



OUR SCHOOLS... **OUR EXCELLENCE!**  
*Demanding Excellence in Education*



## Candidate Questionnaire

**The Urban Congress on African-American Males** helps people and organizations transform the broken and under-performing systems impacting African American males into thriving, high-performing pathways to being productive, connected, healthy and safe. Of the 7 goals of the Urban Congress, 3 of them directly relate to the educational success of Black boys and men.

**Moms of Black Boys United for Social Change (MUSC)** focuses on influencing policy that impacts how Black boys and men are treated and perceived by law enforcement and in society. Our focus covers a variety of areas plagued by racial disparities as it relates to their interaction with law enforcement and persons in authority. From the school-to-prison pipeline to the broader criminal justice system, we aim to break down these walls and change the trajectory of racial injustice to ensure that our sons survive and thrive.

**The Power Coalition for Equity and Justice** is a statewide coalition of community based organizations working together to equip our fellow Louisianans with the knowledge and information they need to find their voice and learn where and when to use it. Through the use of an integrated civic engagement strategy, we amplify the voices of those who have historically been ignored and organize them into a unified movement. At the Power Coalition we believe in three key principles: 1. The people closest to the problem are the closest to the solution. 2. Government should be accountable to citizens for its actions. 3. Intersectionality is mandatory in policy advocacy.

Black males make remarkable and valuable contributions to our communities. Despite these contributions and despite our numbers, they continue to face discrimination and violence at the hands of those in authority and educators. **We believe that candidates for public office must address these disparities and set forth a vision to ensure the educational, civil rights, and safety of black males and in society.**

In an effort to inform Moms of Black Boys United for Social Change, the Urban Congress, and The Power Coalition on your education policy positions, initiatives, and priorities, we have developed this candidate questionnaire. **While we do not advocate for or promote any one candidate, we do believe that candidates for the school board should be able to answer these critical questions as it relates to their work.**

We believe the issues addressed in this questionnaire are vital to ensuring Black males survive and thrive and therefore request your response.

### **On Candidate Backgrounds, Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Education Issues and Needs**

1. What do you see as the role of the school board and how has your background prepared you to fulfill this role?
2. What are the top two challenges facing public education in our city?
3. What are two needs that you consider priority for the school board to address?
4. The School Board only has authority as whole. What skills or traits do you possess that will contribute to the effective operation of the board as a whole?



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5. What responsibilities, if any, should school systems assume for addressing societal challenges such as poverty, homelessness, racial disparities and mental health?

**On Specific Issues of Interest to the Urban Congress on African- American Males, Moms of Black Boys United for Social Change, and The Power Coalition**

6. Currently of the 18,000 students sent to alternative education sites, 85% of them are African American and 66% of them are male. What is your opinion on the disparities that exist in our school system's alternative education and discipline practices?

7. Do you oppose or support zero tolerance policies that exclude children from the classroom?

8. If elected, what specific actions will you take to sport schools and school districts to refocus their resources and energy away from harsh discipline and toward restorative practices to address conflicts?

9. Do you support or oppose increasing the presence of law enforcement officers in schools?

10. Do you oppose or support mandatory continuing implicit bias training and de-escalation training for educators and school resource officers?

11. If elected, what specific actions will you take to support schools and school districts to provide the trainings necessary to equip teachers to support a diverse student body?

12. Support for high quality early childhood is driven by research studies showing that children who participate in such programs can do vastly better in school and in their careers later in life. Do you oppose or support placing a tax proposition on the ballot that would pay for "universal early childhood education" in Baton Rouge from birth to age four?

13. If elected, what specific actions will you take to ensure "universal early childhood education tax proposition is placed on the ballot?

14. Racism is perhaps the most elusive, penetrating, and permeating challenge in our society. Since racism is an institutional problem, it needs to be solved through institutional change. When we see that our institutions have shown that they can operate in a way that serves the needs of all people equitably it makes it possible to see that racism can be eliminated. Racism was built into our system, and anything that was built can be dismantled. We must see to it that our institutions rise to the challenge of solving racism. If elected, would you participate in Dialogue on Race Louisiana's Original Series, an important step in a journey toward enlightenment, understanding and the elimination of racism from our society?

15. Would you oppose or support a measure to require the school board and key school board system leadership to participate in the Dialogue on Race Original Series?

16. Do you believe it is necessary to examine the history curriculum to ensure the curriculum is reflective of "the people's history" as expressed by organizations such as the Zinn Education Project?

17. If elected, would you oppose or support utilization of such educational resources?



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18. What do you think is the role of the community in school system matters?
19. The School Board has a policy that parent and community engagement must be a priority for schools in East Baton Rouge. What are some specific strategies that the board can support schools in the development and implementation of family engagement practices?
20. What, if anything, do you believe the school board and school system, should be doing to address the increasing number of low performing schools in certain parts of our city?
21. Do you support more local accountability for the use of ESSA funds in producing better education outcomes in struggling schools? More specifically, do you support the school system annually issuing an ESSA Report to the public that shows how ESSA funds were budgeted and spent, what outcomes were achieved with the use of those funds, and the extent to which achievement outcomes did or did not improve for African American males?
22. Data shows there are significant disparities in key indicators of student success between African American males and other subgroups. These indicators include elementary and middle school achievement, high school graduation rates, ACT scores, Advanced Placements, TOPS awards, industry-based credentials, and school suspension and expulsions. What can the school system do to address these inequities?
23. What specifically should our school system be doing to ensure that not only do more African-American males complete high school but that they are connected to postsecondary opportunities?
24. Eighty-two percent of EBR students qualify for free and reduced lunch due to their economic status. In a report released by Together Baton Rouge, in 2017, East Baton Rouge Parish sacrificed \$69.6M in property taxes due to Industrial Tax Exemption Programs (ITEP). \$28.1M of this revenue could have been allocated to the East Baton Rouge parish school district. Do you support or oppose ITEP?

**Please submit responses no later than Friday, September 28, 2018**  
to  
**4163 North Blvd Baton Rouge, LA 70806**  
or by email to [info@metromorphosis.net](mailto:info@metromorphosis.net)