

Hi, my name is Sam Starrs. I am a junior at Oakdale High School and I want to represent you as the next Student Member of the Board of Education. In my years in FCPS I have participated in a wide variety of activities and extracurriculars. From art showcases to engineering competitions to varsity track, I have experienced much of what Frederick County Public Schools has to offer. In my 11 years in the school system, I've also made one observation: we can do better, and I want to help us get there.

As the sole student representative on the Board of Education, the SMOB is responsible for advocating for students and voicing opinions on their behalf. **In times like these, student voices are more important now than ever**, and the SMOB is one of the best mediums of achieving change at the county level. Despite this critical importance to the student body, many SMOBs in the past went unknown and unheard from. In running for this position last year, I was astonished by how few of my classmates were familiar with the role of the SMOB. If elected as the next Student Member of the Board, I would continue the current SMOB's efforts towards increased online activity. I would go beyond my own school, social groups and student councils to speak to students of all schools, ages and interests. I would make information pertinent to the student body easily accessible to everyone and ensure that before all BOE meetings I have a firm understanding of the general student consensus on any given topic.

Should I be elected as Student Member of the Board, I would advocate for the student body, and the issues most salient to you. Among many of the issues currently most important to the student body outside online learning are mental health awareness and racial injustice. Poor mental health and subsequently, mental illness, can be extremely detrimental at a critical point in our young lives. As SMOB I would advocate for increased mental health resources and education. Similar to mental health, racial injustice around the country has been made more apparent in the past year. It is the duty of organizations like FCPS to ensure equality of opportunity and protection from discrimination and other unjust issues regarding race, and actively enforce anti-racist policy. As SMOB I would work with you, the students, toward the improvement of these issues within our school system.

In our ever changing world and rapidly diversifying county, FCPS needs a SMOB who will work with the *entire* student body. I can promise you that should I be elected, I will make my best effort to do so. If you would like to support my campaign, ask me questions, or voice your concerns, feel free to message me on Twitter (@Starrs4SMOB), Instagram (@Sam.Starrs), or email me (Starrs4SMOB@gmail.com). Together we can fight the most pressing issues in our school system. I look forward to working with you!