



**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE
QUESTIONNAIRE**

1 What is your motivation for running for this office?

Simply stated, to be the change I wish to see. As a parent of an emerging 4th grader currently enrolled at Huffman Academy, I understand the concerns of parents with children in BCS and I know that I can represent them in this office. As the next BOE member, guided by my Christian faith and moral compass I will serve my community and our city.

2 What is your greatest virtue, especially as applied to leadership, stewardship and learning?

My greatest virtue is my ability to remain hopeful through challenging times. Anyone can be hopeful when things are going well and schools are not failing, but can one remain hopeful through trying times. As your next board member will encourage and inspire other board members as we change the conversation as it pertains to BCS.

3 If you currently attend a house of worship, what is the name of it and how often do you attend?

I am currently the pastor of New Mt. Zion Baptist Church in the Mason City neighborhood. I have had the pleasure of serving there for the past 5 years.

4 What impact will your faith have on the performance of the duties of this office?

As a pastor, I believe in leading through service and as an elected official I will do exactly that. I have the temperament needed to perform the duties of a BOE member. As a Christian leader, I will be fair and just in the position and willing to work with other board members and the superintendent to serve our students, parents and educators.

5 How will you establish a good working relationship with the elected Mayor to ensure the City's success?

Being a team player is vital in every capacity as an elected official. I will build a relationship with the mayor and ensure he/she is consistently informed of the needs BCS students, parents and educators.

6 Recognizing that education plays a vital role on the present and future of a city's economy and job growth, what are your plans for Birmingham City Schools to be seen as one of the top education institutions in the nation?

I believe by planting small seeds in our students early on in their educational careers that we will see a great change in the way they prioritize education, ensuring they are college and career ready. We must find creative ways to engage students and keep our parents informed. We must also work with our community leaders and local business owners to foster relationships based on mentoring our students. Our students need to be exposed to positive professionals that are making a change in our community. In doing this, parents will see our dedication to our student's current educational needs, as well as their future success as respected change makers in our communities.

7 What do you see as Birmingham City Schools greatest challenges and assets?

The greatest challenge BCS faces is its reputation. We are not looked at as the educational system we once were. I want to change the conversation regarding BCS amongst our residents and those residing outside city limits. We must restore our reputation and be the best choice for education in the state.

Our greatest asset is our educators. We have men and women that have dedicated their lives to service in educating our children. By investing in our educators and making sure they are equipped with the needed resources both in and out of the classroom, we can ensure the success of both educators and students.

8 What goals do you hope to achieve if elected?

I hope to develop creative ways to engage students, keep parents informed, and ensure our educators are equipped with the resources they need and build positive relationships within our community to ensure academic excellence.

9 What in your opinion is the reason for Birmingham City's failed schools and what are your plans to ensure the success of Birmingham City Schools.

I can't point the finger at any one person when it comes to us failing our children except to say we failed as a community. I plan on putting a plan in action to make our students, parents, educators, elected officials and our community all take responsibility for our children and the quality of their education. By working as one we will hold each other accountable and together we will overcome the failings of our system.

10 What will you, as a board member, do to assure that teachers have the support and materials needed to successfully assist students in meeting state standards?

I suggest we have a public/private relationship between schools and big businesses located within the districts/city. Each school will be sponsored by area businesses and the business will donate the equipment, products and/or services needed as well as sponsor educational related events. Our educators will in turn have what they need to effectively reach and teach our students.

11 How would you balance your decisions as a member of the board with the input of parents and teachers?

I will be the voice of the people I serve. I will listen to the needs of both parents and educators. I will work with both parties to create a plan of action to deliver to the board that will benefit our students and meet the needs of both parents and educators.

12 How long have you lived in Birmingham, and how would you characterize the City's quality of life? How should it be improved?

I am a lifelong resident of Birmingham. I love Birmingham and how it continues to evolve. However, I have seen increases in crime, poverty, despair, and lack of civility. I believe Education is the driver that combats all of these issues; and by planting small seeds we can see a great change.

13 What distinguishes you from the other candidates?

We all know that our children are our number one priority. I, however, know that it takes a village comprised of the parents, students, educators, the community at large, as well as the elected officials each contributing in planting the seeds necessary for the change we wish to see. I know that I cannot be effective in this role by acting alone. It will take will take all parties to achieve the goals for our community. Through my service to my community I will lead by example.

14 What issue is not getting enough attention?

For me, it is education. If we are going to fix issues related to crime, poverty and a scene of community, it all starts with a good educational foundation. If we are ever going to make Birmingham a better place to work, live, and play; it all goes back to education.