Individual Information

Name/District
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Social Media Accounts
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Education History
Public schooling : Seneca East Local High School, Seneca County, Ohio

Undergrad: Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan [Computer Science/Mathematics]

Graduate: University of Maryland Global Campus, Adelphi, Maryland

Languages Spoken/Other Skills
English

List who has been compensated to provide services to your campaign. List your campaign managers. Note current cash on hand. Note your donations received and spent, although you need not include figures that are already filed on campaign finance reports.
No professional consultants. No paid staff. Ad spend, literature expenses, and cash will be available in the Pre-Primary finance report.

List organizations/groups/committees (both education-related and not) of which you are an official member
NAACP, Community Advisory Council, Columbia Democratic Club

Community Interest / Position Questions

1. Why are you running? Explain why you are qualified to hold this position. Please include your experiences doing volunteer or non-profit work, in Howard County and elsewhere. (Character limit please 1200)
I am running for Board of Education because, as a father and a community member, I am concerned about the long term success, stability, and solvency of our community schools. The current Board of Education has shown itself unable to work together, find solutions, and make the hard decisions that the Howard County Public School System requires. As a technical leader at Cisco Systems I am required to make and execute plans and decisions regarding the handling of millions of events, network connections, and software inspections that occur daily. Understanding complex interoperating systems and processes and their underlying data is what I do. A school system the size of HCPSS is the embodiment of complex interoperating systems and processes, and these processes need to be refined and optimized. That is what I do.

2. Do you believe the Board of Education race should remain non-partisan on the ballot? If so, how is your campaign remaining non-partisan? (Character limit 1200)
Yes, the Board of Education race should remain non-partisan on the ballot. It means that the election process of the race does not exclude or shape how the voices of the community get to choose who they want. A non-partisan race allows the final ballot to be between who the community has decided are the serious candidates without the winnowing by party.

My campaign is remaining non-partisan by running in a non-partisan race. I am a Democrat because I have found the people who share my concerns to be Democrats, not because of a faithfulness to a political party. I welcome the support of and campaign advice from anyone with a commitment to finding strong anti-racist solutions to the opportunity and discipline gaps. I welcome the support of and campaign advice from anyone with a dedication to full support of LGBTQ+ acceptance and success with an extra focus to ensure that they all survive to graduation. I welcome the support of and campaign advice from anyone with who believes the identification of student educational needs should be met by the professional staff of the school and never require parents to add legal costs on top of other parenting challenges to ensure student educational needs are identified and met.

I am an engaged member of the local Democratic Party and recently an officer in a Democratic club. To pretend otherwise would be disingenuous and I pride myself on being open and truthful.

3. Do you believe the Superintendent's requested budget is too high, too low or just right? If too low, how much should it be, and what other county budget items should be cut to fund it? If too high what should be cut from the request? (Character limit 1200)

The Superintendent's requested budget left the unfunded deferred maintenance expenses growing. It did not include the technology investment that the COVID-19 situation proved was long overdue. Year after year the county cuts the requested budget regardless of how trim the school attempts to craft it. This implies the county leadership does not trust the school to request defendable, truthful numbers. Rather than focus on what dollars are asked for, the school system needs to instead focus on defending that those dollars are needed.

Classroom sizes, paraeducators, arts programs, STEM curriculum, classroom and educational technology, special education accommodations, student mental health, and physical education: every one needs to be provided, needs to be protected. Prove to the county, prove to the state that investments in education are successful and required. Account for each dollar spent and ask for as much needed.

4. Over time, the County Council and Board of Education have often disagreed on where responsibility lies regarding addressing overcapacity. There are varying beliefs regarding restricting development and redistricting as tools. How do you suggest the County Council and Board of Education work together to address overcapacity issues? (Character limit 1500)

The County Council needs to assure that future planning ensures that areas of increased use, be that residential additions, new or expanded commercial locations, or increased industry, have adequate public facilities. If the traffic patterns exceed the available road space then no amount of Board of Education activity can successfully transport students through the area. Like the budget though, the Board of Education needs to show itself as an active partner in managing capacity. When a school ends up with 500 more students than capacity attending it, that is proof of poorly managed residential zoning, but it is also proof of poorly managing the school attendance areas around that zoning.

County Council needs to be more restrictive to development and the Board of Education needs to be more responsive to the zoning and planning.

5. How do you define Equity? Suggest how the HCPSS can better ensure equity. Give specific examples, including how to accomplish those goals in the budget. (Character limit 1500)
Educational equity is providing every student the resources that they require to succeed, addressing barriers, and creating individualized support systems.

The Board of Education can support this goal by ensuring, and continuing to fund, that every building has a sufficient staff of counselors. Being able to talk to the students is vital for the identification of the barriers they face.

Once the resources are enumerated, the barriers are identified, and support systems created, then the barriers to equity have to be dismantled brick by brick. Students have to be rested, fed, and feel safe at school. Their curriculum needs to be representative and relevant. They need to be respected as people. They need to be disciplined proportionally and with the mission to help them succeed.

Student data needs to be reviewed to assess whether intended equitable improvements actually help eliminate disparities.

6. What do you believe Board of Education Members can do to help students achieve their fullest potential at all levels? Please include in your answer what you believe should be done to close any achievement gaps, be specific. (Character limit 1500)
Support principals. Support principles. Fund needs. Update policies that enshine biases of the past. Advocate for the school system to governing bodies.

7. What are three things you feel should be Board priorities in the next one to three years? (Character limit 1500)
Protect student health and safety. Be conscientious stewards of taxpayer dollars. Maximize student academic success.

8. Choose a 2020 local Howard County State Bill and evaluate it. (Character limit 1200)
The 2020 legislative session ended early due to the COVID-19 situation.

9. How would you as a Board Member, oversee, review and instruct the Superintendent? Give a specific example of each, where the Board of Education and Superintendent have fallen short, and done well. (Character limit 1500)
I will, with the Board at large, review the contract renewal or expiration in the next terms. We will review the policies the Superintendent implements and update or amend them as

necessary. I will review operating data to highlight ongoing failures and demand remediation and mitigation actions.

10. With regard to school redistricting, what do you believe are the three top priorities, in order, that should be considered as reasons to redistrict, or be goals of redistricting? How would you suggest those goals be met? What do you believe was done right and done wrong in the most recent redistricting? (Character limit 1500)

The top redistricting priority is to effectively balance the student population with the capacity of the school buildings.The second is to ensure that past decisions, biases, or mismanagement do not continue to damage future academic achievement. Third is to guarantee that all the stakeholder communities are active participants in the outcome.

The first goal and second goals can be met with an algorithmically driven process with sufficiently tagged student data and integration with county zoning, planning, and developmental permit requests. Once such a solution is in place it can be reviewed and adjusted every few years to guarantee that the extreme imbalance of the current building utilization does not occur again.

What was done right in this past redistricting process that progress was made on some of the capacity issues. Had the Board of Education not revised any of the attendance areas then over 21,000 students would have been in schools over building capacity.

2019 redistricting was a broken process starting from the Board independently constructing a widespread school attendance area adjustment plan without basing it on a shared starting point from the AAC. At the time of final public input the Board was still developing the plan that the stakeholders should have been helping provide final refinement.

11. Do you believe the HCPSS is serving the needs of the Special Education community? If not, what needs to be changed? Do you believe there is enough funding for Special Education in the current HCPSS budget? Why? (Character limit 1200)

No, HCPSS has not fully met the needs and challenges of the Special Education community. Families with children requiring special education support have, in the past, had to secure outside legal counsel to get their needs identified and have had to use legal challenges to see their children's IEPs followed. HCPSS needs to both empower and require the appropriate staff to begin processing to guarantee students receive an equitable education as early as possible. Early interventions, assisting in the initiation of 504 plans, and minimizing the barriers to establishing IEPs are all ways that the school district can work to support their special education students.

Recent methods of cuts have raised challenges to Special Education even when those cuts don't come from Special Education line items. Increased class sizes mean more distractions for the students and less focus per student from the teachers. These concerns, which impact all students, are amplified when the student in question has additional educational challenges.

12. In what areas of public education do you refuse to compromise, due to strong beliefs? How would you make changes in these areas? Give examples of how you collaborated and compromised with colleagues who disagreed with you. (Character limit 1200)

Every student should receive a safe, free appropriate public education. A student's success or failure should not be able to be predicted by race, sex, gender, sexuality, native language, immigration status, family status, family income, zip code, or neighborhood. I refuse to compromise and accept that any grouping of students are simply less able.

Professionally I work in computer security. The interactions between security folks and basically everybody else is constantly a battle of disagreements. Think of every time you worked at a shared building and watched the side door be propped open so people can get through. You are seeing a great example of how security and everyone else don't get along immediately. The key is that you have to stop and look farther at what you are trying to achieve. Security and operations, both are trying to enable whatever the mission is. Look past the immediate and see what the goal is. On the Board of Education, the path forward is to remember that, regardless of what you think about any specific issue or however you feel in a day or toward people, you need to address keeping students safe, safeguarding taxpayer money, and ensuring student success.

13. Give examples in your personal or professional life that demonstrate your willingness to hold people accountable and include transparency for the community. (Character limit 1200)

My personal writings on my blog the past few years have been used to publicly explore the bigotry and assimilationist racism of my own family. Those same writings have been used to discuss and explore the human rights failings of leaders across the political spectrum. These explorations have come at the loss of lifelong familial relationships because maintaining individual personal relationships is not more important than community justice.

14. For incumbents, what do you feel is your legacy you have left so far on the HCPSS? For other candidates, what do you want your legacy to be and why are you the best choice to create it? (Character limit 1200)

I want analysts like Richard Kohn to look into Howard County schools and not be able to see correlations between FARMs percentages and testing scores. My ideal legacy would be

that HCPSS is a nationally recognized case study in eliminating the ethnic/racial and socioeconomic opportunity gaps as well as a case study in eliminating discipline gaps.

The systemic issues of HCPSS are visible as artifacts when looking at student data. Our Board of Education needs to understand and appreciate the value of repeated data analysis, rapid iterative improvement, and a dedication to antiracist solutions.