

port for all schools within the district. We should consider public/private partnerships for expanding vocational/workforce readiness and college preparation. Tax dollars need to go into funding teachers and programs that have a direct impact on student performance and preparation for college, a vocation, or the military.

**Sherri Hawkins**

We are fortunate in this district that we provide an exceptional education to our students. We have been accredited with distinction once again and have one of the top graduation rates in the state. Even as the fourth-lowest funded school district in the state, we provide a quality education. My experience as a parent with large class sizes tells me we can't sustain this. State funding for education is flawed so this needs to be addressed. Meanwhile, we can take more control of our funding by asking the taxpayer for monies where 100 percent will stay in the district. As a taxpayer, I'm sensitive to any tax increase, too. I would only approve of asking for the least amount needed for a specific time frame and provide tangible evidence of its use. Since I have been on the board, the district has operated with a balanced budget. The budget is free of excess spending and the district continually looks for cost savings in every building and department. The board recently gave each building more control of funds so spending decisions are as close to the student as possible. I will continue to ensure the budget is balanced.

**Christopher Taylor**

No response was received from this candidate.

**Tiffany Upchurch**

Data and studies show that achievement and individual student academic growth are not tied to the quantity of spending; rather they are tied to quality. The quality of education in our district is a testament to the quality of our educators and support. That being said, we must meet our fiscal responsibility to ensure all children, regardless of ability and background, have the skills and infrastructure to learn and feel supported, safe, and confident at school while our teachers feel respected, rewarded, and connected, our parents feel engaged and involved, and we are fiscally responsible to our small businesses and homeowners. We are no longer in recession and lawmakers anticipate per-pupil funding to continue to increase each year. Despite the Gallagher Amendment, it appears our actual district per-pupil funding is increasing (2012: \$6.1K, 2015: \$6.9K, 2016: \$7K). While per-pupil funding is increasing, and revenue from businesses and homes are growing, I would like to set priorities on spending that supports the students in the classroom, which includes quality time instruction with more teachers and support staff, taking care of our busses and bus drivers, taking advantage of donation/grant opportunities, and ensuring budget accountability. I support the district's goal of implementing sight-based budgeting.

**Question: What are two to three strengths of the district? What are two to three needs? Why did you choose these?**

**Thomas De Angelis**

D-38 is a District of Distinction, but we must continue to improve or risk backsliding. Strengths: exceptional teaching professionals and dedicated district staff; opportunities (e.g., RAD, Key Club) for students to apply leadership skills and develop peer support groups; and very engaged parents. Any one of these strengths individually would help a school district to be good. When all three principal players in our educational system combine to foster a positive environment in our schools, you go from good to great. The education of our kids in D-38 comes from a variety of sources, to include the formal from



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**Tom DeAngelis**  
D38 School Board



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