



2025 School Committee Candidate Questionnaire

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(A) Your Candidacy

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

I'm running because for years, as a parent of a child in the NPS district, I have watched our schools be whittled down as I have watched our city's reserve grow. We have one of the highest reserves of cities our size, yet we continue to cut positions and programs. DESE found our city to be not in compliance with fulfilling IEPs after a particularly egregious event in which a parent of a special needs student was disparaged.

It's all made me outraged enough to step into politics, an area that is totally new to me. My top three priorities will be: 1) Truly learning the lay of the land, which I'm doing already by reading, talking to stakeholders, and immersing myself in educational funding. 2) Taking local non-tax-paying entities to task. Smith College, Cooley Dickinson Hospital, and others have an obligation to our city. They use our services, yet have mostly refused to participate in PILOT programs to help fund our schools. I'd like to make this change. 3) Continue to pressure the mayor and the city council to do the right thing and appropriately fund our schools. We say we're progressive and value education—let's act like it.

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

I've lived in Northampton for a decade and deeply care about our city, especially our schools. My career has been spent as a journalist, exploring ideas, collecting facts, and asking questions. I have also written an op-ed for our local paper about the schools, written countless emails (usually unanswered) to our school committee, mayor, and city council members, as well as the governor's office. I have spoken in committee about school funding, as well as seen my 6th-grader go through these schools since 1st grade.

(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?**

As school districts go, our city has at least put some thought and resources into this, deferring most homework through elementary school and offering support for it in middle school. (Homework is very much a financial equity issue—not all kids have the scaffolding and environment to support it.)

We have had some anti-racist speakers, reading, and training in our schools, both with educators and students. I'd like to see that expanded and continued. To further this, I'd like to see us amp up the volume in the face of the Trump administration's dismantling of such programs and kids getting the message that bullying and slurs are newly more acceptable. Clearly they are not. How are we Trump-proofing our students?

Also, several of my colleagues have suggested a bilingual curriculum, offering a dual track, which I see as being an excellent idea that will make us more attractive to families as well as sending the strong message that our schools are for everyone.

- 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?**

For starters, our superintendent and mayor should take a stand. We have heard nothing even internally about how the city plans to protect our students from ICE, just the most vague acknowledgement of its existence. We need a

policy and we need to assure vulnerable families that we have their backs and that the local police at least know our values and how we want them enforced.

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?**

More education and conversation for students and educators on the spectrum of gender identity, clear policies for how to deal with parents who are not respecting their child's gender identity, and messages from the top down on what our values are as a city and a school district.

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

To invest in our aging buildings to make them more energy efficient, use alternative energy sources to power our buildings, and to continue to educate students and teachers about climate change in the curriculum.

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

I plan to post regularly on social media, send out a monthly email sharing with constituents the contents of school committee meetings, and more. One of the largest issues we have in our current city government is a lack of communication and transparency, spoken in jargon-free language that addresses the concerns of caregivers. I will also share how I voted and why.

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

Ok, so this is where my being new comes in and makes it hard to answer! But I will learn the allowable ways to engage stakeholders, notifying my ward of upcoming budget meetings and committee meetings, and letting them know what they might comfortably skip and when it's a time to get engaged and activate their voices. I also know a lot of people in my ward, especially caregivers, so I will talk to them about what makes it easy for them to get involved and how to best amplify their voices for their children.

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?**

This is huge. Our city can only do so much. We need to get rid of the archaic funding formulas that are part of keeping our schools chronically underfunded. We need to press our governor and our great state reps to support us out here in Western Mass. I'd like to see more coalition building between districts around this to push harder on the state to address this awful math.

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

One of the main drivers of my desire to run for office is to press against this regime. I want our city to be a model of how to do education right. Sufficiently funded, supportive and accessible for all, no tolerance for bullying, yet education for bullies, who are likely just imitating something they saw somewhere. Also with fulfilled 504s and IEPs, with plenty of paraprofessionals paid well to do their jobs. I'm not sure how much a school committee member can do, outside of advocating for and enacting all of the above, but I feel optimistic that myself and my incoming colleagues (hopefully!) will do all we can to make that happen.

(C) Yes/No Policy Questions

1. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools? **YES/ NO**
Yes
2. Do you support police-free schools? **YES/ NO**
Yes
3. Do you support teaching comprehensive, medically accurate, consent-based, LGBTQ-inclusive sex ed in schools? **YES/ NO**
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 / NO**
Yes

(D) Additional Comments

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