



2022 Local Board of Education Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE: Patricia Ann Dorsey

OFFICE SOUGHT: Board of Education

CAMPAIGN ADDRESS:

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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: Patricia A. Dorsey **DATE SUBMITTED:** February 18, 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. 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?

What a challenge this has become as evidenced in your background points, but also what a wonderful opportunity as we explore new ways to redesign schools! One of the initial steps to address educator recruitment and retention is to restore and enhance an appreciation for the profession of teaching. All staff members should feel supported and appreciated by their local Board of Education. It should not be an us versus them dichotomy. Elements of the Blueprint should help us to achieve this as we implement the building blocks associated with the plan, namely, a redesign of schools with incentives and supports to continuously improve the profession of teaching and to offer salaries comparable to other professions with similar education requirements. A number of educators are in the profession because they have an inner desire to teach and help students achieve their goals. With the addition of career ladders and a more comparable pay hopefully we can attract more interest and applicants in the field of education. Additionally, we should enhance our partnerships with colleges and universities to fulfill teaching positions. As we return to normalcy and go on recruiting trips to colleges, universities, and job fairs we should include teacher leaders who can make connections to future teachers as they share their perspectives on teaching in the county. Having these teachers follow up with prospective candidates can be helpful as decisions are being made. I will advocate for a high quality and diverse staff that aligns to the racial makeup of our student body. Racial equity is a means to support teacher retention. I would also tap into our Teacher Academy Classes and enhance 'growing our own teachers'. Last, but not least is a desire to rebrand teaching as an attractive, fulfilling career; rebrand our county as an exciting, great place to live; and rebrand our school system as the most rewarding place to teach. All school systems are going to be vying for candidates and we must appear appealing to those interested in the profession. There are a lot of positive benefits to teaching in our school system and living in our county and those items need to be highlighted and enhanced.

2. 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 support Maryland's updated maintenance of effort law to have local jurisdictions fund the local share of wealth-equalized formulas. Funding, however, is a responsibility of the County Commissioners. The Board's responsibility is to share the realistic needs of the system. I will continue to advocate for the needs of the system.

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.

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

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

Maryland provides free public education to all students eligible to attend its schools. If parents choose home and private schools, they should fully support those choices with their personal funding.

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.

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

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

I believe that evaluation systems work best when aligned with classroom instruction, therefore, I support local autonomy in compliance with statutes and regulations. Teachers can use the data from assessments to target areas of need and focus their instruction. This enhances students' achievement. The closer the assessment is aligned with classroom instruction, the more successful students can be. In collaboration with content supervisors, teachers are the key resource in developing the curriculum and assessments. I have worked with teachers in the past collaborating with them on their evaluations and the development of their student growth goals. This involved using data from the English Language Arts and Math benchmarks and then viewing results available from state assessments as well. The dialogue was very rich as we explored reasons why the data looked as it did. Involving teachers in formalizing their student growth goals enhanced their ownership in the evaluation process.

5. 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:

As shared in response four, the closer evaluation and assessments are aligned to classroom instruction, the more successful our students can become. Even though our curriculum is based on the state standards it is tailored to our local needs. I oppose efforts to overturn our local, mutually agreed upon compliant evaluation model for a model developed by federal and state agencies. Local governance is a hallmark of our education system and I believe we should be trusted to make decisions that support our county's students and staff needs.

6. 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:

I have always supported professional development at all levels in the organization to ensure the delivery of high-quality instruction aligned with goals. Over the years the question became how best to deliver professional development. As a county we used to bring all grade level and content area teachers together for large keynote addresses followed by smaller group interactions. Over the years we either had professional development regionally or in our individual schools. Again, it seemed like the closer the professional development was aligned to instruction, the more successful it was in preparing teachers to meet the needs of students. In some cases, professional development was aligned to teams and/or individual teachers. The key was matching the teachers' need to the delivery model of the professional development.

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.

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

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

I support the current Maryland law indicating the scope of bargaining between the local Board of Education and the employee associations representing educators and other employees. Collective bargaining enhances consistency and encourages cooperation between employers and employees. I support the rights of public education employees to have a louder voice by bargaining collectively.

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

Familiar

Unfamiliar

Additional Comments:

As a teacher I was familiar with our CCEA contract. As administrator I became very familiar with the CCEA and CASE Agreements. As Board Member, I remain very familiar with the contracts.

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

The change I would like to see is an adjustment of the budget calendar or cycle, especially at the local level. It would be effective if we knew before May of each year what revenue to expect locally as we enter the negotiation process. As a system we continue to prioritize the needs of the system. The quality of the teachers that we place in our classrooms and system is of utmost importance to the level of education our students receive, so I will continue to advocate for competitive salaries for staff.

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.

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

Staff to support students' mental health were previously identified as school-based priorities in last year's budget and must rise to the top as we focus on the budget for next year. It is unquestionable that counselors, mental health therapists, and school psychologists are needed to support students. I would also advocate for Sources of Strength to be available in all middle and high schools and for full school efforts to address discipline such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at the elementary and middle levels. As we focus on the mental health of students, we

must also keep in mind that staff members have also experienced stress and burnout as a result of the pandemic. The Employee Assistance Program should be available to everyone as a resource. I also believe the environment created in every school and workplace should reflect kindness and support for all employees. Smaller class sizes would also help with teachers' workload.

11. 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?

All students are issued a laptop and hot spots/access points can be available as needed for parents without internet access. This has been accomplished at the secondary level and we are now working on distributing devices to all elementary school students. Continuing to provide up-to-date technology and internet access to every student, especially those who cannot afford it personally, is a priority.

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.

12. 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: I would wholeheartedly support all teachers for teaching the curriculum. We prepare our students to learn to read, write, and compute and yet shy away from teaching true history lessons. Some only want to learn history as told from the view of the dominant race, but the history of our country has many and varied contributors. Our students must learn this. The Social Studies standards and framework support including marginalized groups and encouraging students to learn more about all members of their community. We must begin to have crucial conversations and open dialogue concerning race, so if parents are having an issue with the curriculum, we need to discuss it with them and point out the benefits for preparing our students to be critical thinkers and problem solvers. When having these discussions, we are not placing the blame on any one group or referring to another group as the victim. It has been painful to have graduates of our system return to tell us that we didn't prepare them in learning about all members of our society.

13. 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?

First, I will continue to engage in professional development activities sponsored by the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE). I will encourage my fellow Board members to also participate in some of these activities. I will continue to serve on MABE's Equity Committee and to promote the use of our Equity Workbook which is to be used by local school boards throughout the state. I will plan to attend MABE's Annual Conferences which will probably have some hot topics or workshops related to equity. In the past I have also attended the National School Boards Association (NSBA) Conference which included sessions on equity. Locally I will continue to participate on our county's Education That Is Multicultural Committee and participate in future Book Clubs. I support our county's Equity Policy (ABA), which is modeled after the state's policy, and the regulations supporting equity. I also support policies including but not limited to the following:

AC- Non-Discrimination

ACD – Religious Observances

ACF – Bullying, harassment, Intimidation, Discrimination, or Hazing

GBA – Equal Opportunity, and Non-Discrimination

IGAA – Contributions of Ethnic and Cultural Minorities in Curriculum,

JB – Equal Educational Opportunity,

JICK – Student Bullying Harassment Intimidation Discrimination or Hazing.

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.

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

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

Community schools serve the purpose of providing needed services to students of poverty. There is great benefit in having access to the services available in one location. By addressing the needs of students in poverty we are working on closing the opportunity gaps for students. I support efforts to create and maintain community schools.

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?

As a Board member I will continue to advocate for parents to serve on Board appointed committees and to also be active in their local schools. Over the years I have witnessed increased parental involvement through increased student involvement in after school activities. Continuing to engage students in the fine arts programs (instrumental and choral arts, art shows), athletics, as well as curriculum-based opportunities (Science fairs, Career and Technology Open Houses, Reading and Writing Teas, American Education Week activities), and volunteering are a few ways to keep parents involved. The English Language Learners sessions and Title I activities also enhance parental involvement (Math Nights, Reading Nights). Including the evening meal in these opportunities also helps busy families become engaged in after school activities. The Superintendent highlights student achievement in his monthly reports. Board members could also highlight a few parental involvement activities in their ambassador schools and encourage parents to continue to be involved.

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? In communicating with various stakeholders, I will attempt to maintain a professional demeanor at all times – even during difficult moments of conflict. I will not engage in the use of social media to solve or highlight conflicts.

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: I believe that all services of the Board of Education should be provided by our employees. There are a few situations where this is not the case. Our bus drivers are really employed by the contractors and at times we have some Special Education services and nurse services provided by outside agencies, but I advocate for all custodial, cafeteria, and maintenance employees be provided by our own Board of Education for the reasons shared in your background points.

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:

We often hear from parents whose children had problems with virtual learning, but there were some students who were successful using that platform. I think our educators

did a wonderful job in such a short time pivoting to virtual classrooms. Professional development opportunities as well as support from the Instructional Technology Facilitators enhanced teachers' use of technology. I agree that virtual learning cannot replace in-person learning, but with the proper training, equipment, and resources teachers can be successful with the virtual platform.

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

Support

Oppose

Additional Comments:

Teachers using the virtual platform should be employees of the local school system. In that way, we are responsible for what (the content standards) and how (process) they teach.

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

I believe the following allowances or guardrails should be implemented related to virtual learning:

All staff should be employed and trained by the school system. Curriculum and technology staff should be available to serve as resources for support as needed. Equipment should be provided to the staff as needed.

There could be built in opportunities for touching base in person if needed. If not, opportunities to meet with individuals or in small groups virtually should be available on a weekly basis.

Every student should have the opportunity for equal access to virtual learning. This includes supplying laptops and access to the internet to students as needed.

Students must have cameras on, arrive to sessions on time, and participate actively in the virtual lessons.

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