



## 2025 School Committee Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Brad Willenbrock

Office Sought: Beverly School Committee District B

Website:

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### **(A) Your Candidacy**

#### **1. Why are you running, and what would be your top three priorities if elected to serve?**

My vision is to nurture a culture of optimism and hope for public education, which is our community's greatest asset. School Committee members need to listen intently to stakeholders of public education, notably educators, family partners, community members, and students. This sort of intentional collaboration will regenerate trust in public education.

We need to focus on the gaps in serving students with IEPs. The caseloads of Special Educators is too large and paraprofessional positions remain unfilled. Clinicians are strapped and can not provide necessary services that will help our students thrive. School committee members need to ensure that we are funding the staff and programs that best serve students with varying needs.

The out-of-district placements need to be examined. Can we provide programming in the district to allow students to be educated in our district? Can we fund programs that serve students with dyslexia? As a district, we should strive for inclusivity. When students are welcomed and fully served in the district our schools are stronger.

#### **2. What qualifies you to hold this office?**

I am a veteran public middle school teacher, a parent of students in Beverly Public Schools, and I am a product of Beverly Public Schools. I have served on various community boards and held executive positions. I have managed budgets and worked collaboratively with integrity and transparency. I value the worth and dignity of all, regardless of identity, ability, or access. I enjoy listening and learning as I deliberate and make decisions.

## **(B) Open-Ended Policy Questions**

- 1. Massachusetts has wide racial, income-based, and language disparities in educational outcomes. How would you evaluate your school district's work to improve educational equity? What additional steps would you advocate for?**

Our district has a full-time diversity, equity, and inclusion director. I am proud of the vision of the district and the intentional dialogue that has been facilitated with students. I believe educators need professional development focused on race and equity, especially as our district becomes more diverse. The school district should emphasize the importance of hiring people of color whenever possible so that students of color have educational role models that look like them.

- 2. Earlier this year, the Trump administration repealed a Biden-era policy that protected schools from immigration enforcement. What steps would you take to ensure that schools remain a safe and welcoming place for all students, regardless of immigration status?**

Students thrive when they feel welcomed and safe. Schools need to be a sanctuary space for students. Their focus should always be on learning and developing their whole self. I would make sure the district has an updated policy on how educators will interact with immigration officers if they enter the building. The safety of the student should always be first and foremost.

- 3. The Trump administration has been targeting LGBTQ students's civil rights. What steps would you take to ensure that schools remain a safe and welcoming place for all students, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation?**

Students must have intentional support such as clinicians and an LGBTQIA+ resource office. Students should be able to use their chosen names and pronouns. Pride month should be celebrated and Pride Flag raisings should be part of the district culture. Students from the LGBTQIA+ community should

be viewed as resources when planning and providing programming and professional development.

**4. What role do you see for the school district in the city's response to climate change?**

As a district we need to be fostering a culture of sustainability in our schools. Students need to learn about the scarcity of natural resources and the role they play in keeping our earth healthy and sustainable. We need to work with local non-profits like Green Beverly to provide programming and education.

**5. How would you model transparency and accountability if elected?**

I will welcome and respond as fully as possible to questions and comments from stakeholders including educators, family partners, community members, and students. They would be aware of my rationale for my decisions. I will not shy away from constructive feedback about my leadership and will adjust my practice so that I am best serving our district and city. I realize that I am working for residents and, collectively, we realize that stronger schools foster a stronger Beverly.

**6. How will you engage stakeholders, including students, in budget decisions?**

I plan on holding office hours each month so that I am consistently available to residents. I view students as resources and will actively engage with them on social media and via youth committees to generate their valuable ideas. My strength is collaboration. I feel genuine communication leads to progressive ideals.

**7. How will you use your position to advocate at the state level for increasing education funding, especially to provide additional support for students in historically marginalized districts/communities?**

Serving students who are marginalized is a passion for me. The number of students who are marginalized is growing in Beverly and I will be a vocal advocate at the city and state level to ensure marginalized students are served equitably and justly. I would like to establish parent groups that advocate with me at the state level. Together, we can close gaps that are created by systemic injustice.

**8. How will you use your position to combat the Trump administration's war on public education?**

I will work tirelessly to celebrate the value of public education. All students deserve equitable access to high-quality public education. Often, the focus becomes "Why is public education failing?" The reaction is to find something better instead of intensely examining root causes of the public education crisis and working toward resolving them. I will not abandon public education and will continue to ask questions about root causes so that we can eradicate systemic injustices.

**(C) Yes/No Policy Questions**

1. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools? **YES**
2. Do you support police-free schools? **YES**
3. Do you support teaching comprehensive, medically accurate, consent-based, LGBTQ-inclusive sex ed in schools? **YES**
4. According to the American Library Association, in 2022 there were at least 45 attempts to restrict access to books in MA schools, disproportionately books that speak to the experiences of LGBTQ students and students of color. Would you oppose such book-banning efforts if they occurred in your city? **YES**

**(D) Additional Comments**

*(Use this space to make any final comments you deem important for progressive voters assessing your candidacy.)*

*I care deeply about the democratic process and meeting the needs of students who are underserved. I believe that the worth and dignity of all learners should be celebrated, restoration and reflection yields quality social-emotional development, and all educators, family partners, and community members hold a valuable part of impacting the life of a child.*