

School Board Member Candidate Survey: 2023

Additional comments provided by: Elizabeth Muirhead

Question 2: The PA Senate is now considering legislation (HB 1422 that has passed through the House) that would modernize Pennsylvania's charter school law to ensure transparency, accountability and fiscal responsibility. As a school board member, would you agree or disagree with this approach to regulating charter schools?

I oppose HP 1422 because the amount determined to be allocated to cyber charter schools is not research based or reflective of the amount those schools actually need to run effective charter programs for their students. In many cases, they are hiring their own high-quality teachers, writing their own curriculum, and providing physical space for those teachers to teach classes, although students are attending virtually. After deep investigation of this law, I believe it has a very much needed purpose, but it is not the vehicle that will provide the right solution to the problem that exists with charter school funding.

I believe that it is important for school board candidates to provide an environment where children are safe and nurtured, and can grow to be successful and productive members of society. However, I don't believe that state academic standards are always the right measurement of whether a school has been successful. Not all children are capable of being accurately measured by those standards, and in some cases the standards are disconnected from what actually leads a child to be successful. Also, test scores are most closely correlated to the level of poverty that a child experiences, not how well a school has met their educational needs.

Children First Action Fund is a nonpartisan organization that works to ensure that all children, especially those burdened by poverty and adversity, have the best chance of reaching their full potential. We work on both sides of the aisle, in a non-partisan fashion, to help elected officials learn what it takes for children to succeed and persuade them to support our legislative measures. If you have any questions, please reach out to childrenmatteractionfund@gmail.com.