

Dear Members of the Prince William County School Board,

Under the best of circumstances, your job is a challenging one. I am sure the frustrations you have had to deal with were not what you expected when you volunteered to be a public servant. I would like to help the Board move toward a more productive working relationship, both among ourselves and between Board and Staff. I know it can be done, because I was fortunate to work in such a professional environment during my ten years on this Board.

While the Board I served on had to deal with some difficult issues, and we did not always come to unanimous decisions, we succeeded because we treated each other with respect, kept the overtly partisan talk out of the conversation, and had a relationship of trust and open communications with the Superintendent and staff (a relationship that the Superintendent worked very hard to develop). There is a process to follow in governance, and if everyone agrees to play by the rules, it will produce results that the public will understand and respect, even if they don't always agree with the decision. Early in my School Board experience, a wise Board member commented "we don't need boat rockers; we need boat ROWERS". Our high school crew teams certainly understand that the boat makes much faster progress when everyone is pulling in the same direction.

Many of our Board's achievements were the result of a team effort, but there are a few areas in which I am proud to have provided leadership. These areas are more relevant now than ever before:

**Safety and Security:** We dealt with the aftermath of 9-11; an anthrax scare; the Beltway Sniper; and on the last day of school in 2004, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade boy sneaked a small arsenal into Bull Run Middle School, which was in my district. By the grace of God (and one brave staff member) no one was hurt. Milt Johns and I pushed for the creation of a Safe Schools Task Force, which looked at physical security, training and procedures, and bullying. We made sure it was converted to a permanent Safe Schools Advisory Council at the end. I stayed involved with the Council for the rest of my time on the Board. The School Division has implemented many of its recommendations over the years to improve school safety and is continuing to do so.

**Accountability:** There are many aspects to it, but I focussed on financial accountability. I served as the School Board's representative on the Joint County Audit Committee, which oversees the external audit of the School Division and the County Government. I was one of the Board members who pushed for the creation of the Office of Internal Audit, and as the first Chairman of the School Board's Internal Audit Committee, I played a key role in setting up the audit process that today gives the School Board more detailed insight into the division's financial operations than is possible with the External Audit.

**Transparency:** Simply put, it means doing your business as openly as possible and following a process that allows all stakeholders to understand your decisions. I pushed to get the School Board's agenda process online. Partly this was to make it more efficient and save reams of paper, but the main benefit was that the public could see the agenda items to be discussed and the supporting materials that were being briefed to the Board.

I am putting myself forward because I enjoy the process of governance, I have 10 years of experience doing the job, and I feel that I can be a helpful influence at this time. I have no agenda beyond that. I will not be a candidate for this position in November, nor will I run for it in 2019. My phone number is on my resume and I welcome your questions.

Respectfully,