

**2017 Iowa City Education Association School Board Candidate Questionnaire**

**Candidates, please send your written responses to Brady Shutt at [shutt.brady@iowacityschools.org](mailto:shutt.brady@iowacityschools.org) or at [shuttsaylor@yahoo.com](mailto:shuttsaylor@yahoo.com) no later than 5PM on Monday, August 7. If you have any questions or experience technical problems, please email Brady or call/text him at 319-383-4141.**

1. Please share with us why you are running for the Board. Specifically highlight professional or personal experiences that will make you a good Board member.

I am running for the two-year term on the school Board foremost because I want to address at the Board level the long standing disparate educational results experienced by students of color in the school district. The gaps in educational achievement between students of color and white students have been at 30%-35% for well over two decades. We need to and can reduce these gaps to 0%.

I have served on the District Equity Committee for the last 3 years. Two years ago the Equity Committee recommended and the board adopted the Comprehensive Equity Plan. The plan outlines specific objectives, action steps, time lines and assessments that will eliminate disproportionality in all areas, increase staff of color, incorporate multicultural/gender fair curriculum, and increase community engagement. With clear leadership from the Board we can implement the Comprehensive Equity Plan and have an educational system of teachers, support staff, and administrators that is free of gaps in any educational outcome for all students.

I retired in 2007 from Health Care Information Systems at The University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics and live with my wife, Karen Fox, in Iowa City. Our children, now well into adulthood, attended Longfellow, South East and City High. They each tell stories of special teachers, friends and, sometimes surprising, experiences during their school years.

In high school in my hometown in Texas I was in a vocational training program. I attended a local community college before enlisting in the U.S. Navy for four years. After graduating with a B. A. from Texas Christian University I served in the U.S. Peace Corps in Malaysia and then came to Iowa City in 1971 to attend the University of Iowa Law School.

I am currently serving or have served on the following boards and commissions and organizations:

ICCSA Equity Committee  
Center for Worker Justice  
ICCSA Support for Immigrant Students and Families Taskforce  
Black Voices Project  
Coalition for Racial Justice  
FasTrac  
Little Creations Academy  
Johnson County Empowerment Board  
The Housing Fellowship  
Iowa City Housing and Community Development Commission  
Iowa City Planning and Zoning Commission  
University of Iowa Staff Council  
Consultation of Religious Communities

2. Please list your top priorities if elected.

Addressing the long standing disparate educational results experienced by students of color in the district.

Supporting all immigrant students and their families as we are faced with national efforts that interfere with our constitutional mandate to equally educate all students residing within the district without regard to immigration status.

Completing the Facility Master Plan whatever the bond referendum election result.

Increasing vocational training opportunities and course offerings.

Reviewing our special education programs and physical spaces to make sure they are meeting the highest standards.

Directing effective attention to the questions raised recently about how seclusion techniques are being used and whether they have a place in this district.

Maintaining the overall quality of public school education that exists throughout the ICCSD.

3. In the past two years, what do you think the Board's biggest success has been and what do you think its biggest failure has been?

**Success –**

The Board's greatest success has been in the area of addressing disparities in educational achievement for students of color. There have been a number of actions by the Board towards this end:

a commitment by the District to achieving equitable outcomes by adding this goal to the District Strategic Plan: "Annually improve the educational experiences for all children through culturally inclusive and responsive school environments and classroom instruction, as measured by various student assessments including the Biennial Youth Survey, with a focus on equitable outcomes for students in protected classes";

a Comprehensive Equity Plan was adopted upon the recommendation of the Equity Committee;

the Equity Committee was invited to meet with the full board on two occasions to discuss the use of disaggregated data;

approval was given to begin use of the Weighted Resource Allocation Model in assigning teaching resources;

several programs and studies were authorized such as Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Implicit Bias and Restorative Justice staff training, and two school climate surveys measuring racial attitudes and acceptance of LGBTQ students;

support was shown for student groups that appeared before the Board - Iowa City Parents and Students for Equity and Students Against Hate and Discrimination.

## **Failure –**

The Board's greatest failure has been not taking full and public responsibility for the findings of a large number of IEP violations, systemic non-compliance issues in five major areas and references to a retaliatory culture by the Iowa Department of Education as reported in the IDoE's 2016 Accreditation Report. This adverse review of a critical District educational program was preceded by an investigation of the District special education program conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights in 2013 that revealed a disproportionate rate of enrollment of African American students in special education. The Board at that time also failed to take full and public responsibility for the District's discrimination against African American students.

Compliance with federal and state laws and regulations applicable to District programs is ultimately the responsibility of the Board and of the Board alone. If the District is not in compliance with external regulations it is incumbent upon the Board to determine the circumstances resulting in non-compliance, the corrective action required to bring about compliance, and to adopt effective changes in policies and practices to ensure future compliance. Full public disclosure of all of these steps is necessary to assure students, parents, teachers, staff and the community that the District can carry out educational programs in full conformity with external regulations.

4. In your view, what is the appropriate role for ICEA--the teachers' union--to play in the District's decision making process?

I will want the ICEA to have a substantive role in advising the Board and taking part in the discussion of significant educational related decisions under consideration by the Board and the administration. If they are lacking now in District policies, I am interested in developing processes that the Board, administration and the ICEA can use to have timely and informed procedures whereby the ICEA can comment on and make recommendations about significant issues being considered by the Board. I am, of course, assuming that the ICEA would want to have such a role.

5. Over the past several years, funding from the State of Iowa (Supplemental State Aid) has been woefully inadequate. Cuts to federal funding for education are also likely. Approximately 80% of the

Iowa City School District's budget goes for personnel costs. Given these factors, what will your budget priorities and goals be if you are elected to the Board? What (if any) areas would be off limits from cuts?

My budget priorities will be to at least maintain current staffing and compensation levels and to increase compensation amounts when possible. I will work to keep the percentage of the District budget used for personnel compensation at current levels. Obtaining and heeding the opinions and advice of teachers and staff before agreeing to or rejecting any proposals to reduce programs or positions would be a necessity for me.

6. Do you support the September GO Bond? Do you support the District's Facilities Master Plan?

I am supporting the general obligation bond measure and will work to implement the Facilities Master Plan. Approval of the bond will lead to completion of the Master Plan which will improve the physical educational environment for all students and is directly supportive of district equity goals. I respect the perspectives of people who are not in favor of the bond proposal and look forward to engaging with the entire community, whatever the election result, as we move forward to accomplish our facility goals.

7. In February 2017, the Iowa Legislature gutted much of the language in Chapter 20 of the Iowa Code that, for over forty years, had provided a proven, effective method for labor and management to come together in the collective bargaining process to resolve differences over topics such as wages, safety, leave, workplace conditions and insurance policies in the creation of a negotiated agreement (i.e. a contract). As a prospective Board member, how do you think the District should move forward after these changes? What role do you see the Board playing? And, what do you see your role as an individual Board member being in this?

Public sector workers, like all workers, should enjoy full bargaining rights as do the workers in some sectors in this country and in many employment areas in other countries. I support this district developing a bargaining process that is better than or at least equivalent to the previous system of collective bargaining. We do not need to be restrained by the actions of the legislature in maintaining and improving excellent relationships and outstanding working conditions, including compensation and benefits, with all people working for the district. I will also support lobbying and advocacy by the District for returning to the state of collective bargaining rights for public sector workers that benefited the entire community before the 2017 legislation.

As an individual Board member I would like to immediately begin working with existing union structures to develop effective processes for continuing to bring the ideas and goals of teachers and support staff to the Board table. There are no topics that have been

included in past negotiated agreements that I want to exclude from new processes. I want to consult with the ICEA about ideas of how to go forward as soon as possible after this election.

8. The salary schedule for the Iowa City Schools uses base wage as a starting point and then compensates teachers for their additional years of experience as a teacher, as well as for reaching certain educational benchmarks (e.g. MA plus 30 graduate hours). This salary schedule is the result of decades of collective bargaining. Will you commit to support the salary schedule being used in the Iowa City School District?

I will definitely support and vote for continuing the current salary schedule. It has proven to be a fair and accepted method for adjusting teacher compensation for experience and increased educational achievement.

9. Do you support maintaining all benefits in the current contract that were agreed upon in good faith over decades of bargaining?

I will support current contract benefits and welcome proposals regarding benefits from the ICEA in the future.

10. There is a shortage of teachers at the state and national level. The continued attacks on public education are worsening this problem. How can Iowa City Schools continue to attract and retain the best and brightest teachers and staff members? If elected to the Board, how will you contribute to that effort?

In my view the Board has to listen to and act upon recommendations from current teachers and staff in supporting our work of recruiting new teachers and staff, retaining teachers and staff in their current roles, and understanding why teachers and staff may choose to leave the District. As a Board member I see my responsibility as both establishing the priority of recruitment and retention goals and providing the resources requested by both current teachers and administration to implement effective recruitment and retention initiatives.