**PA-PAC Questionnaire for NC Superintendent of Public Instruction**

*When answering this questionnaire, please work from this document or repeat the questions in your response document with their numbers as they are organized here. Type your responses a different font to distinguish your responses from the questions. Thank you for your participation!*

**Please return completed form along with your resume describing education, work history, community service and prior political experience AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, but by December 27, 2019 at the latest. Please respect the word limits for each question.**

**Email responses to** [page.mc@frontier.com](mailto:page.mc@frontier.com) and tom-miller1@nc.rr.com

**Please note that following above deadline, the Durham People’s Alliance PAC may publish your responses to this questionnaire and your resume.**

**Thank you for completing this questionnaire and your willingness to serve the people of North Carolina.**

Candidate Name:  **Michael Maher**

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Phone: **919.601.6662**

State Superintendent:

1. What experience do you bring to this office that make you the best candidate for the job? (250 word limit)

**I believe the State Superintendent should be someone with broad knowledge and experience in the field of education. These qualities should include classroom teaching, leadership, administration and program development, and policy experience. The job of superintendent is a mix of all of these components since the Superintendent, as you know, is both an agency head and a policy advocate.**

**I am the one candidate in the race with experience in each of these areas. I have teaching experience as a high school teacher having taught in both Kernersville and Raleigh. I was a teacher educator at a small Historically Black College (Saint Augustine’s) and large public university (NC State). Additionally, I have been a leader and administrator as an assistant dean in the NC State college of education.**

**I am the past-president of the NC Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators (NCACTE), past-chair of the Advisory Council of State Representatives, and a member of the board of directors of the American Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators, each of these advocacy organizations is focused on state and national policy. As part of my work with these organizations, within North Carolina, I have worked with members of the general assembly on legislation related to teaching and teacher preparation. I also currently serve as the vice chair of the NC Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission, the commission charged with sending policy recommendations to the state board of education on teacher licensing and teacher education.**

2. List your top three priorities and, beside each, the first two steps you would take to get your priorities enacted. 200 word limit

**My campaign is focused on three priorities: Equity, Excellence, and Innovation. If elected, the first step I would take is to establish a Superintendent’s Task Force in each area that includes broad stakeholder representation. The charge to each task force is the development of goals and metrics for each priority area.**

**Equity policy begins with the elimination of school report cards and transitioning to a public accountability dashboard which moves beyond test scores to measures of equity, including access to courses and programs; suspension rates; principal experience; school safety; and chronic absenteeism.**

**Excellence begins with the development of a comprehensive plan to address literacy rate stagnation in our state. We would begin by convening leadership from organizations engaged in this work, coordinate our task force goals and deadlines toward a comprehensive plan, and use the combined talent to complete the task.**

**Innovation supports the finding of better strategies for supporting underperforming districts, while simultaneously building on successful pilot programs. Examples include ApprenticeshipNC and the Advanced Teaching Roles pilots. As state superintendent I would work to ensure we forge a partnership with ApprenticeshipNC and promote the Advanced Teaching Roles, especially work happening in Edgecombe County Schools.**

3. Will you fight for a moratorium on charters, for greater accountability and for avenues for charters to come under school board control? Why or why not? (200 word limit)

**At this time, I cannot commit to a call for a moratorium on charters, the charter school question is complicated. What I will commit to is the use of the office of the State Superintendent to esure charters meet their statutory obligations. We need to enforce existing legislation on enrollment and performance. We should support those doing great work that also reflect the communities in which they reside and for those that fail to meet their obligation we use the power of the State Superintendent’s Office. The state superintendent appoints a seat on the Charter School Advisory Board and sits on the State Board of Education providing two opportunities for due diligence with regard to charter school operations. I have built my career on accountability and continuous improvement and would use this knowledge to ensure schools applying meet the legislated requirements before approval and those applying for renewal meet their performance expectations before being renewed.**

4. Describe an experience as an elected official or a volunteer on a board where you took initiative to change a policy or service or initiate a new policy or service. Were you successful or not, and why. (200 word limit)

**As the president of the NC Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators I had the opportunity to work on several bills related to teaching and teacher education. This included the new Teaching Fellows Program. While I believe this was a successful piece of legislation, there is still work to be done. In my judgment, the return of the program was a policy “win”. We now need to advocate for changes to the program which include an overall expansion of the number of scholarships and the inclusion of additional campuses including an HBCU.**

**Recently, as the vice chair of the NC Professional Educator Preparation and Standard Commission, I worked as part of the negotiation team on HB 107, teacher preparation accountability dashboard. Within this bill, I believe there are again pros and cons. Through our negotiation, we were able to ensure all preparation programs in our state are included (not just traditional colleges and universities), we were also able to ensure the use of performance metrics that are actionable on the part of preparation programs and a two-year rollout to ensure fairness and adequacy.**

5. Describe your experience as a supervisor: how many people were you supervising? How would you describe your “style” of supervision? (100 Word limit)

**I believe in hiring good people and allowing them to work. We meet regularly both collectively and individually to ensure I am aware of their successes and challenges. We share openly to ensure diversity of opinion. As a supervisor, I am transparent, ethical, and a strong advocate for my staff.**

**As an assistant dean I had direct and indirect supervisory responsibilities. While I maintained a limited number of direct reports (5-8), my office consisted of over 30 individuals, including directors, instructors, and support staff. I was responsible for each of the educator preparation programs which consists of over 100 faculty.**

6. What is your plan for bolstering DPI services to low wealth, rural districts? (200 word limit)

**I believe it is time to eliminate the Innovative School District (and would advocate for such) and transfer the funding back to support District Transformation Teams (DTTs). The DTTs would be assigned to each of the state board regions to work directly with LEAs in a support role. The DSTs could be used to identify promising practices throughout the state which could be scaled to their region, including the Advanced Teaching Roles pilots. DPI through the DSTs could also coordinate services that support the work of low wealth and rural districts including the NC New Teacher Support Program, which provides mentors to beginning teachers in our lowest performing districts, and Wolfpack WORKS which provides coaching and assistance to teachers in early childhood literacy. Additionally, DPI could assist districts with teacher recruitment, by supporting the Teaching Fellows program, which incentivizes work in low wealth districts and retention by enhancing regional beginning teacher institutes.**

7. How can DPI assist districts that are attempting to reduce discriminatory outcomes in suspensions of children of color? (200 word limit)

**We begin by being transparent in the numbers and types of suspensions. As we transition our accountability model from grade-based report cards to a dashboard with equity measures, we can include components of the racial equity report cards. This includes suspension and expulsion rates by race and ethnicity. This will allow districts to target schools with discriminatory suspension rates. Once we have clearly identified schools and districts needing assistance, we can target our response.**

**The second component of our plan would be targeted professional development.**

**Beyond adding school support personnel, we need to empower school administrators as they seek to build and promote an inclusive culture. Building this culture includes additional training for all school staff in topics including social emotional learning, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, restorative justice, and conflict resolution. We also need to include School Resources officers in school-based professional development since the data are clear that students of color and students with disabilities are subject to disproportionate rates of exclusionary practices and suspensions. Comprehensive training in these core areas that includes how to work with children, alternatives to physical interventions, and how disability impacts behavior is critical to ensuring we protect the rights of children.**

8. What is your plan for bolstering the recruitment and retention of teachers of color? (200 word limit)

**As state superintendent, I would work on recruitment and retention through support of high quality programs and advocating for good policy. Partnering with the Governor’s Office through the DRIVE initiative would be the first place to start. Through DRIVE we can enhance and support initiatives such as the NC Teaching Fellows and NC Teacher Cadet programs to recruit teachers of color. We can also support high quality alternative licensure programs, such as Pathway to Practice, which enroll greater numbers of teacher candidates of color than traditional programs.**

**To aid in the retention of teachers of color we need to advocate for better pay and working conditions. We also need to support programs known for increasing teacher retention. These programs would include bolstering the beginning teacher support institute which helps new teachers adjust to the profession and the NC New Teacher Support program which provides coaching and mentoring.**

9. What is your current involvement in and personal work regarding using a race equity lens in making decisions?  If you are or have been a school board member, please offer an example from board decision-making. If not, please offer an example from a personal or professional experience. (200 word limit)

**When I completed my Ph.D. I was presented with two opportunities for employment as a professor in teacher education. I chose to take a faculty position at Saint Augustine’s College. I chose to become a teacher to make a difference in the lives of children and I chose to become a teacher educator to amplify that impact. It is clear that we need a more diverse teaching force in North Carolina. I believe our state’s HBCUs are one of the most effective ways to diversify our teaching force and I wanted to be a part of that solution.**

**Our teacher demographics do not match those of our state or our school population. All children benefit from exposure to teachers of color and so throughout my career I have been committed to preparing more teachers of color. This commitment began with my first faculty position and continued in my work at NC State. Using a race equity lens in my work meant targeted recruitment, supporting and developing a culturally relevant curriculum, and analyzing data to ensure we did not have differential impacts on assessment measures.**

10. Lightning round: For each item, answer yes or no and include one sentence explaining your answer.

Do you support:

a. Opportunity Scholarships (vouchers)? Yes No

**No. We should not be providing public dollars to private schools that are free to discriminate and are not accountable to the public.**

b. The Innovative School District? Yes No

**No. The ISD has not worked in other states and has been a failure in NC, we need to support local district transformation through the Renewal School District legislation.**

c. The two NC Virtual Charters? Yes No

**No. Neither has met the performance outcomes for their enrolled students, they draw valuable resources away from our public schools.**

**Personal Information**

1. Please describe your educational background, noting any degrees and honors you have earned. (skip if included on resume)

**See Resume**

1. Do you have children? If so, where do they, or did they, attend school?

**Yes**.

**Madeline 18. UNCC (Freshman), Heritage High School (Wake Forest), Heritage Middle School (Wake Forest), Wake Forest Elementary School (3rd - 5th grade), Follow the Child Montessori (PreK-3)**

**Megan 15. Heritage High School (sophomore), Heritage Middle School (Wake Forest), Heritage Elementary School (4th-5th grade), Wake Forest Elementary School (1st-3rd grade), Follow the Child Montessori (PreK-K).**

1. Please describe your adult employment history (skip if included on resume)

**See Resume**

1. Please list civic engagement activities, including service on boards, volunteer activities, elected positions, etc. (Skip if included on resume)

**See Resume**