



The Municipal League of King County

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2011 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

The Municipal League of King County requests every candidate who participates in the candidate evaluation process **submit background information prior to his/her interview with a candidate evaluation committee**. The questionnaire is the basis of the League's research and interview process. The League's ratings are non-partisan; they are based on standards of Involvement, Effectiveness, Character, and Knowledge, all of which have been developed and refined over the past 100 years.

A copy of this questionnaire will be provided to Candidate Evaluation Committee members to help them prepare for your interview. Candidate responses, except the confidential section, will be available to the public on the League's website.

The Municipal League requests the following materials from candidates. Please check to make certain you have sent in your:

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Candidate Questionnaire | Sent by: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> US Mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Fax | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Resume (education, employment, and professional activities) | Sent by: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> US Mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Fax | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Campaign Materials | Sent by: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> US Mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Fax | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Constituent Newsletters and other publications | Sent by: <input type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> US Mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Fax | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Sending |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Photograph | Sent by: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> US Mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Fax | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sending |

Note: Electronically submitted questionnaires are strongly preferred. All materials can be emailed to cec@munileague.org. They can be processed and made available on-line far more rapidly than handwritten or typed submissions.

For non-electronic submissions, please print clearly and legibly and return the application **as soon as possible in order to allow the committee the greatest amount of time to prepare a complete report on your skills and experience.**

If you have not yet been contacted to schedule an interview, or if you have questions about the candidate evaluation program, please contact the League office at 206-622-8333.

If you have a disability and require accommodation to participate in the candidate evaluation process, please contact the CEC Coordinator at the League office.

A League volunteer Candidate Investigator is waiting to receive your questionnaire to begin his or her work. Please complete and return the questionnaire to the League office at your earliest convenience.

Please have your materials to us no later than June 10th, 2011.

Email the completed questionnaire and other materials to:
cec@munileague.org

2011 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
John	Jack	Whelan

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

School Board Director, District 2

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

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

Since 1988

5. How long have you resided in King County?

Since 1984

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

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)

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.)

This election is extraordinary because it will define the direction of SPS for the next decade. No decision the board faces will be more important than determining the district's administrative leadership for these critical next several years. In the last decade we've seen the SPS seduced by the so-called educational-reform agendas of foundations that have tried to reshape American education system in its own privatizing image. We've seen this influence in the hiring of the Broad-trained [Maria Goodloe-Johnson](#). We saw this influence in the recent agenda-driven firing of Martin Floe at Ingraham High School, and we saw it in Goodloe-Johnson's bringing in Teach for America last year.

I've heard the argument that the current board is doing a good job in a difficult situation and that we need continuity and stability in district leadership to move forward in rebuilding our district. But you cannot have stability if you build on a foundation that is profoundly flawed, and I think that anybody with even a little knowledge about what has gone on within the district recognizes that Sherry Carr and other members like Peter Maier and Steve Sundquist are themselves elements composing this flawed foundation.

I will advocate for a nationwide search for a new superintendent. Ms. Enfield's candidacy for the position needs to be considered alongside other qualified candidates.

I would move to suspend the district's five-year plan for excellence, which is in fact a five-year plan for guaranteed failure.

I would work hard to prioritize resources allocation to support teachers in classrooms and ongoing teacher development.

I would work within the limits of state law to mitigate as much as possible the destructive effects of high-stake testing on our educational priorities.

I will work hard to support the development of readiness programs for preschoolers to mitigate as much as possible the deficits that low-income kids have when they enter kindergarten.

I would work hard to develop a community/peer based evaluation system for teachers and principals.

I would work hard to develop a more proactive independent auditing procedure that would have a deterrent effect on crony deal making and catch it early when it does happen.

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

First, I am an experienced educator. I have worked in the classroom for the last twenty-five years and am a recent winner of faculty of the quarter at the Foster School of Business at the UW. My wife has been a classroom teacher in the Hell's Kitchen and Harlem neighborhoods in New York City and a special ed. Teacher here in SPS. I understand that the whole, vast system that we understand as American education it comes down to teachers working with kids in classrooms—everything else is about supporting the the teaching and learning that happens in classrooms. I consider myself the "Teachers' Candidate" in this race.

Second, I'm a thoughtful person who understands complexity and cares about social justice. My undergraduate degree in Philosophy from Boston College and my graduate degree at Yale Divinity School have given me a deep grounding in the history of ideas with a particular focus on social ethics. I am someone who has an instinctual aversion for social-engineering projects by the well-meaning, but I also understand that we live in a dynamic, fast-changing social and economic environment that requires educators to be open to change and experiment. But I think experiments, for instance in Charter Schools, should be carefully planned and small-scale rather than system-wide. New Orleans is not the future for Seattle in this respect. Experiments that prove successful in their practices can then be sensibly folded into the larger system.

Third, I think it's important for Americans to have a strong grounding in their own heritage, for a curricula that teaches it, and for teachers and curricula that help students to be radically open to a magnificent global diversity. This is the way I raised my son, who in the six months after he graduated from Ingraham High School lived in France in a L'Arche Community working intensively with mentally handicapped in an all-French language environment near Paris, and is now as you read this at the Middlebury Language School studying Chinese. If my wife and I have given my son anything, it is certainly a grounding in his own tradition as well as a profound curiosity, interest, and desire to compassionately understand the Other.

3. 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.

I am proudest first of being a good husband and father.

I'm proud of my work in the classroom and the work I do with my students. I work hard to deliver an interesting, engaging classroom experience for my students. I have stayed up to date with the use of media and internet resources, but most of all I put a lot of energy and personal commitment into my lectures—the oral word—to deliver insights and knowledge that I hope my students will carry forward with them. My students know that I don't tolerate nonsense, but that I care about their learning and that I demand a lot from them to stretch themselves beyond what they are comfortable doing, and to learn that they can be more than they've thought themselves capable. I already mentioned that students voted me Instructor of the Quarter earlier this year.

I'm proud of the team building and teaching I did with elementary school kids when I was a Little League Coach and chosen to coach the All Star Team in 2003. I am proud of the enthusiasm and collaborative spirit I built in the Green Lake Elementary School Scholastic Chess Club when I was the parent coordinator from 1998 to 2002.

I am proud of being good communicator and listener. I know the difference between persuading and fighting, and between being principled and being stubborn. I always stretch myself to understand the other's point of view.

4. 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.

I would describe myself as someone who does the work that needs to be done when I don't see anybody else stepping up. For ten years I was an overnight supervisor at the St. James Cathedral Winter Shelter for the homeless. At Green Lake Elementary School, I stepped up to take over the Parent Coordinator job for the Chess Club and successfully built it into one of the consistently best programs in the metro area. (Having Devon Manber on the team certainly helped.) I coached Little League for the Roosevelt-University-Greenlake (RUG) for four years and was named coach of the All-Star Team in my last year. I liked working with elementary school age kids, and I think I was very good at finding ways for each player, whether in baseball or chess, to take the next step, to develop a higher level of competence, and to grow in confidence. I don't think anything gives me more a sense of pride or satisfaction than seeing kids overcome their fears and learning they can do it.

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

I see my position on the School Board as the District 2 community's representative to make sure its children receive the best education the SPS can deliver. I think its most important responsibility in the current cycle is to hire administrative staff whose priorities are straight, namely to implement the community's will with regard to its educational objectives. I am concerned that the recent board seems more interested in hiring personnel that are more responsive to outside agendas. (See question 1 above.) And so the first order of business is hire administrative staff who understand to whom they are ultimately responsible. Our job as directors thereafter is primarily one of oversight to make sure that staff is executing the basic policies debated and determined by board consensus.

Finished!

If at all possible, send your response to the Municipal League electronically as an email attachment, or insert it into an e-mail message (cec@munileague.org). Mail and fax numbers are listed below. If the League has not contacted you to schedule an interview, please call the League office at your earliest convenience.

Don't forget to send the following to the Municipal League: a resume, a photo, campaign literature, and, if you are an incumbent, constituent newsletters and other materials. Please use the check-off list on the cover sheet of this packet to indicate which items you have sent.

A League Volunteer Candidate Investigator is waiting to receive your questionnaire to begin his or her work. Please complete and return the questionnaire to the League office at your earliest convenience.

Please have your materials to us no later than June 10, 2011. May 31st is preferred!

Email the completed questionnaire and other materials to:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND GOOD LUCK IN YOUR CAMPAIGN!

THE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE OF KING COUNTY

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