

2009 SPPACE QUESTIONNAIRE

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CMS Board of Education – District 5

1. What are the top three issues facing our school district? How would you propose to tackle these issues?

1. Quality of Leadership on the BOE. I would raise the collective level of leadership on the BOE by treating fellow BOE members with dignity and respect, by becoming a champion for public education, and by leading by example in all aspects of CMS.
2. Student and School Performance. CMS must win the trust and confidence of parents by creating high performing schools, one school at a time.
3. CMS Efficiency and Effectiveness. By applying business minded accountability, we can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of CMS services.

2. Why are so many students (especially low-income and minority youth) failing state exams and dropping out, and what can Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools do to change that?

Leonard Pitts recently documented a number of proven methods for teaching low income children in his series. "What Works." CMS should evaluate which of those proven methods have the right fit for individual CMS schools and quickly implement similar methods. Two examples of this are the KIPP School on Central Ave and what Pam Espinoza is currently doing at McClintock. In addition, two methods for increasing the graduation rate are to greatly expand on line course offerings and vocational/technical education courses.

3. How do you believe Mecklenburg County should fund school capital costs, parks, roads, transit, police and fire protection needs for the County? Should purchasers of new homes be responsible for funding these services for the entire County? Do you believe that these types of proposals are a fair way to pay for required services to existing taxpayers?

First we should develop a more systematic view of county facilities. Libraries are a good example. Today we have two separate library systems, a set of public libraries and libraries embedded in schools. By looking at these as a single library system, we could find greater efficiencies. We should also consider linking the activities that increase the demand for more schools, parks, etc with how to pay for those facilities.

4. What would you propose to do to reduce expenses in line with the reduced funding from the state?

I would implement a managed competition program much like I led as Chair of the City Privatization/Competition Advisory Committee. This requires government to compete with private industry. The result is either more efficient and effective government or better service by private industry. Either way the citizen who pays for and receives the service wins. Examples include food service, bus maintenance, physical security, and property management.

5. **Would you support the use of an accounting system that tracks per-pupil/per-school expenses and student performance at the individual school level for comparative purposes?**

Yes, the better data that we have the better decisions that we can make. This approach is what I used to run a 400 person engineering business.

6. **What are your suggestions for innovative new funding sources for school capital projects?**

CMS, the City, and County should work collaboratively with the real estate community to develop these funding sources.

7. **What suggestions do you have that would reduce transportation costs for the District? Do you support allowing older children to use public transportation to get to and from school?**

CMS should continue to implement methods to reduce transportation cost by restructuring transportation policies, by using a more efficient vehicle fleet, and by increasing the efficiency of the school transportation system. Making effective use of public transit should be an important component of this strategy.

8. **If elected, how do you view your role as School Board Member?**

The BOE should be the champions of public education in CMS. They should constantly highlight the positive accomplishments of CMS, not to ignore the challenges, but to marshal the community's will and collective effort to face those challenges head on. BOE members must lead by example, demonstrate fiscal responsibility, develop innovative and creative solutions based on data and critical thinking, create a culture of professionalism and respect, and through their own personal accountability, win the trust and confidence of the citizens of Charlotte-Mecklenburg.