

School Board Member Candidate Survey: 2023

Additional comments provided by: **Daniel Wisner**

Question 1: The legislature is considering state funding for private school vouchers. As a school board member, would you agree or disagree with the idea of using public funds for private school vouchers?

Re: Question 1 - Private school vouchers treat the education of our children like a commodity rather than a long term investment in children and communities. Vouchers also strip money from schools and harm children with special academic needs.

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?

Re: Question 2 - Like private schools, charter schools strip money from public schools which exacerbates the primary issues that schools face. Cyber Charter Schools in particular consistently rank as the lowest performing schools in Pennsylvania and collect more funds from school districts than they pay out to educate a single student.

Question 3: Do you agree or disagree that working with teachers unions is necessary to address the teacher shortage crisis in our state?

Re: Question 3 - Teacher shortages are caused by low pay and low morale. Teachers are well educated and one of the most important careers in the country but are treated poorly by political groups with no experience or understanding of the education system. Like all workforces, all teachers deserve union representation so that the service and sacrifice they make for the good of their students and our children is not taken advantage of.

Question 4: Meeting the mental health and social/emotional needs of our students is paramount to their academic and lifetime success. This requires funds from the school budget, such as hiring school psychologists and social workers. Do you agree or disagree that school district funds should be among the funds used to address students' mental health needs?

Re: Question 4 - School District taxes are collected to educate and care for our children. The mental health of our children is part of that responsibility.

Question 5: Spending school district funds on career and technical education (CTE) benefits all students as they determine their post-graduation plans. As a school board member, would you agree or disagree with putting more funds toward career related learning?

Re: Question 5 - Career related learning should be a partnership between schools and communities. While some additional funds could be contributed, the largest benefits will come from working with local businesses and industries to benefit students, businesses and communities.

Question 6: The most important job of a school board member is to make sure students are meeting state academic standards in schools where they are safe and nurtured. Do you agree or disagree that this is the most important focus of your position on the school board?

Re: Question 6 - Meeting (and exceeding) state academic standards is an important job of the public school system but it is not the only job. Our children's health and wellbeing are equally or more important while they grow, succeed and become a part of our communities.

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.