



**Candidate Questionnaire - Incumbent School Board Member
August 2022 Primary Election**

Your name: Jory Westberry
Your email address: Westbejo@collierschools.com
Your phone number: 239-293-9904
Your age: 73
Today's date: June 3, 2022

What year did you move to Southwest Florida, and where were you living previously?

Our family moved to Naples in 1989 from Wyoming.

What is your educational background and work experience?

BA in Elementary Education, M.Ed. Educational Administration, Doctor of Education with Honors - U of Miami

Elementary and Middle School teacher, (Received Golden Apple) Mentor for Take Stock in Children. Tutor, Assistant Principal (Recipient Assistant Principal of the Year), Principal 14 years at Tommie Barfield Elementary School on Marco Island, CCerts Program - Mentored new teachers in Collier County, Elected to CCPS School Board 2018.

Describe your community and School District activities, both before and during your Board service. How have those experiences benefitted you as a Board member?

BEFORE BOARD SERVICE - formerly a Hospice volunteer, have written a column for the weekly "Coastal Breeze News" for six years, raised a prospective service dog, served on the Board of the Marco Island Historical Society Museum, mentored a high school student, took many classes through Adult Ed at FGCU, am writing a middle school novel about bullying, avid photographer, mentored new teachers, graduate of Leadership Collier and Leadership Marco and completed my Doctor of Education degree.

DURING BOARD SERVICE - Continued on the Board of Marco Island Historical Society Museum, became an historical re-enactor for the Museum, portraying George Gause, elected to the Florida State School Board Association, graduate of Leadership Florida, read and researched materials to be prepared for school board meetings, visit schools when possible, attend performances, athletic events, write positive notes to students and school personnel and attend in-service and on-line conferences to further expand my depth of knowledge.

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no later than June 3, 2022.

All of these activities have helped me understand a wide range of educational experiences, access different perspectives, learn from others and not be intimidated by opposing opinions.

Describe an initiative on which you showed leadership as a member of the School Board.

During some of our more tumultuous meetings, when tempers were high and nasty remarks were made to Board members, I remained calm and professional and reminded those in attendance or at home that we are raising our students to be respectful, responsible role models and that we, as adults, can do a better job of being role models

What changes, if any, would you like to make to the CCPS Policies?

Here's a recent example that I felt very strongly about. It was a policy that imposed a very strict consequence for an elementary student following an incident on the playground. Knowing elementary students as I do, I felt it necessary to go to the person responsible for researching and updating policies, shared my opinion/experience and it was brought to the Board as a potential policy change. It passed. Policies need to be read and discussed in context and in evolving environments.

What changes, if any, would you like to make to the CCPS Budget?

The budget goes through many reviews, critiques and audits throughout the year and if there are concerns, they are brought up at Board meetings. One of the major budget savings is that CCPS has paid off loans for past construction so there is money saved and not accruing interest to the extent that the new high school will be paid in full with no further construction burden and save taxpayers over \$40 million dollars. Being fiscally responsible makes good business sense.

What changes, if any, would you like to make to the CCPS Leadership?

In my opinion, there are too many leadership changes at the school levels. I realize that there are instructional leaders assigned to building administrators, but there are times, they barely get their feet on the ground and are moved to another school. This makes it difficult to build trust It takes over a year to get to know all the teachers/staff and become a team. Throw in Covid and it's a challenge to establish continuity at all.

What actions, if any, should the School District take to address the need for affordable housing?

Realizing that there are many rental communities that give discounts to school district employees and this information is readily available to CCPS employees, they should take advantage of the discounts. I also feel that if landlords are taking advantage of renters, they should be held accountable. Another idea would be if a family moving to Collier has a mobile home, they could put it on school district land that is not being used. Details to be worked out.

Please comment on your recent votes to approve textbooks.

Many people had opportunities to comment on the textbooks and the concerns were mostly focused on CRT being integrated into math word problems purposely to be divisive. Personally, I didn't see a preponderance of evidence, especially when the

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books were already approved by the state of Florida. There is also a procedure in place to take concerns to the publisher for edits, which is proceeding right now.

What are your views about the parental rights and charter school movements as they relate to the School District? How do they influence your actions and decisions as a School Board member?

First of all, I listen intently to public comments, read relevant information and weigh the substance of the opinions I hear. As a parent and grandparent, I believe in parents' rights. The biggest controversies arose first over masks and then vaccines and there were vehement and ugly comments made. This is water over the dam at this point. Charter schools have a right to operate and were supposed to offer something different and unique that the public schools were not offering. It seems like the original differentiation has been over-looked. Some charter schools are for profit, which is also problematic. Do they accept only the highest ranking students and none with exceptionalities? This can really skew their data.

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