

Wentzville NEA
Board Candidate Survey
2011



Name—Michael Cecil Occupation—Retired educator

Address—10 Cedar Run Lane, Apt. 1 Employer—Ft. Zumwalt Schools

Job Title / Description—Substitute teacher

Phone—636-332-5174 Email—Bubba451@msn.com

Children's Names, Ages, Schools or Occupations—Jeremy and Jessica

Sausto; they both graduated from Wentzville R-IV

Education—BA in British literature/writing minor; BS in elementary
education/reading specialization; MAT in social sciences/emphasis middle
school

School District Activities—Attend district activities and perform school
board responsibilities

Civic Activities—Attempt to communicate with the community about the
needs of our district and their children's accomplishments. And I vote.

1. Briefly explain your reason(s) for running for Wentzville School District Board of Education. Please, see my bio on the website. I'll add to it during the interview.

2. What do you see as the critical issues currently facing the District?
Resources for all aspects of our district, breadth and depth of learning, provide training and time for collaboration, use evaluation and data in a supportive manner rather than as a club, provide the type of education we value despite unreasonable expectations from various governmental entities and patrons who want to run a school district solely as a factory cranking out widgets that will slide slickly into their businesses

3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the District? Let's discuss this at the interview.

4. Please rank your top five spending priorities for the school district's

revenue (1 being most important)



_____ buildings and grounds

- _____ class size
- _____ technology
- _____ salaries/benefits
- _____ existing extra and co-curricular programs
- _____ financial reserves
- _____ professional development
- _____ curriculum development
- _____ transportation
- _____ reducing local tax burden

Explain, if necessary: four that jump out are buildings and grounds, class size, salaries/benefits, professional development—Again, I can elaborate at the interview.

5. Do you feel Wentzville teachers are deserving of pay and benefits comparable to the St. Charles and Greater St. Louis school districts? Of course.

6. Would you support board policy that would guarantee Wentzville teachers mediation or binding arbitration by an outside facilitator for

grievances and professional negotiation issues? I have mixed feelings about this item. I expect to discuss this in detail at the interview.

7. How many board meetings have you attended in the last year? Why did you attend? I've attended every regular board meeting, hearing, and special session for the last three years. That seems an obvious commitment you make when you run for a position on the board. In addition, as president it's difficult facilitating meetings, encouraging the public to bring their concerns to the board, performing rumor control, clarifying and maintaining our mission to provide the best education we can, providing a classroom educator's perspective, mediating well-meant but misplaced efforts to paint central office as a gaggle of insensitive thieves bent on feathering their own nests at the expense of the patrons. I could continue, but you get the idea.

8. What is your general philosophy of education? I don't have a general philosophy; I feel passionately about education. You name the issue and I will probably have a long-winded explanation laced with questions and suggestions. I'll address anything you wish at the interview.

9. What changes would you initiate if you were elected? This would probably be better addressed at the interview.

10. What is your assessment of the district's financial condition? Given the financial cesspool in which we find ourselves, I think we're in pretty good shape. Kari anticipated the cuts in transportation and other areas of funding and has kept the board up to speed. Funding for next year is clearly a concern. The main thing I see at this point that will impact all areas will be the success or failure of April's tax levy. Even though we continue to provide data to the patrons about how they're getting an incredible bang for their bucks, I think many of them don't listen so don't understand how you folks at the building level have sacrificed and cut corners to keep us moving forward. More at the interview if you wish.

11. What factors do you feel will attract and retain quality teaching staff?

Salaries and benefits, a reputation as a community that supports its educators and provides the resources necessary to maintain and improve student achievement in all areas, administrators who solicit feedback from staff and students and use it to help make individual and building decisions/practices,

opportunities for staff to pursue advanced training/learning within and outside the district.



12. What are your strategies for winning this campaign? Gaining support from different groups: I've already interviewed with Local 4894, will with you, and am waiting for a specific time to talk to tri-county labor. I think networking will be a crucial link. Plus, I still have my yard signs from the last election. I'm open to suggestions.

13. Do you support the 30-cent tax levy that will also be on the April 5th ballot? Why or why not? What will you do to support or oppose the levy?

Yes. I'm available to do whatever the team decides is necessary.

Thank you for your time and commitment to the children of the Wentzville School District. Wentzville NEA will share these surveys and the results of its interview process with its membership. Candidate interviews will be held February 16, 2011 at the Missouri NEA office (1011 Peruque Creek Crossing, O'Fallon, MO 63366). To schedule / reschedule or if you have any questions, please contact Scott Kiehl, Wentzville NEA President. scottkiehl@wnea.net or 314-494-6151.

