

2022 Montgomery County Board of Education Candidate Questionnaire

Our Revolution Maryland recognizes the importance of the Montgomery County Board of Education in shaping educational policy in the state's largest county. We are seeking to endorse Progressive Champions who will help improve the public education available to all Montgomery County students.

Please provide as much information as possible. If you have any questions, please email hal@ourrevolutionmd.com. Thank you!

Email *

brenda.wolff@gmail.com

Name of person completing this form. *

Brenda Wolff

Title of office sought including district *

Montgomery County Board of Education, District 5

Candidate status in race

Incumbent



Website

www.brendawolff.com

Email

brenda@brendawolff.com

Phone

240-461-0513

Candidate Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/BrendaWolffForBoardofEducation>

Candidate Twitter

<https://www.twitter.com/brendawolff1>

Candidate Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/blwolff2>

Candidate's Progressive Values

Campaign issues and pledges

Why are you running for the Board of Education? If elected, what will be your priorities?

I am running to serve a second term on the BOE. As a member of the BOE before the Pandemic, I was keenly aware that while we were headed in the right direction, much remains to be done to provide equitable opportunity and access to every student in this county regardless of zip code. My broad experience brings an added dimension to the board of education. My experience in education includes serving as the director of the National Institute of Educational Governance, Finance, Policymaking and Management in the US Department of Education. This office was concerned with improving the quality of education and access to equal opportunities for all children. Later, as Acting Director of the National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students, we looked at educational activities designed to improve outcomes for students at risk because of socio-economic factors including race and Limited English Proficiency. I was also the Program Manager for the National Assessment of Educational Progress. I managed a \$129 million dollars and was responsible for the overall management of this very complex program, as well as reporting the results as the "Nations Report Card." These experiences that given me a national perspective on issues relevant for the Board's consideration. If re-elected. my priorities are expanding access to evidence based social and emotional supports for students and staff; ensuring equitable distribution of programming and opportunities in the county; working to ensure universal PreK for all 4 year olds; measuring program effectiveness and improving outcomes for all students.

Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the board of education? (Please identify and explain)

One of my key objectives in serving on the board is to end what I see as the inequitable distribution of programs and opportunities particularly in areas with high populations of black and brown children. There is a need to add access to dual language and stem programs particularly in East county. Additionally, I feel that the facilities in this area have not received the same level of attention as facilities in other parts of the county with fewer kids impacted by poverty.

What particular experiences or skills have prepared you to serve as a board member?

I am in my fourth year serving on the Board. I have served as the Vice President and am in my second year as President. I served as chair of the Communications Committee, and as a member of the Special Populations and Fiscal Management Committees. I currently serve on the Board of Directors of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education and am the Vice-Chair of its legislative committee. I know what it takes to get change and how to work with my fellow board members to make that happen. Change doesn't happen just because you think it should. It is a collaboration and negotiation. Additionally I spent 27 years in the US Department of Education, many serving as Chief Attorney, Deputy Director and Director of the Office for Civil Rights in two different regional offices and as Institute Directors for the Policy Institute and the At-Risk Institute.

Please describe your background in education? Have you taught in schools?

I have not taught in schools. I have held numerous management and leadership positions in the US Department of Education including, Chief Attorney for the Boston Office for Civil Rights, Deputy Director in the Philadelphia Office, Director of the National Institute of Educational Governance, Finance, Policymaking and Management; Acting Director of the National Institute on Education of At-Risk students; and Senior Program manager for the National Assessment of Educational Progress where I managed the budget and reporting. I am involved in education advocacy organizations and several mentoring programs. I am an education advocate who will work to eliminate disparities and increase opportunities on an equitable basis.

Do you have children who are or were between the ages of 5 and 18? If yes, did they attend MoCo Public schools? If not, please explain why not.

My children did not attend MCPS. We lived in PA during their school years. However, my grandson is currently in the 3rd grade and has attended MCPS schools since kindergarten and my daughter is a teacher in MCPS. Therefore, I am extremely familiar with and invested in the issues of the students, parents, teachers and administrators in our system. Additionally, I have been working with the 1977 -II group and MCPS since I returned to the county to address the opportunity gap for African American children. I served on the African American Student Achievement Group working with MCPS on issues of access and opportunity for African American Students. I also ran a mentoring program at Blake HS for 5 years before joining the Board. The program was so successful we expanded to Springbrook HS before I joined the Board.

Please set forth your position on Charter Schools. (We recognize it may be nuanced. Include in your answer whether you are receiving any support from any such school or individual or group associated with the Charter School Movement in any way.)

I support public schools. However, the BOE must objectively review consistent with the policy on charter schools any applications that come before them. I am in no way receiving any support from any group or individual associated with the Charter School Movement.

How do you propose to attract and retain qualified teachers and to ensure that all students are receiving a high quality education?

I think that we need to make MCPS a premier employment destination for new teachers and experienced teachers. We need hiring bonuses, and we need to work with our County Council partners to support housing stipends for new teachers, especially for first and last month's rent. We need to continue to encourage rigorous support and coaching for all incoming teachers to our district to ensure successful implementation of curriculum and integration of best practices for supporting and communicating high expectations to diverse students and developing collaborative partnerships with diverse families across our communities.

I believe that several factors affect teacher retention. We need to think about environment. Many of our minority teachers do not feel a sense of community in our school buildings. For a new teacher, this is very important. New teachers in particular need greater support, professional development and may need instructional coaches

Does the candidate endorse the Our Revolution Platform?

<https://ourrev.us/Platform2022>

Yes



If the candidate has questions or concerns about any items in the OR Platform, please note here:

none

Is candidate a recurring Our Revolution donor at \$5/month or more?

- Yes
- No (You can contribute at <https://ourrev.us/2022member>)
- Pledged at <https://ourrev.us/2022member>
- Other:

Candidate's narrative

Candidate's political history

What offices have they run for or held before? How did they fare in those elections? What have they accomplished in office?

I was elected to the Board of Education in 2018. I was also represented District 14 on the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee.

Candidate's personal story

Aside from political offices they've held, what is noteworthy about the candidate's life story? ie. personal experiences, jobs, education, etc

I am honored to be named one of Maryland's Top 100 Women for 2022. In 2019, I received the Maryland Democratic Party Tubman-Douglass Leadership Award in recognition of pathbreaking leadership and service to our state and party and in 2021 I received the SHAPE Maryland Distinguished Advocate for Healthful Living award for my advocacy as Board of Education President for Montgomery County Public Schools.

Possible negatives

Use this space to tell us anything you think might be used against the candidate during this campaign

I cannot think of anything.

Other endorsements

What noteworthy endorsements has this candidate has received (if they are not already listed on candidate website)

SEIU Local 500; Senator Craig Zucker – Dt.14; Senator Susan Lee – Dt. 16; Senator Cheryl Kagan – Dt. 17; Senator Will Smith Dt. 20; Senator Nancy King – Dt. 39; Delegate Anne Kaiser – Dt. 14; Delegate Pam Queen – Dt. 14; Delegate Eric Luedtke – Dt. 14; Delegate Julie Palakovich Carr Dt. 17; Delegate Emily Shetty – Dt. 18; Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield – Dt. 19; Delegate Bonnie Cullison- Dt. 19; Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins Dt. 20; Delegate Gabe Acevero- Dt.39; Jud Ashman – Mayor of Gaithersburg; Neil Harris – Gaithersburg County Council; Jeffrey Slavin – Mayor of Somerset; Ike Leggett, Former County Executive Moco

Candidate's campaign infrastructure

Candidate Campaign Manager name, phone, email

Brenda Wolff

Candidate Finance Manager name, phone, email

Donna Mitchell, donna.mitchell1996@gmail.com; 301-503-4062

Fundraising analysis

How much has the candidate raised? How many donors and what is the average donation? How does this candidate's fundraising compare to their opponents?

I have raised \$12,000. I am ahead in fundraising compared to my opponent.

Campaign team/volunteer assessment

How many people are working for the candidate? Does the campaign have enough volunteers?

I don't have any paid workers. I have a kitchen cabinet of 9. I partner with other campaigns to door knock for me and distribute literature. You never have enough volunteers.

Online organizing

How many emails/contacts has the campaign collected?

1480

Theory to win

How many votes does the candidate need to win? What's the plan to get there?

about 223,000

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