

Hamilton Southeastern School Board Candidate Questions

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Name	Michelle Fullhart
Address	12352 Ostara Ct Fishers Indiana 46037 United States
Educational Background	I have a Bachelor's Degree from Miami University (OH) in Elementary Education and a Master's Degree from Ball State University in Elementary Education, as well. I also have endorsements in kindergarten, reading, and am one class short of a high ability endorsement. I have been a teacher for 14 years total, with 11 years within Hamilton Southeastern. During my time working for HSE, I was named my school's teacher of the year two times, and piloted the use of iPads as part of the HSE21 program for elementary students.
Years as a Fishers Resident?	16
Community Involvement Activities (Volunteer)	I am currently serving on the Hamilton Southeastern Schools Foundation Board, Parents in Partnership organization, Indiana Destination Imagination, Brooks School Elementary Guiding All Kids committee, and have served as a past president of the Brooks School Elementary PTO, the HSE PTO Forum, president of the Hamilton County Reading Association, and various other volunteer roles.
Community Involvement Activities (Paid)	I do not have any paid volunteer roles.
Leadership Experience	I am currently the secretary of the Hamilton Southeastern School Board, a past president of the Brooks School Elementary PTO, co-chair of the HSE PTO Forum, president of the Hamilton County Reading Association, and HSE21 committee head at New Britton Elementary.
Professional Designations	Not applicable
1. What is your number one reason for wanting to serve on the school board?	<p>I have been a part of the Hamilton Southeastern community since 1991, and have a deep love for the school district that I have seen grow from 6,000 students to over 21,000. I would like to be re-elected to the board to continue to serve the bring the voice of a teacher to the board, as I have these past 4 years.</p> <p>I have been conscientious and hard-working during my first term, and have continually communicated with the stakeholders of the district through social media platforms. Every vote I have made was based on what I believed to be the best interests of the student, staff, and stakeholders, and not a personal agenda.</p>
2. What role does policy play/have in the function of the board?	The role of the school board is to create policies by which the district will adhere to. Policy-making is the one of the main functions of the board and an important one. Continual review of the policies we have in place is key to adapting to an ever-changing educational environment, and being committed to excellence.

3. What legislative action at the state level would you support to improve education in our community.

I would like to see the legislature make sure the funding formula is equitable for all students when new budgets are created. In the past HSE was the third lowest in the state for per pupil funding, and the disparity between the highest and lowest funded pupils in the state was quite large. The past budget cycle made disparity smaller, which brought welcome relief, but that could change at any point in the future when new budgets created. Even with the change in the formula, we still have a referendum to supplement our budget to help keep teacher-student ratios low.

I would also support a monitoring of legislative action that will affect schools, and ensure that it also include funding to implement it. School districts are often burdened with unfunded mandates when new legislation passes. An example of this, although not legislated, is the "free" metal detector wands that school districts could apply for, which came with no money to pay for the additional personnel to use the wands, or training on how to use them.

4. What do you think is the biggest issue facing your district?

We have many challenges facing our district at any given time, but I believe the biggest one is funding. We are not a business that can increase our revenue by working harder - we are at the mercy of the funding formula. We can ask our community to pay more taxes in the form of a referendum, which we have done, and are fortunate that we have voters who value education and agreed to it. That may not always be the case, depending on the economic environment.

We cannot be complacent and think that the funding will be there well into the future since the legislature could change the funding formula during the next budget cycle. We have a referendum in place, but it will eventually expire and we will need to reassess and decide if we need another to supplement our general fund. A drop in funding would mean we would have to make the hard decisions of eliminating programs and staff, as we had to do for so many years.

5. If you were elected what one thing would you like to accomplish during your term?

For my first term, I have had an on-going dialogue with those in the community, both in person and through social media, to keep them informed of upcoming board decisions and to gather input before making those decisions. My next term will be no different, as I believe being transparent and communicating with the stakeholders are important traits of a good board member.

I would also like to continue to develop the community partnerships, internships, and apprentice opportunities to expand our students real-world experiences outside the classroom. To do so, we need continual community support by educating businesses of the value of working with our students—both those college-bound, and those who are career-ready.

6. Do you or have you had children in the Hamilton Southeastern school system?

YES

Preferred Contact Information (How do you want voters to contact you?)

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