

Tim Shaughnessy

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

JCPS lacks accountability. We must honestly assess where JCPS currently stands, build community agreement on where the district needs to be, and work together on a strategic plan to get there – within a culture of accountability.

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

- Clear expectations for parents, students, teachers, principals, and school leaders.
- Discipline & Respect in the classroom, throughout schools and the district.
- Operate as an effective and efficient steward of financial resources and ensure funds are allocated with accountability to school and district objectives.
- Listen to and support teachers, principals, assistant principals, counselors, and staff - along with students and parents - in defining a culture of accountability while collaborating with the superintendent to establish a culture of accountability for himself and the JCPS office.
- Work with decision makers in consultation with the Critical School Improvement Advisory Committee to establish an effective, efficient, and sustainable strategic plan and a budget that will align resources to accountability for school and district objectives.
- Focus on the foundational progression of continuous learning in English, Reading, Math, and Science through a seamless progression from elementary through middle and high school to college and career employment.
- Emphasize and embed career exposure, exploration, focus, planning, and projects with industry-valued success skills toward a goal of college readiness in 10th grade and dual college - school credit pathways over the 11th and 12th grades.

What is your connection to the district?

I am a lifelong resident of Jefferson County and a taxpayer who annually pays nearly half of our property taxes to JCPS and a former state senator and chair of the senate education committee who championed JCPS and public education throughout Kentucky for over 23 years. I have also connected with JCPS as an education policy maker who collaborates with stakeholders to improve college - career readiness and postsecondary success toward employment in high wage sectors.

What relevant experience in education do you have?

My most recent educational experience has been through the lens of a student at the University of Kentucky where last fall I completed requirements for a Graduate Certificate in Instructional Communication. I currently serve as Director of Career Pathways for the Southern Regional Education Board. My priorities include a joint engagement with the College Board to extend and expand the reach of the Advanced Placement Program to a wider constituency of students. I also coordinate SREB's advancement of dual enrollment as a strategy for high school students to earn college credentials that align to state education and workforce goals and embed industry-valued success skills. I served five years with the Kentucky Community & Technical College System. At Jefferson Community & Technical College I was on the faculty committee charged with developing and implementing the JCTC Introduction to College Curriculum, which I taught for two semesters. I also served at Gateway Community & Technical College as Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, and at the KCTCS System Office where my focus was regional engagement.

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

For nearly 24 years in the Kentucky State Senate and as a past chair of the Education Committee, I regularly participated in the development, approval, and monitoring process of the multibillion-dollar biennium budget to fund the operations and financial obligations of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. As an Associate Provost for Academic Affairs at Gateway Community & Technical College, I oversaw the budget and operation of multiple academic programs within my division. As the Executive Director of the UofL - Jewish Hospital Cardiovascular Research Institute, I was responsible for aligning and monitoring funding streams and financial operations of multi-year industry, private, and National Institute of Health funded research endeavors. As the Corporate Officer over Jewish Hospital Properties, I was accountable for the development, construction, and operation of numerous multimillion-dollar projects.

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

Rebuilding trust with taxpayers is a top priority and I will not support new tax measures until community trust in JCPS improves. I will propose a joint revenue financing committee to include JCPS, Metro Louisville Government, UofL, the State Critical School Improvement Advisory Committee, and others to collectively establish annual projections of funding available to JCPS. In addition, a heightened level of individual and collective financial accountability will be modeled and assessed from the Board to the superintendent and throughout the district.

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

An assessment of the superintendent will be established by the Board in collaboration with the State Critical School Improvement Advisory Committee. The evaluation of the superintendent is a key element of Board responsibility under Senate Bill 4 as adopted by the 2026 General Assembly. It is imperative that the superintendent CLEARLY understands the Board's expectations, goals, and objectives and how each will be addressed, measured, and evaluated.

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

Let us begin by establishing exactly what those student achievement standards are. Parents, students, teachers, school leaders, taxpayers, and other stakeholders must understand what student achievement is and how it will measure.

Currently:

- Almost one out of four JCPS schools (41 / 168) rank in the bottom 5% of schools statewide by the state's report card and less than one third of JCPS students meet the Kentucky Department of Education standards for both reading and math.
- Yet 89.2% of JCPS students graduate high school in four years and 84% of JCPS students are deemed postsecondary ready by the state.
- The Prichard Committee recently surveyed over 600 employers across more than 20 Kentucky industry to explore employers' confidence in high school graduate preparedness. Only 12% expressed strong confidence and 14% reported no confidence at all.
- JCPS student achievement standards must reflect a foundational learning experience that prepares students for progressing success through school, college, career, and life. We clearly are not there.

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

JCPS and the citizens of Jefferson County face a critical tipping point regarding public education in our community. After years of threatening a state takeover or breaking JCPS into multiple school districts, the 2026 Kentucky General Assembly adopted unprecedented legislation to restructure the Jefferson County Board of Education and to specify and prioritize responsibilities of the JCPS Board. We have an opportunity - and perhaps our last opportunity as a community to chart a successful course for public education in Jefferson County. We must take it and be successful in our work going forward.