experience, I was elected to leadership positions on local school PTSAs, Building Leadership Teams, Site Councils, and Design Teams. I am also a Squire Park Community Council board member.

My two Garfield grad daughters have become college grads and I have the commitment, experience and common sense to effectively work with my colleagues and community to ensure a true collaborative and equitable approach.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

Knowledge of Seattle School District, my community and parent concerns.

An Inclusiveness and collaborative approach to finding solutions.

Knowledge that I do not have to have all the answers. Most successful work will be a result of a group effort.

Appreciation and patience with political process.

Thoughtfulness

Willingness to learn and enjoying the knowledge of others and myself that I will gain by I taking on a new role.

2. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.
- 3.

My husband and I are extremely proud of our two adult daughters. I like to think I played a part in guiding them.

My roles as friend, sister, wife, mother.

At a time of change in the Washington Middle School PTSA, especially its fundraising model, I was president of a Board that collaborated to build a model of how to distribute the new resources in a fair and equitable manner. Collaboration within a very diverse parent and staff group was essential to ensure that the resources [contributed.to](#) all programs and the cohesiveness of the school as a whole.

Amid the Seattle Schools Budget crisis and bad publicity the Seattle Council PTSA and the Seattle School District worked together to communicate with families and distribute information to ensure that students would not be negatively affected. As the Seattle Council PTSA President my Board and I worked together to ensure fair accurate information to families. The good news is that enrollment actually showed some upward trend, thus preventing the District from losing students and suffering further negative impacts.

I enjoyed serving on the 1992 Democratic National Committee Credentials Committee and the representative role I played. My involvement as Chair of a District Democratic organization and campaigning organizing has given me experience, patience and appreciation of the political process that is a must to be successful.

My main contribution to most organizations is a dedication developing the group as a team to work toward common goals, including people new to a process in order to ensure leadership development. It's great if everyone likes each other but is not absolutely necessary to work toward common goals.

I am proud of some of the work I have written for Pusan National University and found the cultural exchange to be very educational.

3. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

Squire Park Community Council Board 2007 to present Annual barbecue organizer, Newsletter contributor, Newsletter delivery organizer

Garfield High School Design Team 2003 to present Garfield High School PTSA Reflections Chair 2003/2004 and By-laws Committee

Seattle Council of PTSA President 7/01 to 7/03

Alliance for Education Board of Directors 7/01 to 7/03

Schools First Board of Directors, plans and supports Seattle School levies, 7/01 to 7/03

Seattle Schools oversight budget and planning committees

Seattle Council PTSA Secretary 7/99 to 7/01

Northwest Girlchoir Board of Directors 7/02 to 7/05

Awarded Washington State PTA Silver Leadership Medal 4/2002

Washington Middle School PTSA President 7/97 to 7/99

Other Public Service

President of Washington Middle School PTSA

Treasurer of the Pacific Northwest Ballet Parents' Association

Collaborated on creating and presenting PTSA and the Law for Washington State PTSA.

Facilitated public engagement collaborations for the Seattle School District, Alliance for Education, and PTSA organizations.

4. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

Develop vision, structure, policy, accountability, and act as an advocate for Public Education. They hire and grade the Superintendent of Seattle Public Schools. Most effective Board members also develop a good relationship with the Superintendent and staff and engage and empower constituents. They to ask questions and request information necessary to drill deeper and ensure that the Superintendent is aware of their concerns and those of various constituencies without micromanaging the staff work.. Board members must also be willing to acknowledge the work of District Employees.

Board members must also be able to deal the political process involved in their decision making and at the same time remembering that the primary duty of schools is to educate all children.

I could rewrite this but Washington State School Directors Association expresses the basics:

School board members are the "governors" of the school district who work in partnership with their administrative team to set the district's direction. The school board's governance responsibilities fall in four major areas:

- **Vision** – The board focuses the work of the district and community on student achievement through a comprehensive strategic planning process.
- **Structure** – The board governs the district through prudent financial planning and oversight, and diligent and innovative policy making.
- **Accountability** – The board infuses all programs and crucial policies with specific goals and a process for evaluation, reporting and recommendations for improvements.
- **Advocacy** – The board champions public education in the local community and before state and federal policy makers.

These are all equally important.

Resume

Joanna Cullen

975 21st Ave.

Seattle, WA 98122

(206) 329 8514

Squire Park Community Council Board 2007 to present Annual barbecue organizer Newsletter contributor Newsletter delivery organizer

Muni League Candidate Evaluation Committee 2003, 2005 and 2006

Garfield High School Design Team 2003 to present **Garfield High School PTSA Reflections Chair** 2003/2004 and **By-laws Committee**

Chair Seattle Council of PTSA President 7/01 to 7/03

Alliance for Education Board of Directors 7/01 to 7/03

Schools First Board of Directors 7/01 to 7/03

Seattle Council PTSA Secretary 7/99 to 7/01

Northwest Girlchoir Board of Directors 7/02 to 7/05

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Treasurer of the Pacific Northwest Ballet Parents' Association

Newsletter editor for Central Area Neighborhood Association

Chair of Education Committee chair for the Seattle Audubon Society's celebration of founder Hazel Wolf's 100th birthday celebration

Treasurer of Madrona Elementary School PTSA with a budget of \$75,000. Chaired budget committee. Secretary for Martin Luther King elementary PTSA and Site Council and also Secretary of Madrona Elementary Site Council

Actress Created and performed skits and personal works and acted in local productions. Appeared on local in a fringe production showing at Northwest Actor's studio.

Editor and Writer 10/94 to present Producing and editing articles for newsletters, brochures, and personal biographies. Most recently edited brochures, letters, international oral presentations, and a mission statement for International Affairs at Pusan National University in Korea.

Public Relations 6/90 to 9/99 Managed political campaigns and campaign fieldwork. Managed and coordinated all activities for non-profit events and holiday giving programs. Solicited private and public donations and wrote grants.

Business Management 2004 to present

Maintain financial records and transactions for ranch land business with sisters.

Seattle School District 9/94 to 1/99

Tutored reading, writing, math, and social and life skills for ESL, at-risk and highly capable students.

Represented the state of Washington on the 1992 National Democratic Credentials Committee in Washington DC and in New York City.

Additional Activities

Yoga, hiking, dance, poetry writing, and theater.

Education

- Bachelor of Arts, Editorial Journalism, University of Washington, 1991.
- Selected poet for the *Castilla Reading Series*, University of Washington

Freehold Theater performing workshops.