Delaware PTA 2015 School Board Candidate Q&A

My name is Ron Pierce, and I retired in 2006 after 35 years as an educator in Delaware. I have walked the walk and talked the talk. After completing the last year of a retiring board member’s term, I ran for a full term and am completing the last year. I am currently seeking re-election to the Colonial School District Board of Education. My intent is to continue working to improve educational opportunities for students in Colonial and Delaware.

2. I support the concept of full inclusion as long as students are in settings where all of their needs are being met and supports are in place to insure educational growth. I will continue to ask for district updates on professional development efforts in this area and will insist that all employees receive the necessary training. All students deserve this.

3. I support the right of parents to opt out of state assessments and hope that they will do so only after careful thought. I also agree that there is too much standardized testing, and we need to cut in this area. The state has asked each district to conduct a review of all required testing. The expectation is that parents, teachers and board members will be involved in this process. Parents need to make sure that their district is including these groups. They’re your children and you have a right to a say in what goes on in your district.

4. Results of the state assessment should part of the teacher accountability system but not weighted to the point that our good teachers are hurt due to the lack of student or parent engagement. A dentist does not lose his license when patients don’t brush and floss daily and get cavities.

5. 21st Century skills need to be improved at the classroom level. The state can help with is by trimming the bureaucracy at the state level and moving this money to the classroom level. Part of this move could be in the form of increased technology infrastructure support. 21st Century Skills and best be achieved through increased use of technology and moving toward a system of personalized learning. The Colonial School District is moving in this direction and I will continue to support this effort.

6. Access to technology and personalized learning are critical in todays’ world and must be maintained. We need to not just maintain current levels. We need to increase these levels.

7. Students in our classrooms are your children. Parents must be engaged in building and district decisions. This is an area that needs to improve if we are going to take our students into the 21st Century. Many parents do not understand the power they could have in bringing about positive change.

8. Extracurricular activities to creating well rounded students and future citizens. They should be maintained as long as we are not short changing educational programs. I do feel that participation in these activities should be dependent on mastery of standards.

9. Music, art, physical education, technology and foreign languages are an important part of a child’s education. They make them better students and better prepared to join a world community.

10. if I could change one thing in our school budget, I would trim the bureaucracy at the district level and put more resources into the building and classrooms. The number of supervisors and student advisors could be trimmed.

After the election, I would be happy to meet with PTA groups to discuss these or other issues.