



2022 Local Board of Education Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE: Amanda Jozkowski

OFFICE SOUGHT: Board of Education, Carroll County

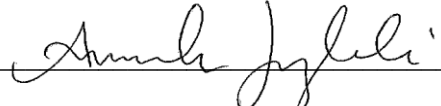
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I confirm that the responses provided here are my official positions in seeking local office and I understand that CCEA intends to share my responses with members and interested parties.

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE:  **DATE SUBMITTED:** 1/25/2022

Candidates: To be considered for a recommendation, you must indicate your response to each of the questions. Clarifications, explanations, and other information may be attached, but please be certain to clearly indicate the questions(s) to which you refer.

Please return your completed and signed questionnaire no later than _____ to Nathan Curtis at ncurtis@mseane.org or to our office at 60 Aileron Court, Suite 6, Westminster, MD 21157

Education Funding

Background Points

- With a critical need in closing education gaps, expanding programs and services, community schools, and improving student achievement, in 2016, lawmakers formed the Kirwan Commission to meet the challenges of a changing global economy and prepare Maryland students to be successful citizens in the 21st century.
- The Kirwan Commission's recommendations evolved into The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, which originally passed in 2020, was vetoed by Governor Hogan, and had its veto overridden in 2021. The Blueprint revises the state's school funding formula for the first time in nearly two decades. Over the next 13 years, the Blueprint calls for billions of dollars of new investment in Maryland schools--and \$218 million for Carroll County through FY 30-- that would expand career and technical education programs, community schools, and pre-k; provide more resources for students from backgrounds of poverty and students with special needs; increase educator pay; hire more educators and expand and diversify the educator pipeline; and create a new, more rigorous accountability system. These programs are designed to raise achievement and address Maryland's economic inequality with programs to target concentrated poverty.
- The Board of Education will have a significant impact on implementation of the Blueprint, including future funding and success of Carroll County schools. The Blueprint is landmark legislation, but there is a continued need for investment in Carroll County schools to see that the Blueprint is successfully implemented, and in ensuring that educator voices are heard and respected throughout implementation.

1. Please provide your general and specific thoughts on how the county can address the unmet needs facing our schools. Detail how you would prioritize aid for education in your budget deliberations.

There are a host of unmet needs in CCPS, and I think the Blueprint, if properly implemented, will go a long way toward meeting those needs. Those that I personally intend to prioritize for funding and further development include the following:

a. Investing in Educators:

- **Recruiting, retaining, and empowering highly qualified staff, including teachers, nurses, bus drivers, janitors, supportive services practitioners, and others critical school system employees.**
- **Providing better training, increasing salaries, prioritizing more diverse hires, and offering supports to prevent burnout and overwhelm.**

- Limiting attempts to censor curricula, teaching materials, and educators in their own classrooms.
- b. **Real World Preparation.** This means graduating students prepared for community life by:
- Supporting teachers to enact best instructional practices in both academic pursuits and functional skills training.
 - Valuing career and technical education.
 - Increasing job-preparation, placement, and transition services for certificate candidates prior to graduation.
- c. **Belonging:**
- Creating an environment of respect and belonging for all students, staff, and families in the school system.
 - Enhancing access to community schools, wraparound services, technology, and alternative education models to increase equity and opportunities for success for all students.
 - Addressing bullying and promoting a culture of inclusive education.
- d. **Accountability:**
- Maintaining fiscal transparency and accountability through improved communication, data management, and assessment practices.
 - Improve CCPS' profile and access all available funding through the Blueprint for Maryland's Future by enacting the county's forthcoming implementation plan, and meeting or exceeding state-level benchmarks on time and within budget.
- e. **Participatory Leadership: Modeling leadership and collaborative decision-making by:**
- Partnering with parents – increasing accessibility of BOE meetings, committee involvement, and PTA participation.
 - Empowering and providing a platform for student and community voices.
 - Encouraging participation and advocacy efforts by CCPS staff and local agencies/experts.
- f. **Best Practices**
- Improving current practices at all levels (instruction, administration, governance) in line with scientific evidence and the highest ethical standards.
 - Ensuring that the health, safety, and wellness of students and staff are prioritized - initiatives to address physical and mental health must be effective, science-driven, and grounded in developmental and culturally-responsive frameworks.
 - Partnering with Commissioners and community members to assess the need for redistricting and capital improvement projects to ease the burden on overcrowded schools and highlight under-utilized facilities – and then actually implement these changes in a timely and logical manner.

I will work to balance the use of evidence and heart to guide decision-making in all areas - from organization and administration, to public health-related decisions, to discussions of curriculum content and delivery methods. We need to be forward-thinking, because students are moving forward. Let's be prepared to meet them with logic and reason, but also compassion and creativity, so that they can develop into engaged citizens. Rather than sticking to what has always been done, we should be brave in seeking innovative approaches to learning and improving the school system, by focusing on both rigorous academic preparation and real-world skills such as media literacy, interpersonal communication, and ethics. This is how we will make our community stronger. Finally, teacher representation on (and open lines of communication with) both the Boards of Education and of Accountability and Implementation is critical for maintaining a voice in the Blueprint implementation and oversight process.

2. There is considerable room for improvement in addressing educator recruitment and retention. Class sizes have increased because of cost-cutting measures and/or due to hiring freezes and retirements. Many support personnel positions have been eliminated. And Maryland is always challenged with filling educator jobs because we import nearly half of all certificated teachers from prep programs in other states. The coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated these shortages. At the same time, the Blueprint calls for the hiring of 15,000 additional educators to provide more individualized attention to students. How will you address critical concerns with educator recruitment and retention?

In “normal” circumstances, working in the schools is an incredibly demanding job, often requiring many hours outside of the contracted workday, taking on student concerns, managing increasing non-instructional task obligations, etc. In the context of the pandemic, teachers have become stressed and strained to the max, coming home mentally, physically, and emotionally exhausted, and they are leaving the school system in record numbers. Because of staff shortages and pressures from administrators, folks are coming to school sick, and are sacrificing precious personal time and resources to make it all work. Salaries in our county do not incentivize teachers to stay, when neighboring counties have higher compensation and other benefits such as retention bonuses, flexible workdays/mental health breaks, and other supports.

Within my authority and ability, I would work to support teacher/school staff recruitment and retention with a variety of creative strategies to improve the attractiveness of jobs in the county. This might include working with the state to bolster local teacher education programs, enhance loan forgiveness opportunities, encouraging administrators to allow for more flexible workload/protected non-instructional time, providing a pathway for teacher-leadership (following the Blueprint ladder), increasing salaries and benefits packages, and making clear that we value and care for teachers by treating them with dignity and respect, not distrusting or taking them for granted.

Teachers are should be compensated equitably and in accordance with their professional training and expertise.

3. Do you support or oppose Maryland's updated maintenance of effort law that requires local jurisdictions to fund the local share of all wealth-equalized formulas, instead of only the foundation formula?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

I am strongly in support of the maintenance of effort law, which improves stability of funding for school systems, in line with the Blueprint. I am also in support of the use of "wealth-equalized formulas" to adjust the per-student allocation to increase equity and better serve students from historically marginalized groups and locales.

I am not sure, however, about the requirement for local jurisdictions to make up this difference, with the state "passing back" any additional costs. I would want to learn more about how Carroll County specifically might be impacted. I fear that redirecting local funds to equity adjustments could limit flexibility and access to dollars for other critical but discretionary programs such as professional development, classroom supplies, arts education, and extracurriculars. It seems that with the boon of gambling revenue contributions to the Education Trust Fund (including the newly legalized sports betting which has not yet been actualized in the budget), funding for wealth equalization should primarily come from the State.

Minimally, the State must protect schools (and students) from being under-resourced in future years by reducing the burden of local contributions in less wealthy areas. Perhaps a point of compromise is to first exhaust remaining COVID-19 relief funds locally, but long-term, there needs to be a more sustainable plan to balance the local and state responsibility for wealth-equalized formula funding. This is in line with the Maryland ACLU's call for the State to be held accountable for providing equitable and adequate funding to students and counties, while counties should be accountable to students and the State to implement high-quality programs.

Public Funding for Private Schools

Background Points

- CCEA believes any education dollars spent outside of improving public schools makes it harder to make the progress necessary to provide a world-class education for every student.
- Non-public school funding for programs in the budget such as textbooks, technology, school construction, and vouchers reduce the state's General Fund while subsidizing the cost of private education. Data from the first few years of the BOOST program indicated that more than 70% of voucher recipients already attended and paid for private school before receiving the voucher.
- The Maryland State Department of Education requires a certificate of approval or registration for private schools; it does not accredit or license them. Private schools do not have to report or administer teacher qualifications, class sizes, adherence to College and Career Readiness Standards, student retention rates, graduation rates, demographics, or discipline or suspension policies. Without these measures, it is impossible to effectively evaluate the programs funneling public tax dollars to private schools.

4. As a Board member, are you in favor of allocating public funding to home and privately schooled students?

_____ Support

X_____ Oppose

Additional Comments:

The exception to my opposition might be in situations where a suitable school/program placement cannot be made for a child with disabilities, chronic health conditions, or behavioral concerns where the intent is to return the student to the public system if/when possible, but due to limited space/availability, pandemic-related constraints, etc., this is not currently an option. In such cases, I would be in favor of directing public funds to ensure access to a free and appropriate education, including enrollment in a private school or homeschool program.

Evaluations and Less Testing, More Learning

Background Points

- CCEA believes that educator evaluation systems must be educator-informed, research-based, and collaboratively developed. Evaluation systems should be fair, transparent, timely, rigorous, valid, and designed to improve instruction by focusing on teaching and learning.
- Maryland law mandates that student growth is a “significant component” and “one of the multiple measures” in a teacher’s evaluation. No evaluation criterion can account for more than 35%. The law also mandates that evaluation systems must be mutually agreed upon at the local level.
- A key provision of evaluation systems is the requirement for local agreement between school boards, superintendents, and local associations. Such local development allows for the evaluation system to meet the unique needs of each district.
- CCEA believes the continued push for high-stakes student assessments undermines educator’s creativity and their ability to respond to the needs of students. Instead of high-stakes assessments, which CCEA & CASE support high-quality assessments that support student learning from a rich curriculum and with room for educator’s voices in the development of curriculum and assessment.
- Additionally, CCEA supports rigorous and relevant professional development through the continued alignment of evaluation systems.

5. Do you support or oppose local autonomy to develop evaluation systems in compliance with statute and regulation?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

Educators are the experts in teaching and assessing student learning. I am against constantly changing the benchmarks and methods of evaluation, which not only causes disruption/confusion, but also leads to an inability to track change over time, resulting in relatively meaningless data. I support re-evaluating current testing protocols and empowering teachers to take the lead on proposed changes so that an evidence-based system can be put into place and used consistently.

The questions that guide my thinking on this and many other topics are always: (1) “Is it effective?” and (2) “Is it helpful?” It is important to keep in mind that effectiveness is not just efficacy, but includes feasibility and real-world implementation considerations. Testing should be less burdensome, and also take less instructional time. It must also be culturally sensitive/relevant, and should not be tied to the evaluation of teacher performance.

6. Do you support or oppose efforts to overturn school districts mutually agreed upon, statutorily compliant evaluation models in pursuit of one-size-fits-all models developed by federal and state agencies, rather than local education agencies?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

7. Do you support or oppose efforts to provide educators with sufficient professional development to ensure that they can deliver high-quality instruction aligned with College and Career Readiness?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

Continuing education and updated training is essential for ensuring fidelity to intended instructional and assessment policies. However, educators are overworked and have limited time and bandwidth to attend additional professional development activities. Administrators should thoughtfully consider the introduction of additional duties and required sessions, prioritizing only those proven to be effective, efficient, and critical to maintaining compliance/meeting strategic plan benchmarks.

Collective Bargaining

Background Points

- CCEA supports efforts to protect and enhance the state's collective bargaining laws.
- Collective bargaining is the negotiation of a contract – including wages, salary scale, benefits, and working conditions – between employers and employees. The items agreed to in a ratified collective bargaining agreement apply to all employees in a bargaining unit, providing a benefit to employees and employers in not having to negotiate thousands of individual contracts.
- MSEA opposes right-to-work laws. Such laws restrict freedom of association and weaken organized labor in Maryland. The strength of organized labor is critical to protecting workers, ensuring quality, and maintaining fairness, safety, and competitive wages in the workplace.

8. Do you support or oppose public education employees' rights to bargain collectively?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

Absolutely. Organization and bargaining are rights that should be valued, protected, and enhanced to the extent possible.

9. How familiar are you with the CCEA & CASE contract?

Familiar

Unfamiliar

Additional Comments:

This is an area I still need to investigate further, but I have accessed the CCPS employee handbook and contract materials, and will spend some time not only reading and interpreting for myself, but have been meeting with current educators in CCPS and outside the county to gain perspective and a better understanding of the issues. As a professor and the daughter of two lifelong educators, I am familiar with much of the terminology and processes outlined in the master agreements and salary schedules.

10. What changes, if any, would you like to see? And how would you honor the negotiated agreement, especially in tight fiscal times?

Honoring contract agreements is the only option, in my opinion. We must match our expectations for high-quality, experienced teachers and school employees with appropriate salary and benefits packages, and we must make up the missed “steps” to get back on track with what is owed to so many over the last decade. With my experience in salary analysis, I will work to prevent compression and inversion (newer teachers coming in at higher relative salaries than long-term, experienced teachers), which is driving away excellent employees. So “trimming the fat” would have to come in other areas, and these decisions should be transparent. In particular, I’d analyze spending on materials/equipment to make sure they are actually being used (in my experience, sometimes something shiny and new looks great but has not been proven to be useful and often ends up sitting in a closet), look for inefficiencies and redundancies, consider the impacts of redistricting and capital improvements on the long-term bottom line (my take is these are good investments), and I would work to reduce spending on non-essential events and trainings that do not lead to demonstrable improvements/outcomes.

As for particulars of the contracted workload agreement, more time should be formally allocated to professional duties outside of direct instructional time with students. Another CCPS teacher I spoke with shared that time for planning and preparing materials for high-quality lessons is often redirected to meetings that do not yield actual lesson plans, so teachers have to take their own personal time to do this work. Additionally, parent-teacher conferences are typically scheduled in the evenings after a full school day, which is exhausting. Other duties unrelated to the classroom are often assigned or expected, and may include updating the school website, planning and running evening events, and even participating in the PTA.

Ideally, teachers would have a 1/2 day of protected planning time (no meetings, trainings, etc.) once a week, but even twice or once a month would help. If a teacher is asked to complete a task unrelated to classroom instruction and outside of the typical workday hours, they should be paid an hourly rate for the time required. As you know, teachers don’t generally choose their profession for the salary, so I think acknowledgment and support to relieve the overwhelming workload is key, and would go a long way toward boosting morale and showing respect for teachers’ time and the work it takes to plan and implement resources that often benefit the entire school community.

Continuing Impact of the Pandemic

Background Points

- The pandemic has exacerbated a pre-existing, multifaceted housing crisis. Housing costs continue to rise, keeping some families out of the market entirely, while those whose incomes were slashed during the pandemic have fallen so far behind that the Census Bureau estimates 7 million households as of late June 2021 face eviction when the temporary moratorium on eviction enacted during the pandemic is lifted.
- The pandemic has also increased stresses, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), food insecurity, and digital divide issues for our students.
- The pandemic has exacerbated a pre-existing, multifaceted housing crisis. Housing costs continue to rise, keeping some families out of the market entirely, while those whose incomes were slashed during the pandemic have fallen so far behind that the National Equity Atlas estimates approximately 129,000 Maryland households, as of August 2021, are behind on rent and face possible eviction when the temporary moratorium on eviction enacted during the pandemic is lifted.

11. How will you address increased needs for mental health supports for students and educators in the wake of the pandemic?

Fortunately, increased mental health support is codified in the Blueprint, because it is essential for effective functioning of the system. Students and staff alike are reporting feeling more anxious, depressed, isolated/excluded, overwhelmed, antagonized, intimidated, and undervalued. I would work to ensure that all supportive services positions were filled, and that county-wide and school-specific policies are reviewed to be in line with current guidance on best practices for wellness. This includes trauma-informed care and providing additional training for all staff who interact with students (not just counselors) such as Emotional First Aid/Emotional CPR. I'd also like to see training in how to spot and report abuse, overdose prevention and Narcan training, and more supports/awareness of the issues of students facing homelessness and food insecurity.

12. The pandemic further illuminated the immediate need for reliable, affordable access to technology for all students and educators in our state. How would you propose to eliminate the digital divide?

We must expand access to the internet by working with county officials to invest in digital infrastructure. This may also mean grant-writing and lobbying the state for additional funds to ensure students can not only access virtual learning platforms as needed, but complete their homework and other academic activities that increasingly require reliable internet access. Opportunities for success are also limited by lack of hardware such as laptops and desktop computers. This issue disproportionately affects

poor students and/or students of color, and is therefore an issue of equity and justice, as lack of access to technology leads to “the homework gap” and further marginalization. This issue also overlaps with accessibility concerns for students with disabilities and those requiring assistive technologies or other accommodations to engage with the education system. Full implementation of the Blueprint will assist in lessening these gaps, but work by the Board will be needed to promote creative solutions – some possibilities might include public/private partnerships, passage of a levy to fund specific technology/access programs, or collaboration with local technology firms to increase jobs training in tech in exchange for equipment.

Racial and Social Justice

Background Points

- CCEA unequivocally believes that our diversity makes us stronger. We fundamentally believe that schools should be safe, welcoming, and nurturing learning environments for students of all backgrounds and beliefs, and places where all our students see themselves in the lessons they learn and experiences they enjoy. While students of color made up approximately 64% of the student population across the state in school year 2019-2020, our state had only 29% teachers of color, 38% principals of color, and 45% assistant principals of color. MSEA was represented on the Kirwan Commission and a vocal advocate of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future in part because of our support for training and developing high-quality teachers and education leaders, particularly those from diverse and historically underrepresented backgrounds.
- Every child, regardless of their background or zip code, deserves education justice and equitable access to opportunities, resources, and supports. We believe that the lives of our Black and Brown students matter and that all our students have a fundamental right to be educated in safe, healthy, and supportive learning communities and all our educators deserve safe, healthy, and supportive working environments.
- Maryland and U.S. history are far more diverse than is generally reflected in the content and courses currently taught in our public schools. Far too many Marylanders can progress through their formal primary and secondary education and rarely, if ever, see themselves reflected in the content they are learning or hear about themselves in the stories they read and are told. This lack of inclusivity negatively impacts not only our students’ ownership of and agency in their learning, but it also adversely impacts their overall engagement in their learning and portrays a one-sided view of our history for all students. This disconnect is further exacerbated by the dearth of a more diverse field of educators in our schools and by the disproportionate (and sometime inaccurate) representations seen in society and in our culture that ultimately reinforces a sense of “otherness” for the people, communities, and cultures who have been rendered less relevant and less valuable. CCEA & CASE recognize the vital importance of honesty in education: ensuring that all students learn about historical figures who not only had a tremendous impact on the forming of our state and our nation but whose actions and sacrifices laid the foundation upon which this nation’s pledge of “liberty and justice for all” must be built.
- CCEA is committed to developing critical thinking skills in our students because we know that they enable them to better understand the problems our society faces and to develop collective solutions. To that end, we are abundantly clear that truth and honesty are fundamental components of teaching and learning, as are academic integrity and professional responsibility. Our essential mission is to prepare our students for college, career, and life and to play an active role in our democracy.

13. CCEA supports honesty in education across all subject areas and in all areas of the approved curriculum. To encourage critical thinking, we believe educators should have professional autonomy and should be afforded the deference to teach the truth in their classrooms, schools, and districts.

Do you support honesty in education? Do you believe educators have professional autonomy and should be afforded the deference to teach the truth in their classrooms, schools & districts?

For example, if a Carroll County high school history teacher, keeping with the approved CCPS curriculum, taught the true local story of Townsend Cook, who was lynched in Westminster in 1885, and as a result some parents became upset because they saw the lesson's material as divisive and controversial, then would you as a BOE member, defend that teacher's right to teach students this true story as part of the curriculum?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

In a recent Public Comment letter to the current Board of Education, I wrote the following (please find at [this link](#) for January 11, 2022):

“As you prepare to vote to approve the “Political Neutrality” policy tomorrow evening, I hope you understand the message you send to the teachers of our county with your vote. At the last meeting, you were clearly advised that the proposed policy would lead to legal challenges. In theory, it is also redundant with existing policy, but in spirit it is much more nefarious.

As a candidate for election to the Board of Education, I have been spending the past few months meeting with teachers and school staff to hear about their experiences and perspectives. Despite the MANY challenges they are currently facing, at the core CCPS teachers just want to be trusted, listened to, and treated with respect. They are professionals who have trained to prepare students to become community citizens, change-makers, and contributors to a democratic society. The political neutrality policy is an assault to their expertise and judgment, and a threat to their personal well-being, as anyone will be welcome to report teachers for violating a “politically neutral stance” in the classroom by simply encouraging the free exchange of ideas in an educational conversation that feels a bit uncomfortable or is in tension with someone’s personal beliefs.

Schools should not prohibit thoughtful discussion to avoid controversy or viewpoints that may be unpopular, and teachers certainly should not be penalized for doing what they do so well – engaging students in critical thinking. We should be welcoming such conversations in the classroom! As teacher education professor Alyssa Hadley Dunn argues, strict adherence to “neutrality” - avoiding political or controversial topics - is a tactic that can actually marginalize many students. Taking a neutral stance reinforces the status quo and silences underrepresented voices and opinions.

Monitoring and reporting teachers who are perceived to deviate from the official curriculum is disturbing, and is a slap in the face to teachers who are pouring their time, talent, and treasure into thankless jobs. Endorsing this policy will only serve to increase discontent and staff shortages – two issues I would hope would be of much more concern to this Board.

Amanda Jozkowski
Candidate for CCPS Board of Education
Associate Professor
CCPS Parent”

I think my letter mostly sums up my feeling about this topic, but to answer the last question directly – I would absolutely defend the teacher in the scenario. The teacher is working to connect students with local history and applying larger societal constructs to real happenings. Just because someone doesn’t want to hear about it, doesn’t make it wrong, offensive, or political.

14. How will you support diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students throughout the county? What specific policies do you support whose goals are focused on providing equitable access, opportunities, resources, and supports?

In addition to an increased emphasis on equity and holistic support services across the entire system, I am in favor of the community school model. When students and their families are provided with health and social services, including youth/community development programs, in addition to traditional educational instruction, parent engagement increases and the health and academic success of students can be improved. In order to learn effectively, students must feel safe and they must have their basic needs met. We also need to do more to improve school building conditions and available services (especially in poorer areas of the county), and distribute resources equitably so that those students most at risk of drop-out, poor physical and mental health, and schools with higher teacher turnover can be targeted for intervention.

Furthermore, I think it is critical to increase diversity among teachers and other school staff, so that kids can see themselves represented in leadership and can identify with role models who look like them. In addition, all students benefit from a racially diverse school, especially one with BIPOC in positions of authority. This tends to contribute to a more welcoming classroom and school community, a wider range of ideas and

approaches, and more motivation/better performance for students from historically marginalized groups.

Community Schools

Background Points

- Poverty dramatically and negatively affects the wellbeing of children, particularly in the areas of physical health, mental health, safe housing, access to technology, parental support, family planning services, nutrition, youth employment, and education. Each of these areas play a large role in whether students can learn and do well in school—making it imperative that these opportunity gaps be closed if we want to provide an equitable education in our communities. According to data collected by MSDE, 48% of Maryland public school students were enrolled for free and reduced-price meals this school year (meaning their family income level is at or below 185% of federal income poverty guidelines).
- CCEA supports the establishment of community schools, where applicable, which are designed to close these opportunity gaps by making the school a hub for essential services that students in disadvantaged communities lack.
- Community schools generally have the following four components: (1) they serve a high concentration of students in poverty; (2) they employ a full-time coordinator to lead community school-related services; (3) they conduct a needs assessment to identify key obstacles to learning and the services needed to close the opportunity gaps; and (4) they work with community partners to bring those needed services into the school building or nearby locations to make them accessible to students and community members.
- The Blueprint phases in community schools beginning in FY20, starting with 219 schools with 80% or more of their students enrolled for free and reduced-price meals. Community schools will be added, phased in according to highest levels of poverty first, until FY27, when a predicted 557—nearly one-third of all schools in the state—are projected to become community schools. That makes this one of the largest scale expansions of community schools in the nation.
- The American Rescue Plan provided additional funding to assist with the expansion of small group instruction delineated in the Blueprint. Of these funds, at least 20% must be used to address pandemic-associated learning gaps through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs.
- CCEA supports equitable and adequate resources to provide every student with an opportunity to learn in a safe and non-disruptive environment. Establishing and funding community schools is a research-based strategy for closing opportunity gaps and building strong communities.

Do you support or oppose local efforts to create and support community schools in areas of concentrated poverty?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

Please see above comments. I also think that it would be important to incorporate student voices/perspectives in the designing and governing of community schools – this increases ownership and buy-in, and shows a commitment to the values of equity and justice.

Parental Involvement and Public Support

Background Points

- It is calculated that school age children spend 70% of their waking hours (including weekends and holidays) outside of school.
- Research shows that the most consistent predictors of children's academic achievement and social adjustment are parental involvement in schools and parental expectations of the child's academic attainment and satisfaction with their child's education at school.
- Additionally, research indicates there are three major factors that influence parental involvement in schools:
 - Parents' belief that they can impact what is important and necessary on behalf of their children school.
 - The extent to which parents believe that they can have a positive influence on their children's education; and
 - Parents' perceptions that their children and school want them to be involved.

15. As a Board member, what would you do to increase parental involvement and public support for our public schools and educators?

One way is to grow community schools and similar supportive services that increase parent buy-in and participation in the schools. I also think that many schools need to work to revitalize their PTAs/PTOs. Most have the perception that these are primarily fundraising organizations that feel burdensome and exclusive. We need to incentivize teacher participation and empower parents to use the PTA/PTO as a mechanism for communication and input with the BOE and school administrators. I think it is also time to look at the timing of BOE meetings and other activities that parents might be interested in, but cannot due to work and family obligations. Perhaps moving to shorter

meetings, starting a bit later in the evening, or allowing more regular virtual participation, might alleviate some of these barriers.

As written above, expectations have been shown to partially predict student performance, so taking many of the actions I've outlined above, and showing parents and teachers what children are capable of using a strengths-based approach and creativity in assessment procedures, will serve to "raise all ships," so to speak.

16. CCEA has had ongoing concerns about how some Board of Education members have used social media in ways we have considered divisive. What assurances would you make about how you would communicate with various stakeholders?

I maintain separate accounts for my personal social media apart from my campaign pages. I am committed to answering questions from anyone, and to keep commenting open and uncensored, unless absolutely necessary for safety reasons (in which case, I would always provide an explanation). While I have a very clear viewpoint/orientation on certain issues, I am less interested in telling others what I think, and more interested in hearing what people have to say so that I can use this to thoughtfully inform my actions and decisions. As a non-partisan position, and one that represents a wide range of families and individuals, it is important to me to have a forum for respectful dialogue. I have experience in mediation and also in managing challenging conversations (and even heated debates) with graduate students in a way that is productive and professional, and I intend to use these skills in my public communication on social media and during Board activities.

Privatization

Background Points

- CCEA opposes any effort to outsource or privatize education jobs that are part of a bargaining unit. We maintain that any attempt to outsource or privatize jobs of public educators violates collective bargaining agreements because such an effort is in essence terminating or firing bargaining unit positions.
- Outsourcing and privatization efforts have threatened teacher and education support professional (ESP) jobs for years. In the last few years, Anne Arundel County has attempted to outsource teaching services for deaf and blind students, Talbot County has discussed privatizing transportation services, and Kent County has attempted to privatize custodial services. There have been multi-county efforts on the Eastern Shore to outsource the hiring of occupational therapists and physical therapists to work in the schools.
- When jobs are outsourced, quality control is diminished, and safety is compromised. Public employees are subject to background checks that private employers often do not require. After privatizing, local school boards lose control over the individuals working in schools and have little ability to provide input on job performance.
- Privatizers often use an argument of cost-savings as a means of winning contracts. The amount is often misleading because they intentionally underestimate first year operating costs. Ultimately, they reduce hours, health care coverage, or just cut jobs. All these steps lead to increase in local unemployment and less money in the community overall.

17. As a Board member, are you in favor of contracting out custodial, cafeteria, and maintenance services rather than have those services provided by Board of Education employees?

_____ Support

X Oppose

Additional Comments:

Privatization goes against union values and is focused more on the bottom line than on caring for people.

Virtual Learning

Background Points

- Statewide closures due to the pandemic forced educators and schools to implement virtual learning as an alternative to traditional in-person learning. The haste with which our schools, educators, and students were required to pivot was unprecedented and without advance planning. There is no doubt that the initial roll-out of virtual learning, coupled with the uncertainty of its duration, created significant challenges for all involved.
- While we don't believe that virtual learning should ever replace in-person learning, CCEA believes that well-planned, goal-specific virtual learning options should be considered to meet the individual learning or course requirement needs of some of our students.
- While there are some things about teaching that remain the same regardless of the mode of instruction, virtual learning does require some significant revisions to instructional planning and implementation that are unique. As such, CCEA believes that if classroom teachers and instructional staff are required to operate using a virtual learning modality, they must be provided with the training, resources, and supports required to ensure that they can do so effectively. MSEA also believes that all employees for virtual instruction must be school system employees and not contracted employees.

18. Do you support CCEA's position on virtual schools?

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

As a professor who was also forced to rapidly convert to online instruction with little training or support, I wholeheartedly support the CCEA position and the notion that regular virtual learning as a modality is wildly different than emergency remote instruction. It is also different than Home & Hospital services, which should not be used as a replacement for a robust virtual program. However in the absence of a full virtual option for those who need or desire it – I would like to explore the concept of a state-run virtual option, which would operate similarly to a public-option insurance model. In Washington state, this model has allowed smaller, less resourced districts to provide high quality virtual instruction in line with state standards/curriculum, keep the money in the system (rather than private online schools), and has given families a choice when it is not always possible for all schools to transition to virtual (short- or longer-term).

19. Do you support or oppose the creation of virtual schools that are independent of local school boards?

_____ Support

_____ Oppose

Additional Comments:

See above comments. I would prefer they were operated at the local level, but in districts where this is not possible due to political pressure, funding, etc., I think a state-run virtual program may be appropriate (especially when the alternative is no virtual option at all).

20. What allowances or guardrails would you like to see implemented related to virtual learning options?

I think that we are seeing that for some students, virtual learning is actually a better fit. This may be because it decreases stigma for using assistive technology, increases flexibility in daily routines for students who need it, limits opportunities for bullying or social anxiety, or protects students and their families from exposure to illness. If done well, virtual learning is an excellent option but it must have oversight and properly prepared staff. Once the current emergency nature of virtual instruction has resolved, I believe virtual learning should remain an option – possibly similar to the “alternative school” model for which students can apply or be referred. I think that if offered by the county or state (which would also mean that lessons are taught by dedicated district employees), virtual schools should be held to equivalent standards for learning objectives and outcomes, attendance, and participation. So much good work is being done right now to generate evidence for best practices in online pedagogy, and I think there is a demand for this model to be implemented long-term.

Thank you for taking the time to address the questions above.