



# Public Education Partners

## Greenville County

### Greenville County School Board of Trustees: Area 18 Candidate Questionnaire Responses

Candidates' responses were limited to 150 words per question. Other than edits to meet the 150 word limit, responses are uploaded exactly as provided.

	Pat Suddoth	Anne Middleton
<b>Years in School Board Area:</b>	Did not respond	18 years
<b>Education Background:</b>		Bachelor of Arts in Biology-University of Massachusetts, teacher certification in Massachusetts and teacher certification in South Carolina to teach high school science courses, Registered Nurse in Massachusetts, Maryland
<b>Employment/Occupation:</b>		Retired FBI Special Agent and Supervisor; former chemistry, physical science, marine biology teacher at JL Mann High School in Greenville for 2 years and former biology, chemistry and marine biology teacher at Scituate High School in Massachusetts for 5 years
<b>Campaign website and/or social media page:</b>		Facebook
<b>Do you have children? If so, what school(s) do/did they attend?:</b>		If so what school(s) do/did they attend? I have three daughters, Laura, Beth and Catherine. All of my children attended public schools. Laura attended public school in Langley, Virginia. Beth and Catherine attended Riverside Middle School, Beck Middle School, and JL Mann High School in Greenville. All my daughters attended Clemson University in Clemson, SC.
<b>Email Address:</b>		<a href="mailto:amiddl7108@aol.com">amiddl7108@aol.com</a>
<b>Daytime Phone Number:</b>		(864) 704-8926

<p><b>Why do you care about public schools and why are you willing to serve as a member of the Greenville County Schools Board of Trustees?</b></p>		<p>Because of my own personal experience teaching in public high schools in Scituate, Massachusetts and Greenville, SC, as well as my children and grandchildren attending public schools, I am a proponent and support public school education. I have seen firsthand the quality of education provided in public schools, and I know how important educators are in shaping children's development and preparing them for their futures. In my own experience, a public-school teacher in Virginia identified my daughter's struggle with reading, which was dyslexia, and addressed it through testing and focused instruction. Helping to provide a good educational experience can have lifelong benefits for students to become clear thinkers, good citizens, and be successful. I believe serving as a member of the Board of Trustees will allow me the opportunity to contribute in an active capacity and be a positive influence.</p>
<p><b>Please describe your work and volunteer background and how it prepares you to be a Greenville County Schools Trustee.</b></p>		<p>I was a public high school teacher for seven years, an FBI Special Agent for 24 years, president of my HOA and volunteer at my church. As a teacher, I was able to observe how students respond to various teaching styles, ranging from lectures to lab group work. In working closely with the science department, I implemented best practices to improve my teaching. Before making decisions, I have learned to listen to all sides and review the available data. I try not to assume anything, because I am sometimes surprised by the way things can turn out! I like to be prepared for meetings. I am an organized and detailed person. I have been told I am a good communicator and get things done. These attributes prepare me to be a Greenville County Schools Trustee.</p>
<p><b>What do you consider to be the most important issue for the District and Board of Trustees to focus on in the next four years and why? What role should the Board of Trustees play in addressing it?</b></p>		<p>I believe the most important issue is focusing on enhancing the educational system so that all students will benefit equally. To address this, we need knowledgeable, caring teachers who encourage our students to reach their highest potential, inside and outside of the classroom. We also need good administrators to help teachers with the discipline when needed. We will need to hire and retain quality teachers. We must keep up the academic standards in our classes, so we do not fall behind. With the implementation of block scheduling, we will need to evaluate its effectiveness moving forward. We have students with special needs and behavior problems which we must have a plan to ensure they qualify for graduation. The Board of Trustees plays a key role in providing the vision, policies, support, and resources educators need to teach effectively.</p>
<p><b>What do you think is the greatest</b></p>		<p>The greatest strength of Greenville County Schools is the caliber of the</p>

<p><b>strength of Greenville County Schools and how would you as a Trustee work to enhance it?</b></p>		<p>teachers and professional support staff I have been honored to serve with. The teachers are dedicated and well-versed in their discipline. They devote many hours to ensuring a better education for our students. As a Trustee, we are entrusted with guaranteeing that all students receive a quality education. To do that, we must work with teachers, our most valuable resource, to provide the best, most comprehensive education possible. As a Trustee I would work with the Board to create the right conditions to support our educators. We must also monitor progress of the students through available data and determine where our resources should be focused in moving forward.</p>
<p><b>From your reading of the <i>Profile of the South Carolina Graduate</i> adopted by the SC State Board of Education and the SC Education Oversight Committee, what is your greatest area of concern in terms of academic achievement in our schools and how would you as a trustee work to address it?</b></p>		<p>My greatest area of concern is lack of discipline in the classroom. In general, this manifests itself in classes where there are too many students for one teacher to effectively handle. Large, chaotic class sizes can result in discipline issues, which ultimately affects the ability to teach effectively. It is important to have strong school administrators support the teachers in classroom management. Additionally, burdensome administrative taskings can expend a teacher's time and energy. Where possible, these types of tasks should be automated and/or minimized. Another area of concern is the assignment of teachers within the departments. For example, junior teachers being assigned large entry-level classes while senior teachers are assigned smaller AP classes. There needs to be more consideration for equity in the assignment of teachers within the departments. The Board can provide guidance to the school administrators.</p>
<p><b>"Critical thinking and problem solving" and "collaboration and teamwork" are among the "World Class Skills" called for in the <i>Profile of the South Carolina Graduate</i>. How best can our educators instill these abilities in their students, and how should the District support them?</b></p>		<p>I believe one of the best ways our educators can instill these abilities is by being role-models to students in their own behaviors and actions. It is important for the student to see the educator as a caring person, a good communicator, and someone who effectively works through problems and develops solutions. The teacher should also have a plan for effectively teaching these skill sets to ensure students develop lifelong good learning habits and become good citizens. The District supports the "Profile of the South Carolina Graduate" by putting in place goals that reflect these values and by providing educators with the support and resources they need to achieve these goals.</p>
<p><b>What do you consider the most important factors in building a strong collaborative relationship between Greenville County Schools</b></p>		<p>One of the most important building blocks of a strong collaborative relationship is to have an avenue of honest and open communication. Ad hoc committees can be set up to engage the Board with the school administration on specific issues. The Board listens to stakeholders who voice</p>

<p><b>Administration and the Board of Trustees?</b></p>		<p>concerns to the Board or to school administrators and works to develop a resolution. With this, school administration and the Board of Trustees can find productive ways to work together towards a common goal, which ultimately is the improvement of our educational system for all students and educators.</p>
<p><b>Teacher pay is always a top concern in recruiting and retaining quality teachers. This is reflected in Greenville County Schools' priority of keeping teacher salaries at or among the highest in the State. So other than this issue, what are the biggest challenges facing teachers today? What forms of support should the District provide for teachers facing these challenges?</b></p>		<p>One of the biggest challenges is recruiting and retaining good teachers. Some of the things that contribute to teachers leaving the classroom are large classes, discipline issues, minimal support from administrators, and burdensome administrative taskings. Teachers work many hours outside of the school day and this can create an imbalance in a teacher's personal family life. With the implementation of the block schedule, students attend fewer classes per day for a longer time. If the classes were smaller, the teacher could vary the instruction and have more time to work with each student. If the class size is large, students may lose interest, as the teacher may depend more on lectures. I have no experience with the block schedule and would be interested in learning more. The District should evaluate the benefits of the block schedule to ensure it is working.</p>
<p><b>What does school safety mean to you, and how would you prioritize investment to keep students and staff most safe within our school buildings?</b></p>		<p>School safety has become a very serious concern in the past several years. We need to take advantage of any new technology that aides us in identifying weapons being carried into the school. All doors need to be locked and a system in place to thoroughly admit, track, and record school visitors. I would also support a School Resource Officer for additional security and have detailed plans in place for emergency situations. Teachers, counselors, and parents need to be adequately trained to identify early warning signs of troubled students and provide resources to aide these students. They also need to be trained in emergency response, such as shelter in place. There needs to be a process in place for being able to report troubled students to school administrators and to law enforcement, as warranted.</p>
<p><b>What would be your priority(ies) as a board member to ensure that students with higher needs receive appropriate support to reach their highest levels of achievement?</b></p>		<p>This would be a top priority for me. All students need to be engaged and benefit from public school education. As a board member, I understand the policies for the district must overall meet the needs of the greatest number of students. However, there should be a plan for higher needs students. The challenges educators face are frequently case-specific needs and can include issues of poor attendance, behavioral problems, or bad grades. Effective utilization of On-Track software can help identify and track some of these problem areas. Similarly, there should be a plan in place for gifted students, special needs, language challenged and any other unique circumstances which may arise. The Board of Trustees is critical for</p>

		developing plans and long-range goals for these programs.
--	--	---