

## School Board Candidate Survey

After soliciting feedback from the community over the past several months, we have created a questionnaire that we hope all school board candidates will complete, to better help ExeterPACT and our community understand where candidates stand on these important issues

Email \*

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What are your reasons for running for school board this year? \*

There is a lot of tension in the community about how the schools are operating. I think I can help bridge gaps in communication and foster critical thinking as we works towards getting our schools back to "normal" and focus on academics and developing our children for the world they are entering.

What do you see as the main challenges facing the school district and what do you want to change? \*

I think the key challenge is working with the community to navigate out of this current emergency mindset and back to an environment focused on learning academics. I'm hoping to drive our decision making processes towards critical thinking and fact based debates and help to ameliorate some of the negative emotions swirling around the community.

The School District Budget is always heavily discussed and debated. What changes are necessary to the budget and the budget process if any? \*

First, I do not understand how seem to be creating a budget without being able to see/forecast the spend of the current year. This seems to be the process at at the SMS level. We cannot realistically create a budget for an upcoming year without looking at where we are exiting the current year.

What is your opinion regarding the SAU16 policy responses to Covid and what, if anything, would you change? \*

I understand the original decisions of closing schools and masking. Those decisions were made with all the information to be had at that time. Where I believe we've let ourselves and our children down is not updating our thinking as the facts change. We know now that there are very few outsized negative impacts to children from COVID. We also know that masks do little to nothing to prevent transmission (That's not my opinion. That's been shown in randomized, controlled trials.). All adults and children of acceptable age have access to all the vaccines and boosters they need.

Yet, we are still forcing masks on children, which is having a negative impact on their emotional states and learning. We are also depriving them of critical unstructured social times (like not being able to socialize at lunch) and then we are surprised that we're seeing elevated levels of depression, anxiety and even suicidal ideation.

The facts are that the Omicron variant is significantly less dangerous than the previous ones, a large percentage of the population has some sort of immunity (whether from vaccine or natural) and we have more effective therapeutics and practices than we've ever had. It's time to start treating COVID like an endemic risk, relax some of the restrictions and focus on academics to help get these kids on track. Kids do not need to be "the lost generation" due to COVID.

Why do you believe animosity has increased during in interactions between the school board, the administration, and the public, and how can the current climate be improved? \*

Unfortunately, the actions and practices of the Board over the past year have left a lot of people in the community feeling unheard. Many people feel like they are screaming into a hurricane and the decisions being made are not being discuss publicly so the community can understand the rationale, if there are indeed any. Also, it is not clear that the Board is taking into account any feedback or discussion with the teachers who are actually in the classrooms. The Board needs to publicly discuss decisions, publicly discuss the facts based on those decisions, and publicly state why or why not certain viewpoints are not being considered. None of those decision making processes are being done publicly in the Board meetings.

What would you use as a model to gauge academic success? \*

This I do not know. And I would like to hear input from the SMS administration or from other schools in NH. I read about how the schools in SAU16 have fallen in the rankings, but I do not personally know what those rankings are. I will say, anecdotally, that I've heard from many parents in the community that their kids are not being pushed academically. I have also had conversations with parents outside the SAU16 who can show demonstrable proof that their kids are further ahead than our comparable students. I want to ask the administration directly, how are we measuring success? And, why are we using those metrics? Are they appropriate?

Would you support the addition of more teachers and para positions? \*

Yes

No

Do you believe our SAU has the appropriate number of administrators? \*

Yes

No

If elected, what approach will you take in responding to parents' questions and concerns as it relates to their children's educational experiences inside the classroom? \*

This will take some refinement, as I am not familiar with how the Board rules and requirements "should" work. However, we need to do a better job of informing the public of topics to be discussed at the Board meetings. We need to make sure the public comment section of the meeting is timed appropriately such that the public can weigh in on necessary topics adjacent to when the Board discussed them. (E.G.- if the Board discusses one thing early in the meeting at 630pm, it does no good to have public comments come in at 9pm). Perhaps we can also create a digital forum for parents to submit relevant questions ahead of time to be read aloud/discussed during the meeting?

Do you see yourself primarily as a representative of the community or as a representative of the school system? \*

Representative of the community

Representative of the school system

Are you committed to a yearly survey of families, students, community residents, and school staff about what they see as major strengths and shortcomings of the district and its schools? Are you committed to publicly sharing the results? \*

- Yes I am committed to a yearly survey and yes I am committed to publicly sharing the results
- Yes I am committed to a yearly survey but I believe the surveys are information for the school board and administrators
- No I am not committed to a yearly survey
- Undecided

What makes you the most qualified person for the school board? \*

I have twins in the 3rd grade, so I am directly impacted (2 times over) by any decisions I help drive.

I have diverse experience in a lot of management positions impact hundreds of people. I also have experience being responsible for the health and safety of those hundreds of people as well as budgeting experience.

I'm also logical and search for constructive debate. I don't hide from fact based arguments. Its the only way we can get to the best outcome for all involved.

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