

# STUDENT MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF FREDERICK COUNTY

## Applicant Questions

*Respond with paragraphs of no more than 250 words per question, not bulleted lists.*

1. What is your plan to effectively represent all students in Frederick County Public Schools, K-12?

The Student Member of the Board of Education's sole and exclusive goal is to represent the interests of every student in FCPS. To do so requires a plan which takes into account the diverse and wide ranging interests of the student populace. Representation must span from kindergartners to seniors, from those in the rural areas of the county to those in Frederick City, so that every individual pupil feels they have a direct impact on their education. The way to do this is by fostering an environment of meaningful and productive dialogue through interaction with students. We must generate a feedback loop which assures that the concerns of students are discerned, addressed, and a pertinent response is coordinated and actuated. Social media is unequivocally the most powerful tool available, so I would utilize it by frequently conducting polls, Q&As, and random surveys. Through these methods, I will be able to determine aggregate and individual opinions, as well as actively seek dissenting opinions in order to test them against a gauged overall view. I would also create and distribute information presentations for schools, have one on one conversations with teachers, staff, and parents, and more. I believe these last methods of outreach could prove the most viable for ensuring that the opinions of elementary school students are also heard. I would use all of these indicators and methods to formulate the most cohesive, coherent, and representative opinion that I can present to the board.

2. Describe how you will change the way you manage your time to be able to meet the demands of Board of Education meetings, FCASC meetings, MASC meetings and your own academic and extracurricular demands.

The nature of his position necessitates that I rework my schedule in order to allocate the proper amount of time needed to execute my duties adequately. As I have done at other times in my life, I will take the time to formulate a routine which allots time for school work (as my primary focus will always be on achieving academic excellence,) as well as school clubs and other extracurricular activities. Additionally, I will continue to uphold my role as a productive member of my family in doing daily chores, and of my community through community service and volunteering opportunities. I will make sure to manage my schedule efficiently with a calendar and daily or weekly to-do lists, and stay true to my commitments at all times.

3. As the Student Member of the Board of Education, what will be your priorities, the policies you might advance, or topics you might wish to discuss?

Though this position is to be a representative, and thus all policies advanced should be derived from the student body, there are some issues which I feel are important to address. We need to work strenuously to develop an education system to equip students with the necessary skills for the changing economy and workforce. In pursuance of this goal, we must consider fundamental reforms which increase their chance of flourishing as lifelong learners. This includes encouraging students to follow their passion by eliminating redundancy in curriculum and standardized testing, so that by high school, they are able to create a schedule comprised of classes which suit their aptitudes and abilities. Additionally, we must enhance STEAM education, make computer science compulsory in elementary school, and expand foreign exchange programs and internship opportunities, as well as programs emphasizing work based learning such as CTC. Since I believe that the education system should work for everyone, it is important that students have the ability to make decisions as to their individual learning experience. A choice between traditional and virtual schooling would ensure that each student is in the most conducive learning environment. Regardless of the specific medium used, it is imperative that we take measures to emphasize curiosity and creativity, teaching to the problem and not the tool (so that the relevance of the tool becomes apparent,) and teaching for the sake of learning instead of teaching to a test. This would ensure that every student is guaranteed an equal opportunity for success.

4. Legislation is being drafted that could provide voting rights to the SMOB. What steps will you take to ensure that you are fully informed of issues on which you may vote?

In general, we tend to reason by analogy, this is and has been this way therefore it will always be this way, but a far superior method of analysis is reasoning by first principles. Reasoning by first principles is rooted in a physics framework of thinking in which you break down issues into fundamental truths, and then reason up to solutions. With regard to becoming informed on the issues facing our education system, I would employ this methodology. I would strive to always step back, analyze the fundamental nature of the issue, and think deeply and broadly, to determine a stance. Perhaps most importantly, I would step back and ask the question, Are we even asking the right question? I firmly believe that framing the question is the most difficult part of any problem, as every line of reasoning, every brainstormed idea and, every solution directly stems from the question you are trying to answer. If the question you asked in the first place was flawed, then the solutions you develop will so too be flawed. I would attempt to remedy this and develop the right questions, by always questioning the constraints surrounding an issue, and always going one step further in my analysis.