



2022 GENERAL ELECTION SURVEY FOR SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

YOUR NAME: Darlene Dunmeyer

DISTRICT # YOU SEEK: District 8

WEBSITE: dunmeyerforschoolboard.com

2022 school board candidate questions (*limited to 100 words per question*)

1. Why are you running and what do you expect to accomplish if elected? *I am running to be a voice for my community on the issues that have gone unresolved. With the newly created single-member districts, I can be the voice and not the echo. Most schools in District 8 are Title 1, high needs, high poverty and failing. CCSD reported that 51% of CCSD students are reading below their grade level, for students in poverty, 75% are reading below grade level and for black students 82% are reading below grade level. One of the School Board's main priorities is student achievement. This information was unacceptable to me and assisted in me launching my campaign.*
2. Tell us something nice or positive about your opponent or opponents. *My opponent, Doris Johnson, is a wonderful person with a kind spirit and I believe that she is sincere in her concerns regarding the students of District 8 and Charleston County. Ms. Helen Frazier is an existing member of the school board with a strong dedication to the community. Mr. Travis Bedson, a former candidate for SC Superintendent of Education, demonstrates a desire to serve in the capacity of helping the community.*
3. *What specifically can the school board do to improve student outcomes, particularly in underperforming schools?*
No single path for closing the gaps in underperforming schools should be deemed best but should fit the needs that exist. Individualized plans for closing the gaps should be developed by educational professionals who work directly with the students. Plans driven by data over time provide a clear picture of the current state of the school and are understood by the board to support schools through providing ways to implement evidenced-based research and strategies.

The board's presence in schools, engaging in conversations with teachers, school leaders and the community is necessary for success.

4. Why does Charleston County still need constituent school boards or is it time to retire them? *The effectiveness of the constituent school boards' function requires a true needs assessment against the vision and purpose for their existence. The outcomes of the needs assessment will likely identify the need for a revamp to include intense professional development to strengthen the work of constituent board members. If constituent boards are to remain, it is essential that constituent boards operate uniformly according to a general standard across districts and refrain from operating and responding to matters that do not positively affect student outcomes.*
5. Should the Charleston County school superintendent have more power, less power or the same as now, and why? *School boards are responsible for governance, accountability, and oversight. The superintendent is responsible for management. Exchange of power completely disregards the origin and intent for school boards in public schools.*
6. The next school board will be entrusted to pick a new school superintendent. Name three non-negotiable qualifications of a new superintendent and any constraints on the superintendent.
The process for identifying a superintendent is one that should be carried out completely, without rush. Securing a non-biased firm with a track record for vetting the best candidates for the role of superintendent is a necessary step in the process. A superintendent is responsible for the management domain in the business of education. The superintendent should demonstrate leadership traits, to include goal setting, communication, building relationships, and making sound decisions with students at the center of the work. They should lead the district from the front, using prior instructional and school administration experience to connect to the district's needs.
7. What metrics should be used to evaluate the superintendent and each school board member? How often should they be evaluated?
The superintendent should develop and submit a plan to the board including goals/benchmarks for each of the time points. The school board will then use the accepted 5-year plan to monitor progress on a recurring basis aligned with the plan's benchmarks. This plan will also drive the evaluation tool on a yearly basis using the same format as principals and teachers (e.g., induction, annual, continuing).
8. Many Charleston County voters don't have a lot of trust for the school board.

They've seen sniping and hours-long meetings. How specifically will you build an environment of trust for a new group of people who never have worked together? *Transparency is the master builder of trust. I will work to not only share my "why" but listen to everyone's "why" to identify and maintain focus on the thread that ties us together, the students of Charleston County.*

9. Please give a 150-word summary of your background.

A native of Hollywood, SC, I attended all grade levels in District 23. I am a 1982 graduate of Baptist Hill High, a graduate of USC (Columbia), and Norfolk State University. I earned a bachelor's degree (Experimental Psychology) and Master's degree (Urban Education – Counseling). In the past 36 years, I've held several positions including writing policy for the SC Dept. of Social Services and as an Educational Consultant for children in Foster Care. I have worked as an Instructional Specialist teaching 5th grade student (DoD), an Educational Specialist (Navy College Program), a licensed professional School Counselor and as a Director of School Counseling Programs. I am the CEO of Next Level Educational Services, LLC providing consulting services to educational and state agencies. Since returning home in 2019, I've worked at North Charleston and St. John's High schools, training school counselors and directors in developing effective school counseling programs.

YES OR NO QUESTIONS ONLY

10. Will you disclose all contributions to your campaign in a timely manner before the election?

 x YES NO

11. Will you recuse yourself from decisions where there might be an appearance of a conflict of interest?

 x YES NO