

Vision for MCPS

1a . what do you think is the goal of education in general? What should be the priorities of MCPS? Why?

The purpose of education is to allow individuals to lead self-determined lives. It has taken me years to come to that answer, but education is also about much more (civic engagement, economic involvement, and creation and continuation of the arts). However, I keep coming back to self-determination as the core purpose of education because to speak to allowing students to be become as much of their fullest and best selves (what that might be for them) as they wish to, in whatever why is meaningful to them.

1b. Where do you think MCPS needs to improve?

I am concerned that full range of educational opportunities are not available county wide to all students, and that our most experienced teachers are not available to all of our students. I am also concerned that many students do not see themselves or their families reflected in their teacher, and I would encourage programs to recruit and retain a more diverse teaching corps in MCPS. In many parts of the country schools are overcrowded; we need to plan for new housing construction and new county-residents, not respond to it.

2. Meeting the Special Needs of Gifted and Talented (GT) Students

In the FY19 Operating Budget, the Office of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI) has been effectively eliminated. As a Board of Education member, what initiatives will you undertake to ensure that the needs of GT students are met, pursuant to COMAR 13A.04.07?

COMAR 13A.04.07 requires that Local Education Agencies, like MCPS, review their Gifted and Talented programing and policies. MCPS also must “provide different services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to develop the gifted and talented student’s potential. Appropriately differentiated programs and services shall accelerate, extend, or enrich

instructional content, strategies, and products to demonstrate and apply learning.”

It is the role of Board of Education to provide governance and set policy, therefore as a Board member I will review and evaluate the current budget and organizational structure and ask if that structure and budget allows MCPS to meet the requirements of COMAR and the needs of our gifted students. If not, we need to find a way to do that.

2a. Transparency

Recently, there are increased voice to expand the GT/Magnet program. However, the future plan of the county and policy change at current center programs remained vague to many parents and students.

This year’s middle school field test for the “center programs” experienced a sudden and massive change in admission criteria and policy at Down County .It caused widespread confusion and frustration for many students and parents.

How would you increase the transparency of MCPS decision making and admission practices in the future? How would you ensure that stakeholder inputs are effectively incorporated before a massive policy change?

Parents and students needs accurate and timely information to make good decisions, as a parent I have been frustrated by how difficult it is to learn more about both program admissions and the actual programs itself. Information on the MCPS website is not readily accessible, and the information sessions are poorly advertised. I would encourage greater outreach and more accessible applications, and broader reporting of data not only about admitted students, but also about students who persisted in the program, and where possible, outcome data. The later two can be very informative for families.

No significant policy change should happen without stakeholder engagement and feedback. There are a variety of ways to solicit that feedback, and to engage with communities. However, I think a willingness to do so authentically and from the very beginning of the policy-setting process is more important then the logistics and modalities of that engagement. Engagement from the very

beginning is important to me, as otherwise stakeholders are limited to only responding, and not creating.

4. Diversity of MCPS Teacher and Administration Workforce – Asian American educators are severely underrepresented in MCPS’ professional workforce and very few administrators in Principal position or above director levels are Asian Americans. Would you be committed to increase the representation of Asian Americans in MCPS’ leadership and administration rank? What is your plan?

Yes, MCPS absolutely needs a more diverse teaching and administrative corp. I support the implementation of the recommendations of the 2013 Minority Teacher Recruitment Study and Report by MSDE, University System of Maryland and the Maryland Higher education Commission. However, I am concerned by programs that use alternative certifications to increase minority representation. Other jurisdictions have begun targeted recruitment of their own students to return and teach within the system after college, and those jurisdictions have maintained a connection with those students throughout college. The targeted “home-grown” teacher recruitment seems promising and is worth exploring.

5. Capital Investment Planning: With increasing enrollment year after year, many MCPS schools are overcrowded and its buildings rapidly deteriorating. If elected, how would you set funding priorities to address the school infrastructure investment?

We must move from a reactive position to a proactive position when it comes to school infrastructure, which might mean a limited period of increased financial investment as MCPS works through what is essentially an infrastructure backlog.

6. Advocacy for MCPS in Annapolis : Families invest living in Montgomery County keep a keen eye on the strength of our school system. This year county residents are doing their part of keeping our schools great by paying 8.7% more on property tax. If elected, how will you advocate for more state funding and what creative ways do you have to find other revenue options?

I agree that MCPS is why many residents live here, it is was a huge part of my families decision to come here, just as it was for my husband’s family some 40 years when they came here to raise their sons. I strongly support collaboration

between all of Montgomery County's elected officials to work together in Annapolis to obtain additional state support; other jurisdictions have done so, and we can too.

6. Bullying, School Climate, and Student Social-Emotional Wellness

Bullying/Cyberbullying, mental health, and overall social-emotional wellness are pressing issues for many MCPS families. If elected, what initiatives would you take to mitigate the impacts of the aforementioned issues? What strategies will you direct MCPS to pursue to confront cyberbullying?

Investments in positive school culture, student mental health and wellness are not "extras" they are vital to student success within MCPS and afterwards, both academically and personally. We know from that MCPS 2013 WestEd report on special education that MCPS does not have enough psychologists to serve all of the students (including those without special education needs) who may need support. I support implementation of the recommendations of the 2013 WestEd report on special education, including the higher of additional school psychologists.

I support a holistic approach to bullying prevention and intervention, which include evidence based programs like restorative justice and others.

7. Honoring Cultural Heritage The Asian American minority group has a distinct cultural heritage and history in this county. For our younger generation to grow up feeling self-confident and accepted, we believe that our culture and history need to be acknowledged, respected, and taught in school. We found that in, in MCPS Middle School social studies or high school history classes on Asian American history and culture, currently, there are very limited materials on Asian American Culture, and very limited time are spent on them, even though Asian American students count for 14%~15% of the the MSCP student population. How can we integrated more Asian American history and culture content in our curriculum? How will you increase the cultural proficiency, particularly Asian American culture proficiency, among MCPS staff?

I think it is vital that every student in MCPS see themselves, and their families in,

who teaches them and in what they learn. I am not sure of the best way to make that happen, although in my personal experience exposure to the literature of a culture and community can be an effective and authentic way to achieve that goal. I would be very interested to hear what you think would be an effective way to ensure that MCPS integrated more Asian American history and culture content in our curriculum.

8. School Boundary

As new schools are built, many traditional school boundaries will be, or are being redrawn, what is your top 4 criteria in evaluating school boundary options? Why are these criteria important to you?

I believe that school boundaries should make sense to families. They should 1) limit student travel time and distance, 2) allow students meaningful access to diverse programming 3) build on existing communities and relationship while 4) intently creating new communities and relationships. As someone who lives near Laytonsville, my children have had significant commutes to Gaithersburg MS and Richard Montgomery HS. We have often felt that some options are less accessible to us simply because of travel time.