

2023 School Board Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: **Salvatore DiPrima**

Please complete this questionnaire and return via email to OBEAPresident@gmail.com by 6:00 PM on Sunday, August 13th.

1. Why are you seeking a position on the Board of Education?

As a former Board of Education member, I am saddened and concerned to see the direction the Board has taken recently. It seems like the unity, camaraderie, understanding of issues and overall caring we built up are gone. Although the pandemic seemed to bring out a renewed parental interest, much of that interest appears to be personal vendettas and personal interests. If elected, I would hope I could be a catalyst to bring back these values and get the Board back to where it should be. I have the experience I feel is needed to make things right.

2. What do you see as the top three education issues the Old Bridge Board of Education must address?

The top three education issues we face are State aid loss, Special Education and Full day pre-k.

In recent years we have lost, and will continue to lose millions of dollars in state aid, keeping programs and personnel in place has been a top priority. Our community has become accustomed to a high level of education and we must continue to find ways to stay at that level. I applaud Central Administration and the BOE for the many hours spent brainstorming on ways to be creative and not have to lessen our standards, and I feel we've done a pretty good job at it.

We have developed a top notch special education program, but we cannot become stagnant. We need to build on our DEI program, not only for special needs but for all the diversities we have in our community. The community deserves the best. I look forward to working with and listening to our special education community to ensure that all students receive the

same level and opportunity to the quality education that they are entitled too.

I recently attended the Superintendents forum regarding full day pre-k, the meeting was so well attended, that it's obvious this is something very important to the community. Assuming we are awarded the grant we are seeking, the Board must approve the program.

3. What is your philosophy on the collective bargaining process?

Having served on the negotiations committee numerous times, I've learned the complexities and importance of the CBA. Teachers are the lifeblood of any school, a school without teachers is just brick and mortar. Salaries make up the bulk of the yearly operating budget and we must acknowledge, respect and be fair and equitable when negotiating contracts while still keeping the tax payer in mind.

4. Explain your understanding of the role of educational support professionals in our school community. What is your position on subcontracting or privatization of these services?

Every individual that helps operate our School District plays an important role in the lives of students both inside and outside of the classroom. They are someone a child can look up to and trust. They are a familiar face to our students, perhaps a neighbor or a friend. They can add more individualized attention to a child's specific needs and they keep our schools running and our students safe, healthy, and ready to learn every day. As for subcontracting or privatization, it won't work, it was a topic of discussion a few years ago and it quickly got shot down. Our number 1 priority is keeping their employment in house. If circumstances dictated that we must go outside, we would need to find a way to avoid that.

5. What else would you like the Old Bridge Education Association to know about you as you run for this very important office?

I have been involved in this school district and community one way or another since I moved here 29 years ago, through PTA, concession stand service, community events and Church service. I have 2 children who both successfully went through the system and are now grown so I have no personal agenda, I am here for all children. I have no political aspirations and believe there is no room for politics on a School Board. In my previous tenure I have served as Board President, Vice President and through specific training have attained Certified Board member status. I love this town and I'd like to think I've actually made a difference. I've seen and been a part of the growth and rejuvenation of the Old Bridge Township School District. I am proud to have been Board President when we defeated the Charter School application and earned our First Blue Ribbon award. I have always taken my responsibility as a Board of Education member very serious. My integrity and dedication mean a lot to me.

Salvatore DiPrimo

Candidate Name

8/12/23

Date

Once again, thank you for completing this survey. Best wishes on the upcoming election.