

MAURA McMAHON - VOICE article #2 – May issue

As caucus days arrive, some may be struggling to determine what distinguishes each candidate. I'd like to highlight some significant ways in which I differ, and why I believe I should be your first-choice candidate:

No other board member or candidate has a child in elementary school. I know the current APS experience and won't rely on how our schools were 12 or more years ago.

No other board member's or candidate's children attend their neighborhood program in a Title I school. I am committed to the success and strength of all of our schools and won't rely heavily on option programs to alleviate crowding or promote diversity.

And, with the exception of Mr. Goldstein, no other board member or candidate has advocated on the broad issues of educational equality, ways to foster diversity beyond choice and boundaries, or County policies as they impact APS' needs and ability to serve its students—housing, transportation, development.

I will apply proactive leadership to:

- * solve our capacity crisis cost-effectively through long-range planning, including a 4th comprehensive high school, and thoughtful growth of option programs to maintain students' access to opportunities;
- * establish a vision for instruction, but focus on managing the infrastructure, resources, and tools our teachers need to engage students in the joys of learning;
- * develop a network of County departments, community groups, and businesses to increase available resources and streamline services in ways that mutually benefit APS and the broader community;
- * create Academic Partner School programs to bring together students of different backgrounds and abilities to experience diversity firsthand rather than teaching it through books and museum exhibits;
- * push the County to make improvements along Carlin Springs Road and in other places to resolve existing traffic and student safety problems and enable the most efficient use of APS properties; and
- * work with the County to develop ART bus routes to serve secondary students, freeing existing resources to transport our growing elementary student population.

I have a solid track record as an active parent and advocate; but I've stepped outside my comfort zone to run for school board because I feel so passionately about the critical issues our schools face today. I respect Mr. Lander's service to our community and admire Ms. O'Grady's efforts for our schools. But I will bring the fresh perspective, proactive thinking, and voice our schools urgently need now.