

Jefferson County School Board Candidate Questionnaire

Better Schools Kentucky - 2020

1. Tell us a little about yourself and why you are interested in serving on the Jefferson County Board of Education. Where are you employed? Where did you go to school (elementary, middle, high, college)? Do you have students in your family who attend school in Jefferson County? If so, can you tell us about their schools? An only child from a middle-class family, I grew up in Louisville's south end. I attended Catholic elementary schools that have since closed and I graduated from Doss High School in 1996. My BA, MAT, and Rank I were all obtained at the University of Louisville. My children attend Hite Elementary and will be in fifth grade and kindergarten this year. I have been on the SBDM there the last four years and spend a lot of time volunteering, including with the PTA. I taught in JCPS (Meyzeek Middle and Male High) from 2000-2016. We decided that I would stay home with my youngest for a few years and that time was extended when my mother became seriously ill. I live with my husband, children, and four dogs in Middletown.

I decided to run for School Board because I want to use my experience and knowledge to advocate for students and their families. This is an important period of transformation for JCPS and it should be led by people, like myself, that believe in and support public education. I will have a strong voice and understand how policies and initiatives decided at the District level impact what happens in classrooms. As a parent of young children, I have a personal investment in the future success of the District and the community our schools help build. I have no political agenda; I only want to provide the children of Jefferson County with the best educational opportunities possible.

2. Would you be willing to consistently vote for the maximum allowable tax rate (not subject to recall) in order to provide as much funding as possible for our public schools? Would you be willing to vote for more than that when necessary? I am in favor of ensuring that our schools are adequately funded. Whether that means "consistently" voting or doing so one time, I understand the needs that we currently have. Our infrastructure has been neglected for decades and school construction has not kept up with residential development. Many of our buildings are in a terrible condition and students must travel longer on buses because schools are not located in the neighborhoods where they live. Classrooms often lack textbooks, technology, or adequate materials so students either go without or teachers must purchase them out of pocket. Many buildings are so old that appropriate and dedicated space for ECE or additional services are not available. All of that is unacceptable. Making sure that our students have what they need to be successful often goes beyond what our school-based personnel can provide. They deserve safe and comfortable environments for learning with the necessary supplies and resources.

I also support efforts to work with state legislators to provide JCPS with more funding from the state. Because of our urban/suburban population, the formula for SEEK puts us at a disadvantage by forcing the District to rely more and more on local funding each year. The state legislature has retreated on prior commitments to fully fund things like textbooks and transportation. As districts across the state have faced this shortfall with no release from unfunded mandates, they have had no choice but to turn to local taxpayers, creating acrimony between citizens and their local school boards.

3. What are your thoughts on the appropriate types of and amount of assessments in schools? The most meaningful assessments are ongoing and selected by the teacher or staff of a school. Formative assessments should be used to inform instruction with summative assessments to measure mastery and retention over extended periods. Assessments should be varied; using project- or performance- based

assessments allows students to demonstrate mastery of content and skill. Assessments should occur at regular intervals prescribed by teachers. Common assessments provided by the District have the potential to be valuable tools for measuring student growth and encouraging collaboration. However, when they become a compliant activity and are not directly tied to what is happening in the classrooms, they erode valuable classroom time and resources.

4. Do you support tying teacher evaluations and/or employment decisions and/or compensation to student performance measures? Please explain why or why not. No. Tying teacher compensation and evaluation to performance measures incentivizes them to work only with students that traditionally test well. This makes it even more difficult to fill positions in ECE, ELL, and in high poverty areas with qualified and experienced educators. Well-trained administrators should be able to evaluate teachers effectively based on lesson planning, delivery, utilization of technology or other resources, and classroom-based assessments. Standardized testing or anything that provides only a brief snapshot of student work is an unreliable, inaccurate assessment of the student and the teacher.

5. Please discuss your positions regarding charter schools, vouchers, and tuition tax credit programs. I am opposed to any structures under any name that remove funds from public school budgets or drain away any resources.

6. Please discuss whether you support collective bargaining in JCPS. Would you ever make a motion or vote for a motion that would diminish or end collective bargaining between the JCBE and the current Unions that represent JCPS employees? I will always support collective bargaining. I have frequently stated that teachers' work environment is their students' learning environment. Provisions such as caps on class size are beneficial to everyone. In order to recruit and retain the best employees possible, their voices must be heard in the design and structure of our school district since teachers are the ones working with students daily. As one of the largest employers in Louisville, JCPS has a responsibility to lead by example. To recruit and retain the best employees possible, they should be treated well and this begins with giving them a voice -collectively – in their terms of employment .

7. What is your position on laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, marital status, gender, religion, disability, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identification, and gender expression? Do you agree that all of these should be explicitly stated in school board policy? I support anti-discriminatory legislation/policy and language for all of the above. I do believe that it should be explicitly stated to prevent any confusion and to prevent individuals from attempting to assert their own opinions in ways that would adversely impact others. District anti-discrimination positions should protect employees and students.

8. Do you believe that the Site Based Decision Making councils in each school should have the authority to select their own principal from an open slate of qualified candidates? Do you believe the school board's legislative priorities should support or oppose placing the superintendent in charge of principal selection, rather than SBDM councils? Please explain. I have a complicated opinion on this. Having served on two SBDMs – a teacher representative at a high school and parent representative at an elementary school – I have seen the good work that a highly functioning SBDM can do. These individuals represent those most immediately impacted by the choice of leadership and typically understand the nuanced culture of the school. The school community will inherently be more supportive of a leader they had a hand in selecting. That said, I do believe the Superintendent should have a role since the individual selected is also responsible for guiding the school through the District's vision and initiatives. An ideal situation would be for the Superintendent or designee to work with the SBDM to select the best candidate. I am uncomfortable with state-wide legislation on this issue because JCPS, as well as very

small districts, have unique concerns. Each district should be able to design a policy that best serves the schools in that community.

9. Our contract has binding arbitration in the event the administration and union cannot reach agreement on a grievance or a contract negotiation. Arbitrator decisions are binding unless overturned by a 4/5th vote of the school board. If the Association prevailed in an arbitration decision and the superintendent asked you to overturn the arbitrator's decision and you generally disagreed with the arbitrator's decision, would you vote to overturn the decision or would you accept the arbitrator's decision, even though you generally did not agree with it, in order to honor the contractual arbitration process?

I would uphold that Arbitration's decision unless for some reason I felt the decision would have an adverse impact on students. While I cannot imagine that ever being the case since the Association does not take actions that harm students, they are my top priority.

10. What endorsements have you received?

I have not received formal confirmation of any endorsements at this time, though I am awaiting several responses and have pending interviews with organizations.

Please return your answered questionnaire & resume to BSK by an email to Antonia.Lindauer@jcta.org by August 7th. After we receive responses, we will determine whether interviews are necessary to make endorsements.