



King County Democrats 2007 General Candidate Questionnaire

Name	Peter Maier	Position Sought	Seattle School Board, District #1
Campaign Address	1300 Hoge Bldg, 705 2d Ave	Campaign Manager	None to date
City	Seattle	Phone Number	206-623-2800
State	WA	Fax Number	206-623-2186
Zip Code	98104	E-mail Address	PLMaier@aol.com
Precinct	36-2506	Web Page	Petermaierforschoolboard.com

Present Occupation Incumbent? How Long?	Attorney (consumer protection), 25+ years. Not incumbent	COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION <i>(Leave Blank - For Committee Use Only)</i>
Employer	Maier & Severance (self employed)	
Union Affiliations	None	

WHAT RATINGS AND ENDORSEMENTS HAVE YOU RECEIVED?			
Legislative District(s)/Unions	Municipal League	Women's Political Caucus	SeaMEC
No organizational endorsements to date. Endorsed by 36 th District State legislators Jeanne Kohl-Welles, Helen Sommers, Mary Lou Dickerson			

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.					
#	Question	Yes	No	Qualified*	
1.	Are you a Democrat? Are you known as a Democrat? If not, explain.	Yes			
2.	Do you support the King County Democratic Platform?	Yes			
3.	Do you support the right of workers (excluding military) to bargain and strike?	Yes			
4.	Do you support affirmative action?	Yes			
5.	Do you support freedom of choice in contraception, abortion and sterilization?	Yes			
6.	Do you support public funding for abortions for poor women?	Yes			
7.	Do you support school vouchers? Do you support charter schools?		No		
8.	Do you support the Davis-Bacon Act?	Yes			
9.	Do you support equal rights for women?	Yes			
10.	Do you support the Patriot Act?		No		
11.	Do you support the restoration of voting rights to persons convicted of a felony who have served their sentence?	Yes			
12.	How long have you been registered to vote? Have you missed any elections in the last three years?	30+ yrs; no election missed in 3 yea			



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<i>If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions please explain on a separate sheet of paper.</i>		Yes	No
14.	Have you ever failed to pay any taxes or court ordered judgments?		No
15.	Have you ever been found in violation of a Public Disclosure Commission, Federal Election Commission or Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission regulation?		No
16.	Have you ever been convicted of a felony?		No

* - If you wish to qualify your answer, please provide an explanation on a separate sheet of paper.



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**PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS
(YOU MAY USE A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER FOR ANSWERS)**

1. Are you a member of another political party? If so, which ones? Have you ever supported or given money to a candidate from another party in a partisan race? If so, whom?

No. I am a Democrat and have been for many years, stretching back to college in the early 1970s. I have been active in many campaigns for Democratic candidates. I have never supported or given money to a non-Democrat in a partisan race.

2. Are you a member of your local Democratic District Party? Have you contributed financially to any Democratic Organization? Have you been a Precinct Committee Officer? When/Where?

Yes, I have been an active member of 36th District Democrats for about a decade or more. I have been a PCO in the 36th District (Pct 36-2506) for 10+ years. I always doorbell my precinct each election. I am also a member of the King County Democrats. I am a frequent contributor to the 36th District Democrats and Democratic candidates on the local, state and federal levels.

3. What are the main messages of your campaign? What is your campaign plan? How many doors have you knocked on to date, pieces of mail planned, budgeting, staffing? Why will you win? What is the fundraising goal for your campaign? How much have you raised to date?

Change and Leadership. We need a Seattle School Board of which we can be proud. We need leaders on our school board who can mobilize the community to support our schools and their children and who have financial management skills. District One needs a school director who will be steady, responsible and focused. If elected, I will work with my school board colleagues to set long-term priorities. Then the Board must hold the Superintendent and her staff accountable for results. A new School Board and the new Superintendent working together will help to restore public confidence in our public schools.

In the past four years we have not seen this kind of leadership from Sally Soriano, the incumbent. She frequently votes "no", but she has seldom proposed specific solutions. By contrast, all my life I have worked tirelessly on developing and implementing specific solutions to problems.

I have assembled a strong campaign team and I am receiving political advice from Blair Butterworth, George Scarola, and Lisa Macfarlane, with whom I have worked with on many school funding and school levy campaigns. I have a campaign steering committee and enthusiastic volunteers. I have already knocked on 800 doors. To date, I have gathered over 200 endorsements and I have raised approximately \$21,000 from over 120 donors. I have printed 5,000 "slim jim" flyers and have begun building yard signs. I intend to use direct mail in both the primary and the general elections.

4. What are the single most pressing issues facing your jurisdiction? What actions would you take if elected?

My goal for the School District is to give every child in every classroom in Seattle Public Schools the opportunity for a quality education. We have a way to go before we reach that goal. I believe that, working with the new Superintendent, the School Board should agree upon a handful of priorities for the next year and then focus upon them.



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Examples of possible priorities that the Superintendent and Board should consider and agree upon include:

- **Long term fiscal health of District.** Financial crises and roller coaster budgets are harmful and demoralizing to everyone, especially for teachers and parents and for those students and schools who are already struggling. The Board should set aside time for a twice yearly review, in a public meeting, of the current and predicted budget situation using a 5-year forward projection. The Board should use this process to hold the staff accountable for fiscal integrity and to make budgetary changes before serious problems arise.
- **Turn around low performing schools to help struggling students and close the achievement gap.** The District, while making progress, still struggles with an unacceptable achievement gap. One way to focus on this important problem would be a turn around plan for low performing schools. The Board, working together with the Superintendent, could start by identifying a half dozen or so schools where large numbers of students are not achieving at grade level and where the school is not showing improvements year to year. Schools like Maple Elementary and Van Asselt Elementary remind us that high student achievement can be the reality in schools with a high percentage of students from low-income families. We need to replicate that success in all of our low performing schools, but we won't succeed without strong principals and building leadership and broad and deep community support. Our school district needs a system for growing, training and supporting highly capable principals in every one of our schools.
- **Math Initiative.** A District focus on math will help all students, especially those who are not now at grade level. The Board should complete the ongoing selection of a math curriculum so that the District has a common beginning point for the math curriculum (with waivers for schools that can demonstrate high and broad achievement using another curriculum). The Board should then focus on providing support to teachers and principals in implementing the new curriculum and in improving math instruction (e.g.. training, coaches in classroom, release time for collaboration, etc.) This is likely to be a multi-year process.
- **9th Grade Initiative.** Ninth grade is a critical transition year where we lose too many students who later drop out. This initiative should identify those 9th graders who are most at risk (e.g. failing two or more classes at the initial grade report in early October) then track those students and work with them and their families to figure out how to keep them engaged in school. The initiative could also identify entering 9th graders who are at risk and have "pre-High School" class in August to get them off to a good start. This initiative would require additional funds. Alternatively, this initiative could focus on SPS' middle schools, which are of uneven quality and which are where many students begin the dropout process.
- **Review Student Assignment and Transportation Programs:**
We need to review the District's student assignment and transportation plan. This review should take place together with the District starting to implement strategies for turning around low performing schools, so that there is public confidence and support for any changes in student assignment or transportation.

The present system of student assignment and transportation has significant holes and



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weaknesses, is unpredictable and is overly complex for many parents to use (especially parents who are less educated or non-English speaking). Transportation consumes too much of the District's scarce funds and burns lots of fuel. The Board should continue the ongoing review of these programs that has just begun and should listen to parents and the public. Issues that this review should include are: completing the transition of school students to Metro buses; adjusting assignment areas to match future enrollment changes; elimination of gaps in assignment areas, esp. for high school, and possible consideration of a focus more on neighborhood schools so as to provide more predictability and to reduce transportation costs.

5. If you are a candidate in a contested primary race, what record of performance, ability, experience, personal qualities, and positions on issues distinguish you from your opponent(s)? If you do not receive the nomination, is there any reason you could not support your Democratic opponent in the general election? Please explain.

MY RECORD:

I grew up in Seattle and over the years went to five Seattle Public Schools, graduating from Nathan Hale in 1970. Both of my children attended Seattle Public Schools and graduated from Ballard High. While they were in school I was very active in PTAs, as an officer, Site Council member, and fundraiser and as the head of three grant projects for construction of playground and public plaza improvements. Twice I have been awarded the PTSA "Golden Acorn" for my volunteer service to Seattle's public schools.

For decades I have fought to improve and support public education and Seattle Public Schools. As President of Schools First Coalition in 2004 and again in 2007, I led the successful levy/bond renewal campaigns that raised hundreds of millions of dollars for Seattle Public Schools. These efforts required countless hours of my volunteer time, and have given me considerable knowledge of the issues in our city's public schools. On a state level, in 2000 I was heavily involved in the successful I-728 "class size" initiative (including personally gathering over 1,000 signatures to put the initiative on the ballot). I also supported and worked on the unsuccessful I-884 initiative to increase public funding of public education. I have repeatedly traveled to Olympia to testify and lobby for reforms in K-12 public education funding. I have also worked actively against allowing charter schools in Washington State and did volunteer legal work for the campaign committee that successfully opposed a charter school initiative that was on the ballot in 1996.

In my professional life, I am a consumer protection attorney, focusing on the representation of individual consumers in Lemon Law cases and in their disputes with car dealers. I co-own and manage my own small law firm. I have been recognized by other lawyers as one of Seattle's "Top Lawyers" (2001 and 2007) and one of Washington State's "Superlawyers" (2007). I have also taught consumer law at Edmonds Community College and have taught many continuing legal education courses.

I am a loyal and active Democrat, as described above.

INCUMBENT SALLY SORIANO'S RECORD:

Sally Soriano, the incumbent in District One, as a School Board Director has taken actions that are inappropriate and divisive. For example, she participated (by offering and filing an affidavit on behalf of the plaintiffs) in a lawsuit against the School District and Board.



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Inexcusably, as a member of the School Board in Oct. 2006 she voted against putting on the ballot the \$490 million bond measure that included \$20 million for water and air quality improvements and monies to rebuild Nathan Hale High and to replace an old math wing at Ingraham in District #1 as well as for other desperately needed capital building projects across the city. The bond measure went to the voters in Feb. 07 and received a 68% yes vote.

Sally Soriano is not a Democrat. In the 2006 Senate race she endorsed Green Party candidate Aaron Dixon (her endorsement is still on the Dixon website). In the 2004 Presidential race she led the petition drive to put Ralph Nader on the Washington ballot. By contrast, I worked hard and donated substantially to re-elect Sen. Cantwell and to defeat George Bush.

6. Do you believe the current structure of taxes and/or fees that generate funds in your area are fair? If not, how would you change it?

The present state tax system is unfair, unstable, inadequate and regressive. I favor a state income tax, as well as extending the sales tax to services (including lawyers). We also need tax reform to provide better and more stable funding statewide for K-12 education and higher education. I have been an active member of the League of Education Voters to achieve this goal.

7. How would you balance continued growth, the quality of the environment and declining petroleum and energy resources? What is the role of the Critical Area Ordinance (CAO)?

We need to protect the environment and quickly address global warming. We need to use fewer resources, esp. oil that makes us dependent on foreign oil and has led to the disastrous war in Iraq. The CAO should be kept. My wife Liz works in the environmental field (reduction of hazardous waste), and over the years we always supported and donated to environmental groups like Washington Toxics Coalition and People for Puget Sound.

8. The caucus system helps Democratic Party members in a legislative body work together and stick together. Do you support determining leadership positions and committee chair positions *solely* within the ranks of the Democratic Caucus?

Yes. In the 2004 Presidential campaign I was the convener of a neighborhood caucus for about 10 precincts in a local school. That caucus worked well and generated much energy for the election.

9. What role should government play in the healthcare system?

The government should play a key role. I support a single-payer, comprehensive health care system.

10. What is your position on civil rights for Gay, Lesbian, bisexual and trans gendered people? What is your position on equal rights for same-sex couples when it comes to benefits, civil unions, marriage and parental rights?

I support civil rights for GLBT people. I also support equal rights for same sex couples for marriage, benefits, etc.

11. What creative solutions can you offer to address the problems of the economically disadvantaged?

Public education is what levels the playing field and gives all those born without wealth or privilege the chance to be successful. Improving education at all levels (preschool, K-12 and community and technical college) is not a new or creative idea, but it is what will make the most difference for our economically disadvantaged children and adults. If the public sector cannot ensure that our poor children get quality early learning opportunities, if it cannot



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provide QUALITY educational programs in ALL of our schools, and if it cannot make post secondary opportunities affordable and accessible for all, especially first generation college students, then we will keep perpetuating the cycle of economic disadvantage. The Seattle School District has a high school graduation rate that no one wants to acknowledge. When students drop out of school, they lose opportunities for living wage jobs. The more students we keep in school and send on well prepared to some kind of post secondary education, the more bright futures we will create and the less dependence we will see on the social service and criminal justice systems.

12. What would you like us to know about you?

I am deeply committed to improving our Seattle Public Schools. I have the energy, policy and financial skills, and experience to be a strong and effective School Board member.

In the interests of strengthening the Democratic Party and the ability of the Party to support me or any other candidate, I pledge to uphold high ethical standards. I am responsible for the content of literature, advertising, and statements disseminated by my campaign. If my campaign releases information regarding my opponent(s), I pledge that any such release will allow reasonable time for verification by the voters.

Signature		Date	
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Please attach a recent resume.

PETER L. MAIER

PROFESSIONAL

- Attorney, Maier & Severance, P.C. since 1981.
Manage small law firm business. Specialize in representing consumers in Lemon Law vehicle cases.
- **Recognized by legal peers as one of Seattle's "Top Lawyers" (2001 and 2007) and one of Washington State's "Superlawyers" (2007).**
- Serve as an arbitrator **for King County Superior Court's Mandatory Arbitration Program (15+ years).**
- Taught Consumer Law courses **at Edmonds Community College paralegal program (1980s).**
- Teach continuing legal education courses **(since 1980s)**
- **Before becoming a lawyer, worked in Washington D.C. for several years as Special Assistant to Chair of U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and for independent consumer organizations, 1974-1979. Testified before Congressional committees, wrote investigative reports that received national press attention, helped manage a public agency.**



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LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION AND PUBLIC SERVICE

- President of Schools First Coalition, 6/02- 3/07
Led successful levy and bond campaigns in 2004 and 2007 **to ensure public funding for Seattle Public Schools.**
- Leadership role in PTSAs at Ballard High School and Loyal Heights Elementary School.

PTSA Board Vice-President and member Site Council, Ballard High. Twice awarded PTSA “Golden Acorn” in recognition of outstanding volunteer service to the school (Ballard High and Loyal Heights).

- Board member, Alliance for Education, 6/02-3/07
- Active in 36th District Democrats. **Long-time Precinct Committee Officer.**

PERSONAL EDUCATION

- Harvard Law School, J.D. cum laude, 1981
 - Oberlin College, B.A., with highest honors in economics, 1974
- Nathan Hale High School 1970. Also attended John Rogers Elementary, Maple Leaf Elementary, Laurelhurst Elementary and Jane Addams Junior High

PERSONAL

- **Married 28 years to Liz Tennant, Policy Analyst. Local Hazardous Waste Program in King County.**
- **Parent of two children, both graduates of Ballard High School. Daughter is training to be an elementary school teacher in Oakland, CA. Son is in college studying business.**
- **Contact information: PLMaier@aol.com
_206-623-2800**