



Board Special Meeting

School Board District VII Candidate Forum

Wednesday, September 11, 2019, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Paul Robeson Performing Arts Center, Rainier Beach High School

8815 Seward Park Ave S Seattle, WA 98118

Minutes

Call to Order

Director Burke called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Directors Burke, DeWolf, Geary, and Mack were in attendance. Director Pinkham arrived at 6:08 p.m. Director Harris arrived at 6:30 p.m.

School Board District VII Candidate Forum

Director Burke welcomed audience members and candidates to the forum and introduced moderator Angelina Riley, a Junior at Rainier Beach High School. Director Burke noted that questions for the night's forum had been collected through the Board website and would also be collected until 6:10 p.m. from forum attendees. Director Burke explained that questions would be randomly selected for the night's forum and would be reviewed for duplicate questions prior to being asked. Director Burke explained that the moderator would be noting whether questions indicate they have been submitted from a District VII resident. Director Burke noted that on September 18 the School Board will vote on an appointment to the District VII seat during the Regular School Board meeting, which begins at 4:15 p.m. at the John Stanford Center auditorium, and the applicant that is selected will be sworn in during the meeting.

Director Burke noted that input into the appointment process may be submitted by comment card during the forum and through the school board website. Director Burke recessed the meeting at 6:08 p.m. and noted that questions would be collected until 6:10 p.m. At 6:10 p.m., Director Burke called the meeting back to order.

Ms. Riley explained the format for the forum, which would begin with each candidate being given an opportunity to provide a two-minute opening statement followed by a series of questions drawn randomly from questions submitted in advance through the Board website and questions that were provided by the audience. Ms. Riley noted that each candidate would be given an opportunity to respond to each question and that candidates had been seated based on a random drawing. Ms. Riley noted that the order in which candidates speak would rotate each time a question is asked and that responses would be limited to 90 seconds for each question, with lights being displayed to indicate when time had expired.

Candidates Julie van Arcken, Brandon Hersey, and Emijah Smith provided opening statements.

Ms. Riley asked question one, submitted by a resident of District VII: Please tell us what you have done so far in your regular work or volunteer work to center the voices of students and families furthest from educational justice and how you plan to focus your efforts to close the opportunity gap in SPS?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question one.

Ms. Riley asked question two: Middle School years are a time for needed stability both socially and emotionally. What sort of grandfathering do you see happening with new boundaries being proposed?

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question two.

Ms. Riley asked question three: Requirements in the workplace are changing rapidly. What would be things you would consider changing in our schools to make sure children are ready for the 21st century workplace?

Candidates van Arcken, Hersey, and Smith responded to question three.

Ms. Riley asked question four: What are your thoughts on the student dress code policy?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question four.

Ms. Riley asked question five, submitted by a resident of District VII: What is your experience working directly with teachers in our Seattle Public Schools?

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question five.

Ms. Riley asked question six, submitted by a resident of District VII: What specific action will you take to increase the role of parents in decision making and promote parental involvement in schools?

Candidates van Arcken, Hersey, and Smith responded to question six.

Ms. Riley asked question seven, submitted by a resident of District VII: What needs to be changed about how the district projects enrollment?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question seven.

Ms. Riley asked question eight: In what ways do you think option schools such as Cleveland, Orca, Boren, or South Shore are like, or not like, charter schools, and do you think option schools and charter schools improve or harm equity in SPS?

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question eight.

Ms. Riley asked question nine: How do you see yourself as a good fit to collaborate with the rest of the board and a new(er) supt?

Candidates van Arcken, Hersey, and Smith responded to question nine.

Ms. Riley asked question ten, submitted by a resident of District VII: Do all the teachers in our schools meet the federal government's definition of highly qualified? If not as board member, what would you do to address this?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question ten.

Ms. Riley asked question eleven, submitted by a resident of District VII: What things will factor in your decision-making process as a member of the school board?

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question eleven.

Ms. Riley asked question twelve, submitted by a resident of District VII: We often hear that Executive Directors of Schools have oversight of principals, but when it comes to Special Education they seem to defer to the Department of Special Education, which has no authority in the buildings and can only advise and walk on eggshells with principals and Executive Directors. In this situation, our students with disabilities are falling through the cracks and so are their teachers. What is your analysis of this situation and what will you do to encourage Supt Juneau to resolve this long standing problem that results in chronic second class citizenship of our students with disabilities in schools?

Candidates van Arcken, Hersey, and Smith responded to question twelve.

Ms. Riley asked question thirteen, submitted by a resident of District VII: How will you go about learning the needs of all of the district 7 students and schools, build relationships with staff and constituents, and do the research and absorb all of information necessary to effectively represent district 7?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question thirteen.

Ms. Riley asked question fourteen, submitted by a resident of District VII: Who is missing from the district's definition of those "furthest away from educational justice?"

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question fourteen.

Ms. Riley asked question fifteen, submitted by a resident of District VII: One of the only high schools that is considered truly diverse in Seattle is Chief Sealth! SE high schools are not diverse when you think about it that they don't have a balance or mix of student backgrounds. Do you have any low cost suggestions on making schools like Franklin, Rainier Beach, and Cleveland more diverse than they currently are? Would those ideas also work for Ballard and Roosevelt?

Candidates van Arcken, Hersey, and Smith responded to question fifteen.

Ms. Riley asked question sixteen, submitted by a resident of District VII: Describe your experience working to end the school to prison pipeline?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question sixteen.

Ms. Riley asked question seventeen: Board Director Scott Pinkham recently put forward a proposal to reopen Indian Heritage High School and the African American Academy. The proposal did not pass. Do you support reopening these schools?

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question seventeen.

Ms. Riley asked question eighteen, submitted by a resident of District VII: Should Teach for America be invited back into Southeast schools?

Candidates van Arcken, Hersey, and Smith responded to question eighteen.

Ms. Riley asked question nineteen: What do you think is the biggest challenge facing our public schools right now and what is your plan to address it?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question nineteen.

Ms. Riley asked question twenty: How do you envision improvement in addressing kids with both advanced learning needs and learning disabilities so they aren't forced to choose between those needs?

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question twenty.

Ms. Riley asked question twenty-one, submitted by a resident of District VII: How they will be accessible to parents and advocate for their concerns with the district?

Candidates van Arcken, Hersey, and Smith responded to question twenty-one.

Ms. Riley asked question twenty-two, submitted by a resident of District VII: Are you aware that Rainier Beach sophomores don't receive a full year of history?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question twenty-two.

Ms. Riley asked question twenty-three: what do you think about school uniform policies?

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question twenty-three.

Ms. Riley asked question twenty-four, submitted by a resident of District VII: What experience do you have with SpED in SPS and how services are delivered?

Candidates van Arcken, Hersey, and Smith responded to question twenty-four.

Ms. Riley asked question twenty-five, submitted by a resident of District VII: Do all SPS middle and high schools currently offer similar course offerings and does that matter?

Candidates Hersey, Smith, and van Arcken responded to question twenty-five.

Ms. Riley asked question twenty-six, submitted by a resident of District VII: Do you think sweetened beverage taxes should be increased to promote food/nutrition justice in Seattle Schools?

Candidates Smith, van Arcken, and Hersey responded to question twenty-six.

Candidates Smith, Hersey, and van Arcken provided closing statements.

Director Harris noted comment cards and online feedback were being collected and that on September 18, the School Board will vote on an appointment to the District VII seat during the Regular School Board meeting, which begins at 4:15 p.m. at the John Stanford Center auditorium, and that the applicant that is selected will be sworn in during the meeting.

Adjourn

Director Harris adjourned the Board Special Meeting at 8:45 p.m.