



**Jennette Williams**

- 1. Please provide 3 words that capture your candidacy.

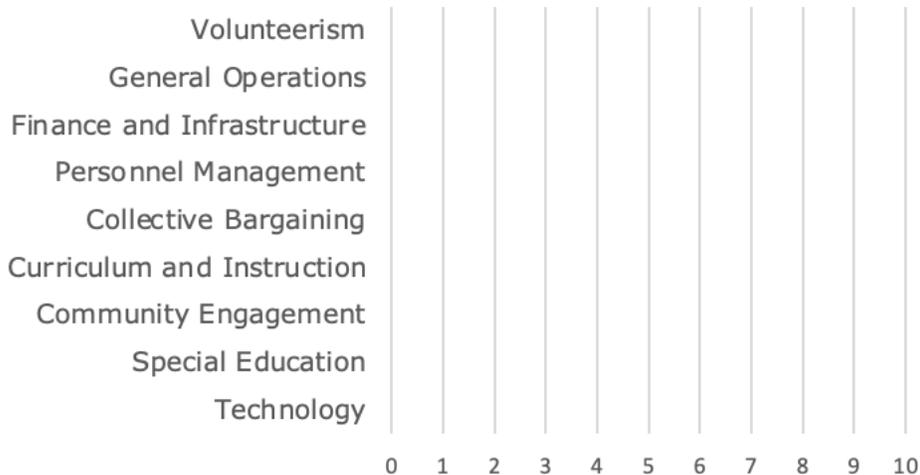
Integrity, Honesty, Service

- 2. Why are you running for the BOE? Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the Board of Education.

I am a candidate for a seat on the BOE because I want an opportunity to give back to the community that enabled me to develop my craft and inquisitiveness about how children learn and what attracts their undivided attention! Montclair values the tenets of education and teachers engage students with motivating and challenging activities. I believe Education is the heart of Democracy and I want to have a seat at the table where the creative energy of Democracy has an opportunity to flourish.

- 3. Please rate your work/life experience in

Jennette Williams' Self-Rating



Note: Scale of 1 (least experience) to 10 (most experience)

Please feel free to elaborate on any of the above self-rating.

Thank you for giving BOE candidates a platform to address questions that our community considers pressing. It is appreciated. The rating scale asks us to rate our work/life experiences in a variety of areas. As a career educator, I have not asked students, interns, parents or workshop participants to rate themselves with numerical classifications. I requested written descriptions which gave me in depth information about their developmental levels and how to best meet their needs. Therefore, I respectively am not completing this section.



4. In what school district or community activities/organizations have you been involved?

My involvement in school district or community activities/organizations has been rewarding. I have co-written grants for the district. I am proud to have been a Teacher Consultant with the (Wellesley College) Stone Center Reach Out to Schools Competency Program. It provided evidenced based social and emotional learning (SEL) professional development to our teachers. I co-directed MBOE Photojournalism summer camps, served on the STARS Advisory Board, Coordinated the Cooperative Teacher Program for the Montclair State University Teachers in Training Program, co-chaired the Mentoring Program for new teachers, taught and presented MEGA Skills to PUPS (Primary Unit Parents), facilitated Rainbows for All Children small groups, and currently serve on the NAACP ACT-SO and the Princeton Prize in Race Relations committees, to name a few.

5. If elected, what are your top 2-3 priorities for the BOE? Specifically, what do you think the BOE should prioritize in the next year and what should be prioritized in a longer-term plan?

My top priorities are:

- 1) for years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, to complete Mr. Graber's Technology recommendations (presented Nov. 10, 2021)
- 2) aggressively continue the May 2021 recommendations offered by Go Teach Consultants, LLC, during Summer 2022 - Culture, RtI, Screening, Data and Progress Monitoring, IEP Development, Personnel

6. In your opinion, what would be an "ideal/well" functioning BOE? How can the BOE be more accessible and more communicative with the community?

The "ideal/well" functioning BOE is one that exhibits characteristics of having thoroughly experienced all the stages of group development and understand each member's role, both collectively and individually.

Being more communicative can be accomplished by using technology, such as social media accounts, to make BOE members more accessible to the community they serve. As a retired Montclair educator and resident, I am able to dedicate additional time and service to our BOE.

7. Recognizing that relationships are a foundation of our school community, what specific steps would you take to improve the relationships between the BOE and the district administrators, the various unions, and parents/caregivers?

Relationships can be improved by:

1. surveying these identified target populations to gather data regarding their perceptions of the problem areas and sharing the results with the groups
2. brainstorming solutions with the groups
3. setting short and long term goals and objectives
4. prioritizing the actions
5. monitoring and evaluating the actions

Transparency in all these steps builds trust and willing participants.



8. What should MPSD do differently? Please be specific – academic programs, sports, civic programs, extra curriculars, etc.

The MPSD should survey parents and students, (families) to gather information to address this question. Share the results with the community. Then invite parents and students to attend two informational sessions, by specific groupings of grade levels, to collect ideas/solutions. Share the results. Organize committees to design and prioritize the programs and activities that are feasible and within BOE policy.

9. What are your thoughts on school district's programs for special education students? How can the BOE better serve the special education students, and what would you do as a board member to ensure our special education students' needs are being addressed?

My thoughts begin with the view, education is always on-going. Proven strategies are practiced, monitored, evaluated, and modified as needed. Mini observations and transparent conversations about IEPs and recommendations for at home learning extensions, tailored to meet the physical as well as emotional needs of the child, initiate the process. It may be helpful to re-read and implement the May, 2021 Special Education Program Review Findings and Recommendations, pp. 21-34. SEPAC has been an excellent resource of information for parents, teachers, and administrators.

10. How can the BOE address the opportunity/achievement gap in our district? What are your specific ideas and plans for addressing the achievement gap and educational equity? In your opinion, what is the role of BOE in this area?

These concerns can be addressed by creating a Roadmap to our goal, using the same community/ family/ children involvement strategies I've outlined previously. Survey to collect data that reveals the community's perceptions. Compare that with Montclair's statistical results. Determine what areas need immediate attention. Collate the data, brainstorm actions, set goals, implement the actions, monitor and evaluate. The BOE 's role is to support the Roadmap if it meets with BOE policy. I am willing to observe classes in session when specific skills, such as reading, are taught. I have earned a CERI (Center for Effective Reading Instruction) Structured Literacy Dyslexia Specialist Certificate, Fairleigh Dickinson University Orton Gillingham Dyslexia Specialist Training - OG Teacher Certificate, and Wilson Reading System Level 1 Certificate. It is also imperative that we not neglect the Social Emotional well being of our students. This includes the impact of ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences), which must be examined. Policies and protocols must be put in place. I am willing to visit the schools and observe these practices in action. I have earned MA degrees in Early Childhood Education and Guidance Counseling from Kean University. We should also continually refer to the Equity Curriculum and Instruction Update on Goals, 2021-2024.

11. How should the BOE balance the need to provide a quality education with the need to manage the local taxpayer burden? What should the district's capital spend priorities be? Would you consider budget cuts, if so – what specific areas would you cut?

The BOE can provide quality education with "out of the box" thinking. We can expand our activities by partnering with an array of colleges, universities, cultural centers, and businesses that can accept students to mentor. Invite retired educators to tutor and



teach. Budget cuts are a last resort and made after academic and mental health needs have been assessed and met. Specific evidence is required before cuts are made.

12. Montclair is known for its magnet schools, which are supported by a unique school ranking and placement process and a "courtesy busing" program. What changes, if any, would you consider with respect to the magnet system, the school ranking and placement process, and/or the courtesy busing policy?

The magnet schools were created to enhance education while instituting mandated systems. Instituting the Restorative Justice program in the classrooms, expanding the "Magnet" quality of each school, and extending partnerships with a variety of colleges, universities, trade schools, cultural centers, etc. will continue to make us unique.