

CANDIDATE INFORMATION SHEET AND ATTESTATION
Newport-Mesa Unified School District
Trustee Area 5

https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1724346040/nmusdus/nmtqw2lmevmztymr0v9y/NMUSD_Area5.pdf

Please complete and return by email no later than January 21, 2025 to sbaltazar@nmusd.us at the District office.

Candidates should make themselves available for a public interview with the Board of Education which is tentatively planned for January 27, 2025 in the Board room of the Newport-Mesa Unified School District.

Date: 01/19/2025

Walsh, Kirstin E.

(Last Name) (First Name) (Initial)

Home Address in Trustee Area 5: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Occupation and Employer: Pediatric Occupational Therapist

Number of Years Residing in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District: 23

Do you have school-aged children? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, what school(s) do they attend? NHHS

1. Do you have prior experience serving on a school board? Please list such prior experience with dates of service.

No

2. Have you held any other public office - appointed or elected. If yes, please explain.

No

3. Please describe your familiarity with public agencies/ local government and share any experience working or volunteering with a public agency.

I do not have direct experience with public agencies or local government. My experience has only been at the NMUSD level.

Candidate Information Sheet - Board Vacancy

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4. Please describe your past and current involvement with NMUSD schools. Have you worked on school committees or participated in school activities recently. Please be specific.

I have been actively involved with the NMUSD schools for the past 13 years. I have been active at Newport Elementary, Ensign Middle School and Newport Harbor High School. I have served multiple positions in both the PTA and the Foundation at all schools. I was the PTA President at Ensign in 2022-2023 and NHHS President 2023-2024, 2024-2025. I have chaired the Turkey Trot at Ensign and the NHHS Holiday market for the past three years. Additionally, I produced school plays, Boo Bash and supported other events at Newport El. I have served on the NHHS water Polo boosters for the past two years. I have served as historian for the past two years on the Harbor Council. In my role as PTA President I have had a hand in all committees, and positions.

5. Why do you want to be a member of the Board of Education? What do you understand to be the role of a Board member?

I want to be a member of the Board of Education because I want to continue to invest in my community. I believe that my 13 years of volunteering in the NMUSD schools puts me in a position to continue to successfully advocate for those that I represent. I come from a very unique background that I feel can be an asset in the continued growth and development of the Newport-Mesa School District. I understand that to be a Board member is an in trust commitment to help make decisions that are in the very best interests of the students and our community as a whole.

6. What should be the relationship between the Board members and the administration in the handling of school concerns?

To advise and consent.

7. Briefly describe your commitment to public education. What do you see as the purpose of public schools.

I think that my years of volunteering in public education shows my commitment to its success. Public education is the opportunity to provide the very best resources, educators, opportunities to ALL kids equally.

8. What do you see as the area(s) most needing improvement in the school district? At the end of your term what would you like to have accomplished?

I think that a high priority item for NMUSD is to invest in the infrastructure of its facilities. Many of our buildings are approaching the limit of their useful life. If NMUSD is to be successful continuing their educational mission reinvestment is needed to ensure the safety of our kids and staff.

9. Please share with us your understanding of NMUSD finances. How will you work to learn about our budgeting processes? What are your thoughts on public financing and/or bonds?

I am beginning to familiarize myself with the current state of the NMUSD finances. I will be the first one to admit my limited experience with budgeting on this scale. I will of course review the budgets and would seek to learn about the assumptions driving the budgets. If resources allow I would like to meet with the key personnel that develop this critical activity. I would be open to discussing public financing, but would want to see that the NMUSD is vigilant in being fiscally responsible in their capital requests.

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10. Please share your thoughts on AB1955 and school district's adherence to federal and state laws.

I agree with the safety act AB1955. I believe that parents should be informed of many issues with regards to their children. However, in this circumstance, there are many variables that could be a detriment to a child if an educator was required to report the current way a child would like to be identified. I would hope that the higher educators that spend time with our children would be able to identify when there would be a greater concern that needed to be communicated with the parents. We should also have resources available for teachers to help support them in these kinds of situations by having a psychologist available to consult when necessary.

11. Please share your thoughts on book censorship in schools.

I am against the banning of books. There is however an appropriate setting for books that may require a more mature reader. I don't think that the elementary school library should have the same volumes available as the high school. I think it needs to be said that we want our students to be exposed to all sorts of ideas for them to weigh and consider and grow as people. Books and reading are essential to strong academic growth.

Applicants are urged to attach a resume/ CV and may attach an optional letter of recommendation. Anything included in or attached to the candidate information sheet and attestation is a public record.

Names of applicants, once verified, will be posted on the District's website.