

# Prince William County School Board Chair

Description:

This Special Election is for the Chairman of the Prince William County School Board. The candidate who is elected will serve until a 2019 election that will determine a Chairman to serve for four years.

## Candidates (choose 1):

### Stanley Bender

Party: Independent

Biographical Info:

Questions:

**Q:** *What are the chief fiscal challenges that are affecting the Prince William school system? What proposals do you propose to overcome those challenges?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What changes, if any, are needed to increase and ensure safety in our schools?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *How successful is the Prince William School system in involving parents? If improvement is needed what proposals would you support?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *How would you promote effective and satisfactory communication among administration personnel, Board members and our teachers?*

**A:** - no response -

**Q:** *What are your priorities for increasing quality in the school experience at all levels?*

**A:** - no response -

### Babur B. Lateef



Party: Independent

Biographical Info:

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**Email:** [bblateef@gmail.com](mailto:bblateef@gmail.com)

**education/Degrees:** Boardman High School, Youngstown State University(BS), Northeastern Ohio (MD)

**family:** Wife Tarannum, Children: Dean, Ronia, Manu, and Deen

**experience:** Current PWC School Board Chair, Member - University of Virginia Board of Visitors, Instructor - GWU

Questions:

**Q:** *What are the chief fiscal challenges that are affecting the Prince William school system? What proposals do you propose to overcome those challenges?*

**A:** Our funding comes from 3 sources Local (~55%), State (~40%), and Federal (~5%). Right now we are limited by the joint funding agreement with the Board of Supervisors at the local level. We need to advocate for more funding from every level of government. We are lucky that there will be additional funds coming from the State level due to Medicaid Expansion. Hopefully those funds will be earmarked for teacher raises, additional mental health specialists, and renovations to our aging schools. I have already met with people like Senator Stanley (R - Franklin) and Secretary of Education Atif Qarni to advocate for Prince William Schools. While ensuring we get our fair share from every

level of government is important, we need to seek creative solutions at the same time. I am proud to push the P-Tech Program with IBM and grant money from the National Endowment of the Arts because I realize not all of our solutions will come from more tax payer dollars, we must also seek outside investment.

**Q:** *What changes, if any, are needed to increase and ensure safety in our schools?*

**A:** I've always been told that the best security is the security you don't see. That means the physical security of the schools, mental health of students, our preparedness, but also the way in which our SROs imbed in schools. First and foremost we must verify the physical safety of our schools. There are still campuses across Prince William that do not meet our standards. Whether it means ensuring every outside door locks and closes during the day or finishing the installation of front door buzzer systems. We have to reduce the ratio of students to counselors to make sure every student has the wellness tools they need to succeed. There need to be additional training drills for conceivable emergencies, especially when children are vulnerable getting off the bus. I am also watching the pilot program for our Elementary Schools very carefully. Our parents and students must feel a sense of security in our schools so that they are comfortable in their learning environment.

**Q:** *How successful is the Prince William School system in involving parents? If improvement is needed what proposals would you support?*

**A:** Prince William Schools are good at involving parents that are very proactive. I want to ensure we are doing more to send out information about all of the programs we offer. We need more families to engage with our Head Start, GT, early foreign language, etc. programs. More aggressive communications strategies are needed and earlier in the child's academic career. More open houses, better social media campaigns, traditional media advertising, text message alerts, and better orientation for transient families (military and mid year movers) are just a few steps that would help.

**Q:** *How would you promote effective and satisfactory communication among administration personnel, Board members and our teachers?*

**A:** Communication is key to the success of any organization. Our school division's communication is already being strengthened under my leadership. The Board is functioning better than it has in years, we have had more 8-0 votes and consensus building than in the recent past. It starts from a culture of respect, I let any School Board Member put what they want on our meeting agendas. They were elected by the people and deserve to be heard. At the Administration and Teacher level some trust building needs to take place. I ordered a top down review of all EEOC complaints and an Independent review of our School Climate Surveys to make sure that staff at every level know their concerns are being properly addressed. Once everyone knows that their legitimate concerns will be honestly evaluated we will have open and compassionate communication.

**Q:** *What are your priorities for increasing quality in the school experience at all levels?*

**A:** I have focused my campaign on 4 main issues. Student Success, Safety & Security, Space to Learn, and Teacher Salaries. Student success starts with closing the achievement gap by expanding the successful programs we've piloted in our title 1 schools and looking at project based learning opportunities and lending aspects of the GT curriculum to everyone. We need to do a better job with Special Education funding and implementation, too many teachers are overworked. All of these will increase our test scores and national ratings. Our number 1 mission is to ensure the safety of kids while they are under our supervision. We have the most overcrowded classes in the region and need to renovate and build schools to keep up with growth and get rid of our trailers. Great teachers are our best asset as a school system, we need to recruit and retain the best by having competitive salaries. No more frozen steps, cost of life adjustments, and an aggressive strategy to make us competitive regionally.

## Alyson A. Satterwhite



**Party:** Independent

**Biographical Info:**

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**education/Degrees:** B. S. Education, George Mason University, 1990; Associates Degree, Pensacola Junior College, 1986

**family:** Husband: Doug Satterwhite Children: Rachel (& Chris) Chorney, Rebekah, Matthew, & Mark Satterwhite

**experience:** School Board 2012-; Board-Governor's School @ IP; Safe Schools Adv. Council; Parent volunteer 15 yrs

**Questions:**

**Q:** *What are the chief fiscal challenges that are affecting the Prince William school system? What proposals do you propose to overcome those challenges?*

**A:** Competitive wages for teachers and bus drivers remain a critical priority. We have to continue to work to retain our employees. Neighboring counties offer higher wages and are able to do so because their business tax base is larger than that of Prince William County (PWC). More business growth in PWC provides a better balance of the residential and business tax base, allowing us the money needed to improve salaries. Reducing class sizes helps our students academically, reduces the workload on our teachers, and on average leads to fewer discipline problems. The Superintendent presented the School Board with a 5 year plan in the FY18 budget that would move students out of trailers and reduce class sizes. After the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) numbers are updated and accurate, we need to revisit this plan. Working together with the Board of County Supervisors and our tax payers, we can make this a reality for our students.

**Q:** *What changes, if any, are needed to increase and ensure safety in our schools?*

**A:** Safe schools involve the physical security of our schools and also include student mental health. We have to continue to upgrade and make our physical security a priority, as shown by the School Board last spring with \$1M dedicated to completing safety initiatives at our schools. I encouraged staff members to add armed school community safety officers for our elementary schools. Teachers should be focused on our students and security specialists should be focused on school security. I have been a strong advocate for student mental health and suicide awareness. Last year I proposed adding additional school nurses to the budget. This year I made the proposal to hire 13 additional school social workers, including a human trafficking specialist. I continue to advocate with members of the General Assembly to change the state Standards of Quality to reduce the student to counselor, nurse, social worker, and school psychologist ratios to better serve the needs of our students.

**Q:** *How successful is the Prince William School system in involving parents? If improvement is needed what proposals would you support?*

**A:** Parents need to know that they are heard, their voices matter, and that the partnership between parents and the school division is of the utmost importance. On the occasion that highly charged topics of public interest are brought forward to the School Board, everyone will be given an opportunity to speak. We are always increasing parental involvement in our Title I schools. Offering a variety of engagement activities at different times allows for parents who work to have more choices, including Saturday field trips. Prince William County Schools continues to improve the outreach to military families with six schools having recently applied for the Virginia Purple Star Designation. The High School Parent Summit has been very successful and has expanded from one event to two in order to accommodate more parents. A similar program for parents of middle school students would be welcome.

**Q:** *How would you promote effective and satisfactory communication among administration personnel, Board members and our teachers?*

**A:** We must encourage and continue to build a division culture of trust and respect. It is important that School Board Members, the Superintendent, and senior administration not become insulated or isolated from concerns of stakeholders. Collaboration and communication are vital and that's why the education unions meet with administration in multiple meetings yearly for Meet and Confer. In the interest of open communication it's time to share the results of Meet and Confer with the School Board. Training for School Board Members is a state requirement. Over the last few years we have seen the importance of and why a School Board needs to learn to function as a collaborative group. Setting annual goals as a School Board would help to focus the Board on our work for the year.

**Q:** *What are your priorities for increasing quality in the school experience at all levels?*

**A:** As a School Board, our focus must be on putting students first. That begins with the next Strategic Plan development process and the impact it has on academics and student performance. This document, that guides the division over the next 5 years, must set goals and objectives that challenge us as a division to continue to improve. Improvements must also continue in Special Education, based on the Special Education audit that I supported. The School Board should be provided with a timeline of when proposed changes will be implemented and the budgetary impacts so that we can adequately plan for and support those changes. Currently the graduation requirements for the state are changing with the new "Profile of a Virginia Graduate." I want to see each student graduate college or career ready. I continue to advocate for more dual enrollment classes that will enable students to earn an Associate's Degree as they graduate from high school.