

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SubDistrict 4 Part 1 of 2, page 1 of 2

Question		Jill Brown (Democrat)	
Contact Info	Date Filed: 2-28-13. 3/2/2013, 9:05pm, resident of district caller assigned; 3/10/2013, Noon, sent report of extending to March 14 deadline; 3/14/2013, 6:15pm, send questionnaire even though caller had not made contact yet. After primary: 4/12, 4:51pm, left message on work number. 4/15, 8pm, reminder email. 4/19, 1:32pm, said to send questionnaire for other email address. 4/27, 12:51am, reminder email. 5/6/13, 5/6/13, 1:00am, last request email sent to candidate's website. Mon, 6 May 2013 07:26am, requested questionnaire. Mon, 06 May 2013 08:24am, ANSWERS RECEIVED.		
01 Biographical	My name is Jill Brown and I am an associate professor of psychology at Creighton University. I am married to Jim Sorrell, who is a psychiatrist who works with adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities and a mother of 5 daughters. Public education has provided me with opportunities of service, growth, and achievement. I grew up on a farm outside of a small rural town in central Nebraska. Education, for me, was a world of new ideas, people, and opportunities. I have never looked back. I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Namibia and received a Fulbright fellowship to study in India. My vision is a school district that provides our diverse student body with a vibrant and dignified educational experience that prepares them for the challenges of an evolving economy. I want to serve the community and work collaboratively to make OPS the best school district in the country. Website: www.jillbrownops.com		
02 Motivation	I am motivated to run for OPS school board because I care deeply about the education of our children in Omaha. I am a child developmentalist by training and hope to use my knowledge of development and research to move OPS forward. My skills as an educator, researcher and a developmental psychologist will be an asset to a newly formed board. Honestly, I see potential in most settings and take such pleasure in watching my students make small steps towards understanding. I believe deeply in understanding the diverse world I live in and most of my research looks at how families of different cultural backgrounds raise their children. Specifically, I have worked with refugees in Omaha, African American, Latino and White families. I have been involved in Program Evaluation research on school readiness among low income families utilizing Early Head Start and know the importance of parents as our real, first teachers in life.		
03 Qualifications	A PhD in Child Development who understands the needs of our children and can guide OPS towards best practices. A teacher who uses innovative practices emphasizing community engagement who understands the challenges our teachers face. A scholar who has received international recognition for my work on the culture and child development and the impact of parental expectations on their children's educational and social outcomes.		
04 Sustainable Development	I believe OPS has made substantial commitment to this. Green policy is essential to our world.		
05 Superintendent and School Board	To be a successful superintendent one needs a great deal of autonomy as well as support and guidance which is the school board's responsibility to provide. A Superintendent that understands clearly the needs of the community and the vision of the school district will be an effective one. It is the board's responsibility to provide that vision and careful oversight. I would represent the interests of the constituents by listening closely and being an active voice on the board.		
06 Nationalized Standards	The Common Core State Standards evolved from a joint effort between the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers to devise common standards for reading and math. The vast majority of states have adopted it. To date Nebraska has not. The Common Core describes grade specific standards that if followed will ensure college or career-readiness. While there is concern that this will diminish state control of education, in fact the states remain in control of setting curricula that promise to meet those goals. In principle the adoption of these standards could increase the rigor and cohesiveness of our education policy. It is my understanding that Nebraska Board of Education has initiated a study to examine how our standards compare to the Common Core. I believe that ultimately Nebraska will fall in line with the rest of states and adopt the Common Core and I would support that unless I have clear evidence that any independent standards set by Nebraska are at least as rigorous in providing a broad, enriched curriculum that promises to assist us in closing the achievement gap for OPS students.		
07 State Standards	The most extreme form of teaching to the test approach is detrimental to our students, our teachers and the taxpayers. However, in practice it is usually a continuum from designing curriculum after looking at the objectives to the unsavory practice of drilling students on the specific questions. It is my belief that the tension between the instructional and assessment communities, as well the pejorative connotations that "teaching to the test" entails, will continue unabated so long as testing and assessment are seen as something quite apart from instruction and learning, rather than an integrated reflection of what was intentionally taught. Many educational scholars believe that what is needed is a deliberate attempt on the part of all parties to link curriculum, instruction, assessment, and standards in a more generative and even transparent way.		
08 Abstinence, Contraceptives	Yes, Where this used to be an issue left to parents it is no longer so. Sex education aims to reduce the risks of potentially negative outcomes from sexual behavior, such as unwanted or unplanned pregnancies and infection with sexually transmitted diseases including HIV. It also aims to contribute to young people's positive experience of their sexuality by enhancing the quality of their relationships and their ability to make informed decisions over their lifetime. Sex education that works, is sex education that contributes to both these aims thus helping young people to be safe and enjoy their sexuality.		
09 Scientifically Criticize Evolutionary Theory	Evolution is an undisputed fact within the scientific community where the level of consensus for evolution is essentially universal. I use evolutionary psychology theories to guide my own research on families. But a mark of a good education is openness to debate therefore we should not be afraid to critique any theory. The support for Abrahamic accounts or other creationist alternatives is very low among scientists, however, Gallup reported in 2012 "Forty-six percent of Americans believe in the creationist view that God created humans in their present form at one time within the last 10,000 years. The prevalence of this creationist view of the origin of humans is essentially unchanged from 30 years ago." We should be able to discuss this.		
10 Global Warming	Again, global warming has scientifically proven support but open debate is essential for true learning.		
11 Religious Freedom	This was decided by the US Supreme Court.		
12 Lifestyles	I don't think equality should be the core of this debate. All people deserve to be treated with fairness, respect and dignity. Although it is critical today to protect our classmates and neighbors from harassment, the issues of tolerance and inclusion need to be taught. We must embrace these values towards all people for all time. This includes but is not limited to all races, religions, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and those with special needs.		
13 Education Support	Whatever support that alternative education receives should be clearly transparent to all stakeholders, most importantly taxpayers.		
14 Ecation Business Connection	None.	15 Parental Rights Amendment	[not answered]
		16 Governing documents	[not answered]

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SubDistrict 4 Part 1 of 2 (cont.), page 2 of 2

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17 Constituents' concerns	I plan to be actively involved in the community and available to my constituents. I also will visit the schools regularly and upon invitation.				
18 Family	My family has been campaigning with me. We all know how important education is to us and to the community and I imagine if elected my family will understand this even more clearly. They have been my biggest supporters.				
19 Personal/Political	Personal is political but one needs to be well informed and use wise counsel before making decisions that affect an entire community.				
20 Political decisions	No	21 Abortion/capital punishment	[not answered]	23 Anything else?	[not answered]
22 Past President	In deciding who to vote for I chose the candidate that I believe would move this country forward, who had realistic ideas about how the USA functioned in the global world and promoted increased civil liberties and equality.				
Extra biographical	married, Spouse: James H. Sorrell, #of children: 5, High School: Minden High School, College: UNL, Degrees: PhD, Church: Christian, Employer: Creighton University,				

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS – SubDistrict 4 Part 2 of 2, page 2 of 2

Question	Justin Wayne (Democrat)			
Extra biographical	married, Spouse: , #of children: 1, High School: Northwest High School, College: Creighton University, Degrees: BSBA; JD, Church: Methodist, Professional Associations: Nebraska Bar Association, Organizations: Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Midwest Trailblazers, Employer: Union Pacific Railroad, www.justintwayne.com			
Contact Info	Date Filed : 2-19-13. 3/2/2013, 9:05pm, resident of district caller assigned; 3/10/2013, Noon, sent report of extending to March 14 deadline; 3/14/2013, 6:15pm, send questionnaire even though caller had not made contact yet.. After Primary: 4/12, 4:51pm, left message. 4/15, 8pm, reminder email. 4/19, 1:59pm, left message. 4/27, 12:31am, reminder email.. 4/29, 7:55pm, left message.			

See next page for actual questions asked.

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD Questions

Question Key	Actual Questions asked. “*”d” questions offered as minimums to answer
Date Filed	The date the candidate officially filed with the County election office.
Contact Info	Contact Information - ranging from the details of when we inputted the candidate's responses, to attempts to establish contact, to if we still need a volunteer caller, to if the candidate is unopposed and therefore not on the list to contact.
01 Biographical	*Please include biographical information, e.g. family members, church affiliation, employment, etc., you consider important for voters to know and/or reference your website.
02 Motivation	*What has motivated you to seek this office? Is there a key issue you hope to address?
03 Qualifications	*What three primary qualifications do you bring to this office?
04 Sustainable Development	* Discuss how the sustainable development presented in the UN Agenda 21 comprehensive plan can be a benefit or detriment to the citizens. What do you believe should be the government's role in establishing green policy?
05 Superintendent and School Board	How do you view the check and balance relationships between the superintendent and the school board? How do you picture representing the interests of the constituents if they differ with the superintendent's?
06 Nationalized Standards	*Some are pushing for nationalized learning standards (federal curriculum) and assessment systems. Do you agree or disagree with that idea? Why?
07 State Standards	Discuss the various curriculum standards that the State Board of Education has been working on. What is your thinking concerning the “teaching to the test” approach?
08 Abstinence, Contraceptives	Should schools teach abstinence-only sex education? Why or why not? Should schools teach about contraceptive use?
09 Scientifically Criticize Evolutionary Theory	*Should teachers be required to include scientific criticisms of evolutionary theory in their science curriculum? Why or why not?
10 Global Warming	Should curriculum include debate as to whether global warming exists, is man-caused, or part of the cycles of nature?
11 Religious Freedom	Should Muslim students have freedom to pray at specified times? Should Christian students have freedom to pray in public? Should those without a specific religion be free to cancel other religious practices?
12 Lifestyles	*Should schools promote all lifestyles, beliefs and values to be equal?
13 Education Support	What support (e.g. vouchers, tax credit) should alternative schools (whether charter, home school, private school) have from taxes collected for education?
14 Education Business Connection	Do you, a family member, or your employer have any business relationships serving education? Please describe.
15 Parental Rights Amendment	*Do you oppose or support a Parental Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution? Why? (See www.parentalrights.org for proposed language.)
(These last questions we ask regardless of what office is being sought. You may not think these relate to your office, but how you respond to these controversial questions might help the voter know how you would respond to other controversies in office.)	
16 Governing documents	What do you see as the major governing documents for this position? Have you read them? What does it mean to “uphold the Constitution” in the position you seek?
17 Constituents' concerns	*What plans do you have for remaining aware of your constituents' concerns and desires?
18 Family	What role has your family played in your seeking this office? In holding this position, how do you foresee it affecting your family?
19 Personal/Political	To what degree should an office holder's personal principles be reflected in political decision making? To whom/what will you go for counsel in decision making?
20 Political decisions	Is it appropriate to use the Bible or other religious writings in making political decisions? If so, what would you use? If not, why not?
21 Abortion/capital punishment	*What definition do you give for each of these terms: pro-life, pro-choice. Which is your view and to what level of conviction do you hold that view? Some say capital punishment is a pro-life issue. What is your perspective?
22 Past President	*What key considerations did you use in deciding how you voted for President in 2012?
23 Anything else?	Declare anything else you want voters to know about you.
Extra biographical	Biographical information from what candidates provided the Douglas County Election office and/or other web resources. Candidates are asked to email kathy@voterinformation.org if any information is inaccurate. When known, candidate's website is noted.