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Questionnaire Results

Falcon School District School Board 2021 Candidates

Do you agree or disagree with the idea that parents, not systems or institutions, are best positioned to select the school or educational services that best meet the needs of their children? Why or why not?

Jamillynn D'Avola: Absolutely agree. Parents know what is best for their children. Parents should have full direction of their children's education. They should be able to choose what, how, when, and where their children learn. Parents must have full access to all the curriculum that is being taught in their child's school and be able to voice their concerns over any curriculum they feel is inappropriate. Parents are the experts of their children, not the teachers, not the schools, not the government. I believe that schools and teachers should give primary deference to the will of the parents, whenever it is fiscally possible and does not disturb the rights of other students to receive a quality education. Schools have lost the understanding that nothing should be taught that might violate the children's and parents' views. As a Board Member, I will put an emphasis back on teaching reading, writing, math, etc. No more distancing the parents' from what is being taught in school.

Fadil Lee: I agree with the idea that parents are best positioned to select the school or educational services that best meet the needs of their children. Parents will have the best handle on what their children require to be successful.

Ivy Liu: I agree that parents are best position to decide on the school or educational services that best meet the needs of their children. Parents have the best grasp for a child's learning style, personality, relational skills, and learning challenges if any. Choosing the best learning environment for a child is a crucial job for a parent.

Tammy Harold: Agree, parents know their children's interests and have a variety of schools to choose from. I believe is parents choice in choosing a school.

Dave Cruson: No response

Elmer Harris: No response

Justin Jakovac: No response

Lori Thompson: No response



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Should students in your school district have the unrestricted ability to attend a charter school or other public school of choice if their families so choose? Why or why not?

Jamillynn D'Avola: Parents should be able to choose the right school for their children. This includes choosing a traditional school, private school, trade school, charter school, or online school, etc. Parents should have the right to place their children in the school of their choice, especially when their existing school is underperforming. All children are different and have different needs. Parents should have options available to them so that their children are receiving the best education based on their needs. Students must not be stuck in an underperforming school just because they live in a certain neighborhood.

Fadil Lee: Yes. Choice is essential to being an American. There shouldn't be any backlash or repercussion for school choice.

Ivy Liu: Yes. It is absolutely the parents' right to choose the best school for their children based on the family's priorities. Parents pay taxes and should have free choice regarding school of choice.

Tammy Harold: Yes, parental choice is a right of families and with the many varieties of traditional, charter, technical, online and homeschool schools, they have the benefit of that choice.

Dave Cruson: No response

Elmer Harris: No response

Justin Jakovac: No response

Lori Thompson: No response

Do you believe that public charter schools or other choice schools should have the flexibility to operate autonomously within the bounds of state law, including through waivers of certain local district or board policies? Why or why not?

Jamillynn D'Avola: Yes! I have been a teacher at a charter school for the last 13 years, and I have personally seen how this autonomy helps the school do what is best for students. Having this flexibility is what makes the majority of charter and choice schools more effective and better schools. They can make decisions based on their student population to best support their students. More government and state control of schools has proven ineffective and hinders the learning process.

Fadil Lee: Generally speaking I do. I support flexibility, autonomy, choice, unrestricted ability and freedom. On a case per case basis, I am curious to know what certain local district or board policies need to be waived.

Ivy Liu: Yes, within reason. Hopefully the waivers will not cause substantial deviation from the original mission or concept of the charter school.

Tammy Harold: Yes, D49 strongly supports our charters and works hand in hand to assure they have the flexibility to meet students needs.

Dave Cruson: No response

Elmer Harris: No response

Justin Jakovac: No response

Lori Thompson: No response



If elected, how do you plan to support both new and existing public-school options—charter, magnet, online, specialty, etc.—in your school district?

Jamilynn D'Avola: Having these options available to parents is very important. If the schools are meeting the needs of the students and students are learning and growing, then we need to support these schools. We need to let them run these schools as the parents and the administrators see best. This means granting them the waivers they request when their proposals are sound and meet the criteria for approval. I will make sure they are granted the requests and waivers they need.

Fadil Lee: When elected, I plan to meet with every existing public school option in my represented area. I want to know what's working and what isn't. I will maintain a clear channel of communication.

Ivy Liu: When elected, I will continue to support existing public-school options as well endorse solidly developed concepts of new public school options.

Tammy Harold: D49 has a culture of choice options and advocating for academically outstanding educational choices is important to our families. If elected, I will continue that culture.

Dave Cruson: No response

Elmer Harris: No response

Justin Jakovac: No response

Lori Thompson: No response

As a school board member, how will you balance the needs and priorities of the district itself against the needs and priorities of families, students, and communities?

Jamilynn D'Avola: These needs go hand in hand. The district exists to meet the educational needs of the community. Every decision we make must go back to these questions, "Is this what is best for the students? Is this what parents want for their children?" If the answer is, "No," then we should not be pursuing those avenues. Our policies, our curriculum, our budget, and our hiring choices should all reflect the belief that we must do what is best for students, not what is convenient or what might be a "good" idea that has not research-validated to improve education.

Fadil Lee: As a school board member, the electorate has entrusted me to represent the interests, needs and values of the students, their families, and the community. The district administration's priorities and needs, may at times be at odds with what the school board desires, and what the students, their families, and the community seek. My intent is to seek what is good for the electorate first, second, and third.

Ivy Liu: Since the Board is elected by the stakeholders, it would be prudent for the Board members to act upon the expectations of the majority in the community, within reason. However, the needs and priorities of the district and the impact of a major decision on everyone should always be an important consideration in any major board decision. I imagine this can be a fluid scenario where the balance may shift a bit along a continuum.

Tammy Harold: Open communication, respect and transparency is key to building trust between the district and our community. I am dedicated to listening and making decisions that are based on all information available to best support our families, students and district.

Dave Cruson: No response

Elmer Harris: No response

Justin Jakovac: No response

Lori Thompson: No response