

Q1

Candidate Information

Candidate Name: Helen H Raikes

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Q2

*Are you aware of an agency of state government – the Nebraska Arts Council (NAC) – whose mission is to support the arts, humanities and creative activities in Nebraska?*

- Very aware

Q3

*The Nebraska Arts Council invested \$1.5 million in FY2019-20 state general appropriations in grants across the state to support arts programs and access, arts education programs, and supporting local arts councils and organizations. Most grant dollars required a 1:1 match. With which statement do you most agree?*

- The NAC should receive an increase in state funding in the coming fiscal year.
- The NAC should receive the same amount of state funding in the coming fiscal year.

*Comments:*

- My answer is between the top two--Normally, I would say NAC should receive an increase but I think we will be tightly strapped next year due to COVID. The arts can be part of the healing process though which could be a way of increasing funds.

Q4

*Research has shown that arts education increases achievement across all academic disciplines, enhances student engagement, and fosters development of critical thinking and learning skills. How important do you think it is to have access and participation in arts education for youth in Nebraska schools?*

- Extremely important

*Comments:*

- The arts enhance the ability for the brain to activate (turn on so to speak) for all students. For some it is the main portal to the other areas of learning.

Q5

*The State of Nebraska has curriculum standards in the fine arts, which includes art, music, theater, dance, and media arts. How important do you think it is for schools to have content-specific certified teachers in the arts?*

- High Priority

*Comments:*

- It is important but community artists can provide a wonderful supplement and they may not be certified. Ideal would be for these artists to work with certified teachers.

Q6

*According to data from the Creative Economy State Profiles, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis reports that arts and cultural production accounts for \$2,943,343,023 and 2.4% of the Nebraska economy, contributing 28,735 jobs. The Nebraska Blueprint report recommends investing in “community vibrancy” projects to attract businesses and workers, increase tourism, and generate revenue for state and local government. How important do you feel state appropriations and policies to advance Nebraska’s creative industries (an example is this year’s LB943) are in relation to creating a strong economic future for Nebraska?*

- Extremely important

*Comments:*

- I think all of us working in concern on Nebraska Blueprint is vital to create a common vision.

Q7

*In 1998, the Nebraska Legislature established the Cultural Preservation Endowment Fund to join the Nebraska Cultural Endowment to create a private-public partnership for providing stable funding for arts and cultural programs in the state. These funds must be matched dollar-for-dollar by private contributions. The earnings from both the state and private sides are then distributed to the Nebraska Arts Council and Humanities Nebraska to fund grants and programs all across the state. As a candidate for the Nebraska Legislature, what is your position in supporting this investment in Nebraska’s rich arts and humanities assets?*

- Strongly Support

*Comment:*

- The Endowment provides an extremely strong base for the arts in Nebraska. I was strongly supportive when it was created and I remain so to this day. We are fortunate that it is in place.

Q8

*Nebraska adults have one of the highest the highest participation rate in the U.S. in annually attending an art exhibit or arts performance. Is there a specific arts or culture organization in your part of the state that you or your family particularly enjoy, or do you have an artistic talent or hobby?*

- Yes

*If yes, please list your talent/hobby and your favorite organization(s) here:*

- Theater and dance, visual arts. One of my daughters is a virtual artist and dancer. Another is a painter. Photography is my hobby.

Q9

*We welcome any additional comments or experiences you would like to make with regards to the arts in Nebraska. Please use the space below. Your comments will be posted on the Nebraskans for the Arts website and in a voter guide of survey results received, sent to the network of arts advocates in the participating organizations.*

- The arts are central to a great society. They lift us up to experience and express what is best about being human.