



Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Candidate:

This questionnaire is a prerequisite for consideration for endorsement by the Cleveland Heights Democrats at our endorsement meeting at 7:00 p.m. on September 13, 2017 at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, One Monticello Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, Ohio. You are encouraged to attend this meeting, and if you choose to do so, you will be given an opportunity to speak to the Club prior to the voting on endorsements.

With respect to the endorsement meeting, only club members who are in good standing and on the official membership roster for forty-five or more consecutive days prior to September 13, 2017 may vote on the endorsements. A majority of those members in good standing present and voting make an endorsement for office.

Please complete and return this questionnaire to Screening Committee Chair Katura Simmons at katuras414@yahoo.com, 1736 Wood Road., Cleveland Heights, 44121, no later than September 4th at 5:00 PM.

Name: Dan Heintz

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By completing and returning this Candidate Questionnaire, I affirm the following:

1. I am a registered Democrat.
2. I agree to comply with the purpose of the Club as stated in Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution, that is:

The purpose of this organization shall be to provide a means by which residents of Cleveland Heights can organize to promote and develop the highest principles of the Democratic Party, to improve the administration of government, and to work for the good of all citizens. This organization shall endorse and support for public office all candidates whose election will, in the judgment of the membership, best advance the Purpose. In pursuing its Purpose, this organization may also cooperate with the National, State, and County Democratic Committees, and pursue other programs of benefit to the community.

3. I agree not to openly oppose any Democratic nominee in a general partisan election.
4. I agree not to openly support any opponent of a Democratic nominee in a general partisan election.
5. I have not violated the above 1-4 during the past five (5) years.

If you cannot affirm as to numbers 2-4 please explain your reasoning below.

1. What do you hope to accomplish on behalf of the community as a member of the Board of Education?

Our schools are currently losing more than \$7.6 million to charter and voucher schools. I believe that our schools have not been proactive enough in response to this. Until this year, our CH-UH schools have never even audited these students to learn which of them are still living within our borders. If elected, I will propose an annual residency audit of every student for whom our district is being billed for charter and voucher school tuition. I will also endeavor to continue the good work of Ron Register in building relationships with other school districts. These relationships can provide a platform for a more coordinated response to the legislation related to charter and voucher schools.

The state of Ohio forecasts that we will lose 2% of our enrollment each year for the foreseeable future. This is an enormous problem for our schools. Currently, the CH-UH schools do not conduct an "exit interview" when a family withdraws their student(s). As a result, we know **that** we are losing enrollment, but we don't know **why** we are. Until we know what the problems are, we won't know how to solve them. Therefore, If elected, I will propose that we carefully develop an exit interview to be conducted as part of the withdrawal process. The data from these interviews will be compiled and reported to the Administration and Board of Education so that we can look for trends or areas that need attention.

Many of our families rely on our busses to bring their students to and from school each day. Unfortunately, this reliance means that they cannot stay after school to receive the extra help that they occasionally need. If elected, I will endeavor to establish a "late bus" which is available (even 1 day a week) to ensure that every CH-UH student has access to after school support.

2. What qualities, skills, insights, or perspectives do you possess which would be of value as a member of the Board of Education?

Perspectives. I have seen the CH-UH schools from many perspectives. As a child, I looked at our classrooms from the perspective of a student, and then graduate. I have viewed our schools from the perspective of a small business owner who was happy to make donations as expressions of gratitude to the community which was supporting me. As a taxpayer, there have been times when I have looked with great pride at our schools, and other times when I have scratched my head in confused disappointment. From a parent's perspective, I have been so appalled by a building Principal's ineptness, that I have literally withdrawn my child from our schools. In the course of this withdrawal, I was further disappointed that no one in our district ever took the time, or showed the interest to ask "Why are you leaving?" A few years later, I saw our schools from the perspective of a father who understood that our CH-UH middle schools offered opportunities that made returning

my son easy and exciting. Today, my perspective as the father of a Heights High student is one of great satisfaction. My son and his friends are receiving a fantastic education which celebrates the values of this community and prepares them to be passionate, engaged citizens when they leave. From the perspective of a candidate for our Board of Education, I am very optimistic, as I have great confidence in, and admiration for all three of the others who I will share a ballot with.

3. What education, employment, and/or life experiences have prepared you to serve as a member of the Board of Education?

When I closed my store, Cedar Hill Video (at Cedar & Fairmount), I went back to school to become a teacher. After two years teaching in the Cleveland Public Schools, I was laid off due to budget cuts, and then got a job teaching 8th Grade American History at Chardon Middle School, where I have been teaching ever since. Being thus immersed in public education for the past 15 or so years has given me a deep understanding of many of the issues facing our schools today. Some of these issues are: high stakes testing, teacher evaluations, school funding, the evolution of special education, curriculum and school report cards. As a teacher who is active in his profession beyond the walls of the classroom, I also have extensive experience on committees related to contract negotiations, strategic planning, school levies, professional development, and addressing the impact of charter and voucher schools.

Members of the Heights Dems are certainly aware that our schools are losing three dedicated Board members. Kal and Eric have each served twelve years, and Ron has served for sixteen! The result is that in December, our Board of Education will have 44 years of combined experience. In January, it will have just 4 years of combined experience. My years as a classroom teacher and professional leader have provided me the experience necessary to serve our community at a time when that experience will be needed.

4. Describe your recent community, professional, charitable, and political involvement. Please provide an example of a situation where your participation made a difference.

Last fall, I helped out with our CH-UH levy campaign. I did so by attending meetings & sharing my experiences working on Chardon's levy campaigns. I also passed out campaign literature at Open Houses and football games as well as door to door canvassing. Thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, and the generosity and faith of our taxpayers, our efforts were successful and our schools now bring in roughly \$5.8 million more annually. Unfortunately, charter and voucher schools take every dime of that from our students. This knowledge inspired me to become involved in the Heights Coalition for Public Education last winter. The coalition conducted a "Listening Project" which attempted to contact every single CH-UH household that was using charter schools. We wanted to interview them in order to learn about the *push and pull* forces that impacted their decision. One of the things that we quickly discovered is that many of these families no longer appear to be living in our school district. I was surprised to learn that our schools had, at that time, never audited their residency. I have heard that the school district is in the early stages of conducting the first such audit now, and am eager to learn the results. With roughly \$6,000 on the line for each student, this has the possibility of making a very significant difference!

5. How will you raise funds for your campaign?

My campaign is raising money through donations. I have received checks from members of my family as well as many of my old friends. I have also received donations from many community members who are eager to have the voice of a teacher represented on our Board of Education again. We have not had a teacher occupy one of those seats in nearly twenty years.

Krissy and Mark Gallagher are hosting a fundraiser, and I may have one at a local restaurant.

My campaign's website: www.danheintz.com offers a link to donate via PayPal. My campaign's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofDanHeintz> does as well.

I do have a Designation of Treasurer on file with the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections. My designated Treasurer is Matt Weigand. I also do have a dedicated bank account for my campaign. This is at PNC bank, and I can provide proof of this if you would like.

6. Following is a list of issues facing the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education. Please choose three or more and briefly describe how you propose to address these issues.

a. Improving the administration of testing and student achievement. We dedicate far too much time administering tests. Some of these are required by the state, but not all are. Since tests are designed to inform instruction, I believe that classroom teachers, not administrators, should determine what locally mandated tests (MAP etc.) tests are appropriate, when they should be administered, and what information can be gleaned from them.

Since many standardized tests have historically resulted in scores closely aligned with race and SES factors, **placement/access to academic classes and/or programs should not be determined by a student's performance on standardized tests alone.**

b. Improving the image of our public schools and encouraging enrollment versus private school options for families. Enrollment is a major area of interest for me. The state of Ohio forecasts that our schools will lose 2% of our enrolment annually for the foreseeable future. This is an enormous problem, yet our schools have done precious little to address it. I am convinced that we can stabilize, then increase our enrollment in the next few years. We have a great story to tell! Our schools are improving! Our schools are welcoming, and safe! Our International Baccalaureate program is expanding. We offer more AP courses than may of the nearby private schools. Our grads are National Merit Scholars, and are earning scholarships from some of the most prestigious universities in the nation. We need to get better at telling our story. To do this, we must follow the model used against us by charter and private schools: Marketing!

Every school in our district should be direct marketing, at least once a quarter, to every family who's child would be, but isn't using that school. The marketing should start with "Come See & Join..." Come Join our Halloween parade on October 28th. Come see our Orchestra concert on December 19th. Come Join our bike safety class on May 25th. Come see our Science Fair, Track Team, Robotics Club, Student Art Show... We beat ECOT every time one of those kids walks through our doors. We just need to get them through our doors!

d. Achieving an effective relationship between the Board of Education and the various unions with which it negotiates.

I have been an activist in my union local, the Chardon Education Association, for many years. I have served as a Building Representative for a decade, and as our Vice President for a term. I have negotiated three contracts and serve on our Labor-Management Team, Local Professional Development Committee, and many others. I have also served on the Steering Committees for the District's Strategic Plan and Levy Campaigns. My candidacy has been endorsed by the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union, and if elected, I will work hard to improve the strained relationship between the teachers and the district administration.

Much of the atmosphere under which a school district operates is a result of the contract negotiations process. When contract negotiations are heated and confrontational, it takes a long time for those feelings to dissipate. One proposal that I will make is to leave the standard "adversarial bargaining" model, and move to "interest based bargaining" instead. I have personal experience with both models, and have found IBB to be far more collaborative, less personal, faster, and leads to a contract that both sides feel satisfied with. I also feel that , elected members of our Board of Education must be present during contract negotiations. Without members present, the Board cannot be certain that the reports they are receiving are accurate. Finally, having elected Board members present sends powerful message that these negotiations are important and so is everyone sitting around the table.

e. Forging a collaborative working relationship with elected officials in the three cities (Cleveland Heights, University Heights, and South Euclid) served by our school district.

We know that the quality of schools is the single most important factor that home buyers use when deciding where to purchase. We also know that the public schools are responsible the largest chunk of property taxes - another one of the most important factors. The relationship(s) between our schools and the cities who host us then is critically important. As a member of our Board of Education, I will work to build strong relationships with all of the members of those City Councils.