

Frederick Progressives

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March 11, 2018

2018 Questionnaire for FCPS Board of Education

Dear Camden Raynor, Candidate for FCPS Board of Education:

Frederick Progressives, as a chapter of Progressive Maryland, is a grassroots community organization that acts for social and economic justice by developing civic leaders and cultivating allies in order to advance economic, racial, and environmental equity, and to change our economic system for the benefit of all people in Maryland.

Learn more at www.ProgressiveMaryland.org

Progressive Maryland supports candidates who will work to build a society and economy that works for all Marylanders, with special emphasis on traditionally marginalized groups—low and moderate income residents, people of color, women, LGBTQ+, and all oppressed and exploited people. Elections can have an enormous impact on our work to reduce inequity and to improve the lives of residents all over the state. It is our responsibility not only to advocate for residents but also to empower them to engage in the political process at every level, from member-led canvasses to trainings for our members who wish to run for office.

To be considered for Frederick Progressives & Progressive Maryland's endorsement, please return the completed questionnaire by email to FrederickProgressives@riseup.net no later than 5 P.M. on Friday, March 23, 2018. Your responses will be available to the public at www.FrederickProgressives.com

Sincerely,

Josh Cassell
Secretary - Frederick Progressives
(301) 928-0697

1. What do you believe are the precursors for academic success?

The precursors for academic success come from, in my view, the student's own family. The school system cannot effectively educate students who do not have adequate support from family and friends. Students need parents who value education and are willing to put in the time to help ensure their children are keeping up with their work. In addition, basic human needs must be provided for students to at least have a shot at getting the most out of their educational experience. Hungry or sick students have more trouble focusing on instruction and desperately need basic conditions met at home. A combination of these precursors can lift up students and demonstrate the transformative power of education.

2. Will you advocate for universal Pre-K in FCPS? If so, how can this best be implemented?

Universal Pre-K is a wonderful goal to work towards at the state level and I would certainly support efforts to expand Pre-K programs in Frederick County. However, we must be mindful of the limitations of our current system. FCPS does not have the classroom capacity or the budget for universal Pre-K at the time. I would not support laws that mandate universal Pre-K and pass the financial burden onto the county governments. Programs like universal Pre-K must be funded by the state and implemented with the understanding that local school systems need funds for added capacity and new instructors. As a Board member I would certainly work to advocate and support additional Pre-K programs within FCPS.

3. What does FCPS need to do to close existing achievement gaps in its student body and what programs, strategies or initiatives would you work to implement to do so?

We need to continue to work to ensure that students in every school in our county receive the same opportunities for success. A student's feeder pattern or zip code should not determine what services are available to them. To that end, we need to work on expanding our IB, Apex and CTC programs to make more seats available at a larger number of locations around Frederick County.

4. How will you increase FCPS graduates' preparedness for higher education and/or the workforce?

Preparing students for success after FCPS is and should be the ultimate goal of the school system. We need to make more seats available at the CTC and continue to expand our dual enrollment programs in our high schools. We need to do everything possible to lighten the burden of the cost of higher education and skills acquisition for our students. Expanding these programs will, I believe, continue to lead us in the right direction as we attempt to prepare students for life after FCPS.

5. What will you do to protect and enforce Policy 443? What other measures will you spearhead to defend our kids from discrimination and make sure FCPS is a safe atmosphere in which all students can thrive?

I support Policy 443 and feel it has done an excellent job of affirming the worth and protections of our transgender students. I am certainly committed to combating discrimination and bigotry in our school system.

6. What negative effects do you believe the existence of the 287g/ICE program of the Frederick County Sheriff's Office have on students and families in Frederick County and what actions would you take to reduce or eliminate those negative effects?

I am not aware of the effects of the ICE program in FCPS. I'll leave that discussion to the Sheriff's Office, County Executive, and County Council.

7. What does FCPS need to do to improve student mental/ physical health/well-being and what would you work to implement and or support that would result in better student outcomes?

Generally speaking, I'd like to see more school psychologists and a lower student-guidance counselor ratio. Students should have personal relationships with emotional and academic support employees, such as counselors, that are built over time. In addition, we need to continue to support a school culture that encourages students to come forward with questions and concerns regarding their health and personal problems. We can't help students if they don't feel comfortable talking to us.

8. What outreach and policy solutions will you advocate for in regards to student poverty?

If elected to the Board, I'd like to spend some time becoming more familiar with the needs facing FCPS students. In general, I believe that it is imperative that FCPS partner with local community organizations to help fill in the gaps students may face at home. While I cannot be specific in my policy solutions right now, I understand and am committed to providing a public education system that helps empower students and breaks the cycle of poverty that traps too many in our county and state.

9. What policies would you support to schools and students safer from the potential threat of active shooter situations?

There are several policies I would support to minimize the threat and potential impact of active shooter situations.

First, I want to reaffirm current FCPS policies regarding safety that are essential to prevent crisis situations. Specifically, making sure that portable classrooms are locked at all times is of particular concern to me.

Second, I'd like to see more training of transient FCPS employees, like substitutes, on lockdown procedures. We need more standardized training so any employee in any FCPS building understands what to do in the event of an emergency.

10. If Frederick Progressives /Progressive Maryland does not endorse you for this race, would that affect your willingness to work with the group in the future on important issues?

No.

11. Would you be willing to support Frederick Progressives priorities by:

● cosponsoring legislation or policy?	Possibly
● testify in support of legislation?	Possibly
● write an op ed?	Possibly
● speaking at progressive events?	Yes
● attending meetings?	Yes
● meet with our leadership group?	Yes
● give updates on shared goals?	Yes
● writing letters to endorse a labor organizing drive?	Possibly

Other: