



Revere Education Justice Alliance

2021 School Committee Candidate Questionnaire

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1. Do you support the district providing transportation for all students who live more than 1 mile from school?

Yes.

2. Would you support the allocation of funds to make AP exams free for any students in AP courses?

Yes.

3. Do you have a plan to not only hire, but to retain teachers of color in the district?

While there is no doubt that having teachers and staff of diverse backgrounds certainly enrich the learning environment of all students and is something that I would encourage and support, I think it's important to realize that we are also in a situation where we are losing good teachers at alarming rates. Last year alone, we lost at least 67 teachers. From what I'm learning from speaking with residents, this number is climbing. We need to address the reasons for which these teachers are leaving. While I'm sure there are various reasons, what I am hearing most as I speak with teachers, is that they don't feel supported. However, if we cultivate a positive and productive environment for our teachers and provide teachers with the resources needed, allow them flexibility and freedom to collaborate with other teachers so they don't feel isolated, support them in their decisions and actions and set them up to success – I believe teachers will find fulfillment, satisfaction and enjoyment in their profession. While this is not a conclusive plan for teacher retention, it's a start. I also recognize that support may mean something different to different teachers. All of our efforts made to make these changes, should be made across the board, irrespective of race.

4. Do you support the creation of English Language Learner-specific pathways to graduation?

Yes.



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5. Do you commit to increasing the number of guidance counselors and social workers at Revere High School?

Absolutely. There needs to be an increased focus on overall student health, wellness and self-care. The numbers of students with mental, emotional and behavioral disorders was too high prior to Covid, I imagine it's higher now. The development of a healthy mind, body and spirit are essential to our complete well-being. Our students suffer from disinterest, which manifests through disruptive behavior, drugs, alcohol, violence or simply put, poor decision making. The addition of individuals with the experience and training to adequately and successfully address these problems is a very important component to the achievement of our students.

6. Do you commit to increasing the available after school programming at all schools?

Yes. Afterschool programs help to support a student's academic development, offer social and emotional support, and provide a safe and productive environment for our students. Children who spend more time staying busy, whether it's afterschool programs, sports or clubs – are less likely to get into mischievous behaviors.

7. Do you commit to staffing special education classrooms with full time paraprofessionals?

Yes. Another set of eyes, ears and hands to help the teachers and support students' needs is always a good thing, especially when we are talking about special needs, where the range of need and required attention varies drastically from one student to another. Having a team approach and being able to provide more focused attention to children is always positive and I would fully support an initiative to bring in more resources and services for special need students, which would include the hiring of paraprofessionals.

8. Do you support the adoption of anti-racist curriculum in grades K-12?

How do you define "anti-racist curriculum?" Do you mean having teachers honor the depths of human suffering that is reflected in our American history, age and grade appropriate, of course? Allowing for teachers to have meaningful, honest and open conversations about our history? Yes, I support transparency in teaching in general, but certainly when it comes to this nation's history – the good, bad and ugly. Teaching all narratives of black history as opposed to a single narrative of oppression? I am cautious when it comes to certain words that carry different definitions to different people, especially when those definitions and labels involve race relations. We have to be mindful that certain words mean different things to different people and have to have an understanding of where it is they are coming from, what is their understanding, in order to engage in meaningful conversations. I also am hesitant when noble ideas are tainted by agenda. While I full-heartedly support calls to reject racism and to promote equality and have been an activist in this mission since I was very young, I believe issues of race to be extremely complex; it is not a yes or no answer; it cannot be categorized and labeled; and if we are going to truly effectuate change then we need to be sure that we approach the subject responsibly. That we don't just drop heavy material on our impressionable kids and leave them with it to process. To be inclusive means to be just that. Yet, it seems that in the attempt to be inclusive, we tend to exclude and we have to be very careful with



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that. I am witnessing a serious divide – and we have to ask ourselves, while we can certainly agree with the good intentions of working to eradicate racism – which I do, perhaps we are not succeeding in the execution. Maybe we need to re-evaluate our approach. Perhaps we do our own thing, we approach the subject in ways that are effective and in which, we are actually seeing results. We need to ask questions. I want to study the curriculum for myself; I want to have an understanding of the source of the information and the opportunity to question any agenda, as we always should – especially when it comes to our children. I am all for teaching children in the appropriate context, that there are injustices and there is racism – however, I think it's equally important to teach children how to transcend.

9. Will you use your position as a Revere School Committee Member to support the Fair Share Amendment to increase funding for public schools?

Yes.

10. Will you support funding for live interpretation at School Committee and School Improvement Council meetings?

Yes.