

Michelle E. Patrick

What is the biggest issue facing JCPS right now, and how would you address it?

Student achievement is the biggest issue facing JCPS. "I would advocate for improving student achievement by ensuring that all students have access to the academic support they need, including intervention, enrichment, and opportunities for acceleration. I also believe we must invest in our teachers. Through the superintendent, the district should provide meaningful professional development that helps teachers use assessment data to identify where students are struggling and develop instructional strategies that address those specific needs. As a board member, I would want to see measurable goals and regular progress reports. If we invest resources in a program or instructional strategy, we should know whether it is producing results. If students are not progressing, we need to ask why and determine what needs to change. Ultimately, student achievement isn't about adopting another program. It's about making sure our teachers have the tools and support they need and that every student receives the appropriate instruction to be successful."

What specific changes would you push for at JCPS if elected?

The specific areas I would advocate for improvement include transportation, a comprehensive assessment of school facilities, fiscal responsibility, access and opportunities, and family engagement

What is your connection to the district?

For 27 years, I dedicated my career to education as a teacher and an Assistant Principal. Additionally, I am a proud graduate of Shawnee High School, having graduated in 1972.

What relevant experience in education do you have?

I bring 37 years of experience in education. My first 27 years consist of being a teacher, an assistant principal, the multicultural education consultant for the Department of Education, and 10 years in higher education as a college professor and the first vice president of student affairs at Midway college. Those experiences have allowed me to see education from several different perspectives. I believe that background will help me ask the right questions, carefully evaluate the information presented to the board, and make informed decisions that put students first."

What relevant business, budgeting or financial management experience do you have?

During my tenure as an assistant principal, I gained valuable experience in managing school budgets. Notably, I successfully managed a 1.5 million grant awarded by the Kentucky Department of Education. Additionally, I am responsible for overseeing my own personal financial accounts.

JCPS has faced major budget challenges. What would you do to improve financial oversight and rebuild trust with taxpayers?

My first priority would be protecting the classroom. I would be very reluctant to support cuts that directly affect instruction, teacher compensation, or the academic resources our students need to succeed. Before asking our classrooms to absorb those cuts, I would want the superintendent to conduct a thorough review of district spending. I would look closely at central-office expenditures, administrative positions, outside contracts, programs that are not demonstrating results, and other areas where we may be able to operate more efficiently. I would also examine whether major capital projects or new construction could responsibly be delayed without compromising student safety or creating greater costs in the future. If we did all of that and still faced a significant deficit, then I would be willing to have an honest public conversation about additional revenue, including property taxes. But before asking taxpayers for another dollar, I believe we have an obligation to demonstrate that we're using the dollars they already give us responsibly. Ultimately, a school district's budget should reflect its priorities, and my priority would be keeping resources as close to students and classrooms as possible."

How would you measure whether the superintendent is doing a good job?

As a board member, I have a responsibility to hold the superintendent accountable for the district's performance. I would examine the data, the goals we established, the resources that were provided, and whether the superintendent implemented an effective plan for improvement.

Leadership must produce results. We cannot continually ask students, teachers, families, and taxpayers to wait while the same problems persist.

Accountability has to mean something. If we establish measurable goals for the superintendent and those goals consistently aren't being met, then the board must be willing to make a change in leadership.

My decision would not be personal. It would be based on performance, evidence, and what is in the best interest of our students and the district."

What do you believe JCPS should do to improve student achievement?

Ensure that each student has equal access and opportunities to high-quality education and curriculum, regardless of their zip code. JCPS should foster a genuine culture and climate that prioritizes respect and concern for students that goes beyond the status quo. Additionally, create a welcoming environment that encourages and engages parental involvement in the school.

Is there anything else you want voters to know about you or your campaign?

I bring 27 years of experience as an educator, along with experience as a college professor and educational consultant. I understand education, but I am not running to protect the status quo. I am running because I know we can do better for our children. I will ask the difficult questions. I will examine the evidence. I will listen to our parents, teachers, students, and community. And when decisions must be made, I will have the courage to make them based on what is best for our children. I will be a voice that listens and a voice that acts. Together, we can make sure every child has a successful educational path forward.