

# Kansas Senate/House of Representatives 2020

Response ID:27 Data

## 1. Candidate Information

### 1. Candidate Name

Dinah Sykes

### 2. Political Party Affiliation

Democrat

### 3. District Number of Office Being Sought

Senate 21

### 4. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 10227 Theden Circle

City/State/Zip : Lenexa, KS 66220

### 5. Phone Number

913-406-0053

### 6. Email Address

Dinah@dinahsykes.com

### 7. Campaign Website

Www.dinahsykes.com

## 2. Candidate Background

### 8. Occupation/Work History (last 5 years - 25 words or less)

Personal Chef/Caterer prior to being elected to Kansas Senate

### 9. If you are or have been affiliated with a chamber of commerce or other business organization, please list which organization(s) and any leadership positions you have held.

Member of Lenexa Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Lenexa Alumni, Past Legislative Affairs committee Lenexa Chamber

### 10. Other recent political/community experience? (25 words or less)

PTA, Kansas Children's Cabinet, Kansas Senate, Governor's Association Early Childhood Lead for Kansas

## 3. Issues and Policy

### 11. As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues? (30 words or less)

Economic Recovery: Repairing the damage caused by COVID-19

Public Education: Adequately and Equitably funding schools Constitutionally

Representing the People: work in the light of day; listening to and respecting constituents

### 12. How would you propose to balance the state budget? What specific budget cuts would you support and what revenue enhancements would you consider, if any? (100 words or less)

In the short-term, we must survive the immediate effects of the COVID-19 induced slow down. We need to preserve funding for Kansas Schools, our infrastructure, and business recruiting tools. I'm eagerly anticipating the outcome of the Governor's Council on Tax Reform and the aim to keep the tax burden as low as possible. If hard decisions must be made around cuts, the legislature needs to do the hard work of deciding what is most vital to our state's long term strength.

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**13. What are your views on state tax policy, being as specific as you can? (75 words or less)**

I supported ending the failed Brownback tax experiment. Even after that repeal, income taxes are still lower than they were in the pre-2012 tax framework. We need to ensure our tax policy is not regressive and does not punish the middle class while creating loopholes that allow some to avoid supporting the infrastructure and services they use in our state.

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**14. What are your views on K-12 public education funding? (75 words or less)**

I voted for the school funding formula that ended the litigation on school finance. We must continue to monitor the formula and be open to improvements where they might better serve the needs of Kansans. We must continue to ensure that we adequately and equitably fund our schools for the changing nature of a 21st century education.

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**15. What are your priorities in the new statewide Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program? (75 words or less)**

A strong transportation system is a key advantage for business in Kansas. The new plan is a rolling program which adjusts every two years rather than once a decade. With that flexibility, plans should adapt to the rapidly changing conditions in JoCo. We need to leverage the cost share part of the program to make all dollars go further to keep JoCo, the economic engine of Kansas, growing and strong.

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**16. What types of economic development policies will you support to encourage job growth and business expansion in Kansas? (75 words or less)**

I support the current direction of the Department of Commerce to recruit new businesses to our state and market the state. I'm also pleased at the work to end the economic border war in Kansas City and think that we must consider the return on investment for grants and incentives offered to businesses. We must continue to develop, through education, the workers and entrepreneurs that will help drive our state forward.

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**17. What would you do to grow and develop the state's workforce? (75 words or less)**

My support of education is grounded in my belief that our greatest natural resource in Kansas is the potential and talent of Kansans. Developing the workforce is a direct result of partnerships between the state, business and educational institutions to ensure that we are developing the skills in our workforce necessary to compete in today's economy.

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**18. What are your views on the state's role with respect to ensuring access and affordability of post-secondary education? (75 words or less)**

Affordability is a key component of providing access to all students. Further, personal debt from higher education must be a real concern both in terms of accessibility and a limiting factor to future economic growth. An affordable quality higher education system is key to helping Kansans escape poverty and matching workforce needs with skilled workers.

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**19. What are your views on healthcare policy and Medicaid expansion? (75 words or less)**

I support Medicaid Expansion and have led the charge multiple times in the Senate to consider this issue. Medicaid expansion will bring our tax dollars back to Kansas, help eliminate the gap of working Kansans not able to afford health coverage, and help our rural communities by giving them the healthcare options they need.

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**20. What role should state government have in determining workplace employment practices and benefits offered to employees? What workplace changes, if any, would you support? (75 words or less)**

Whenever possible, decisions are best left to employers and employees.

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**21. How control over decision-making is divided among the state legislature and local governments (including local school boards) on issues such as taxation, economic development, and education has been a matter of debate. What are your views on this issue? (75 words or less)**

Whenever possible, we should allow local control over decisions. I strongly believe that the government closest to the people is best. At the same time, we must coordinate efforts between state and local government to ensure that policies don't create unintended consequences (e.g. the border war).

**22. What do you believe most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race? (50 words or less)**

When I first ran for office, I stated my commitment to being present, listening and transparent in my public service. I have a track record of putting the community I serve over my own political ends. I think that is the common sense, courageous, and compassionate leadership our community deserves.

**4. Thank You!**

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