

CANDIDATE FORUM

hosted by


MOBB UNITED
 MOMS OF BLACK BOYS UNITED
 FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

 OUR SCHOOLS... OUR EXCELLENCE!
 Demanding Excellence in Education
**Candidate: Joycelyn Hall, District 2****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? The role of a school board is to govern over and operate an equitable educational organization and to equip the children being served everyday with the knowledge that they need for college and career readiness. I am a Southeastern Louisiana University graduate. I am a certified teacher in EBR, and have been teaching 3rd grade for 3 and ½ years.

2. What are the top two challenges facing public education in our city? Equity and Social Emotional Disparity

3. What are two needs that you consider priority for the school board to address? Two needs that I consider a top priority that the school board needs to address is allocating equitable funding to underperforming schools, and also ITEP exemptions; if billion dollar corporations are receiving tax exemptions and not investing into the educational system here in Louisiana in general, those corporations are not in the end helping the economy and growth of Louisiana but instead hindering it from prospering the way that it could if the funding were available.

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? I am relatable, determined, and I am a good problem-solver. I am good at analyzing a situation, critiquing it, to find the best solution possible. I also know how to listen actively, to make sure that I understand the topic of conversation, before giving a response.

5. What responsibilities, if any, should school systems assume for addressing societal challenges such as poverty, homelessness, racial disparities and mental health? The school board should be aware of the socioeconomic statuses of the families that they serve, because it will give oversight of the challenges and how those challenges should be addressed. As a school board, you have to be aware that some of the children served, go through real-life issues and challenges before they reach adulthood, and a school board should do their best to intervene to help the children and their families cope with the challenges they are facing so that they can retain the information that is being taught in the classroom.

CANDIDATE FORUM

hosted by


MOBB UNITED
 MOMS OF BLACK BOYS UNITED
 FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

 OUR SCHOOLS. OUR EXCELLENCE!
 Demanding Excellence in Education
**Candidate: Joycelyn Hall, District 2****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? As a teacher, I know the struggle of trying to teach and being constantly disrupted and/or disrespected. It can be challenging

because it not only interrupts the classroom environment, and hinders the learning process for other students, but it hinders the learning process for that individual student as well. Most times, these situations are not handled properly. There is no social emotional support for these children. Although there are some LCSW in schools, a LCSW or two, should be available in all schools to assist teachers with students who may suffer from mental health issues or may need help coping as they go through a challenging time as it pertains to home, or it may be a confidence issue that they are facing academically and they resort to attention-seeking/negative behaviors. Schools should address the reasoning behind the why so that they can supply the child with the help that they need.

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

Depending on the magnitude of the situation, such as a threat (bomb/homicidal), and/or gun violence there should definitely be a zero tolerance policy put into place, but I don't agree with just sending the child off without evaluating the why behind it. There is a reason behind everything that we do. For behaviors that are not to this magnitude, I do not support a zero tolerance policy because I believe that we should incorporate more mental health professionals into the school setting to help combat some of these manageable behaviors, that teachers are only equipped with so much as it pertains to mental health.

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

-Build culturally relevant schools

-Incorporate more mental health professionals into schools

-Build a stronger parental presence within schools. Get parents more involved, and establish parent-teacher organizations in every school.

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

I oppose the presence of law enforcement in schools. Law enforcement can not do the job of educators, and educators were not equipped to do the job of law enforcement. Law enforcement should only be present when needed, and should be discreet if needed, based on the situation.

10. Do you oppose or support mandatory continuing implicit bias training and de-escalation training for educators and school resource officers? I support the training because teachers/resource officers need to know how to de-escalate a situation effectively.

CANDIDATE FORUM

hosted by


MOBB UNITED
 MOMS OF BLACK BOYS UNITED
 FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

OUR SCHOOLS. OUR EXCELLENCE!
 Demanding Excellence in Education
**Candidate: Joycelyn Hall, District 2**

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? Just as the ethics training is a requirement every year, so should de-escalation techniques, especially for new, inexperienced teachers/resource officers.

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? I support putting universal early childhood education on a tax ballot being that the foundational skills needed for success starts before a child enters kindergarten.

13. If elected, what specific actions will you take to ensure "universal early childhood education tax proposition is placed on the ballot? I will look at ways in which we can utilize buildings in our network, and/or combine low population schools, so that we can house a place for the universal learning center. That would not be an expense that EBR is not used to, since there are some monies still being utilized at these abandoned, and/or low population schools. Then, I will see what monies are [.]

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? I would most definitely participate in the Dialogue on Race Louisiana's Original Series.

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? I would support this because you can not support colored children if you have not made it an initiative to understand and learn them, instead of stereotyping. It would be imperative that ALL board members participate, because at the end of the day, the students that represent EBR are majority colored children, and to do what's best for colored children, you can not have the spirit of racism running through your bones as an elected official, making decisions that are going to have an effect on the colored children in which you serve.

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? Yes it is necessary. The history that is being taught needs to be reflective of the history of the USA, and not a faux version of it. I definitely think that EBR should utilize the resources that the ZEP offers, so that the curriculum is including, and not excluding history that is important towards

CANDIDATE FORUM

hosted by

OUR SCHOOLS. OUR EXCELLENCE!
Demanding Excellence in Education**Candidate: Joycelyn Hall, District 2**

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

18. What do you think is the role of the community in school system matters? The community are the people in which we serve. We have to allow their voices to be heard and find ways to address their concerns. The decisions made by a school board will affect the community, so it is vital that we allow the community to make the school board aware.

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 do to support schools in the development and implementation of family engagement practices?

- EBR can make sure that PTO's are established in all schools.
- EBR can implement more than 2 Parent-Teacher conference days per calendar year.
- EBR should make it mandatory that all schools have a school website that is kept up-to-date.
- I would have to research other ways to get families involved due to the majority of families being single parent households.

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? The school board needs to address the rise in mental health in schools. The school board also has to address the retention policy. A child should not be moved on to the next grade level in Pre-K-2 if they are not ready. If a child is still significantly not showing growth, then that child should have documentation from a pediatrician that excludes any type of other issues, so the school can know how to proceed. A lot of our children can not read. Reading is important in all subjects, not just ela. Reading will have to be a major focus in the lower grades, and administration being visible in the lower grades to assure that these children are receiving adequate instruction so they aren't being sent off to upper grades being 1 or more grade levels below.

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? I support local accountability of ESSA funds. If the plan is drafted to detail the specific steps that will be taken to better the achievement gap, then there should be data detailing whether or not the implementations in the plan actually worked, or not. No, things do not happen overnight, but in order to know how these things that are being implemented are going in the classroom, you must 1.be in the classroom for more than 30 seconds to know, and 2. you must value the opinion of the people who are the front lines day in and out and delivering these resources, and whether or not it is beneficial to our children or not.

CANDIDATE FORUM

hosted by

OUR SCHOOLS. OUR EXCELLENCE!
Demanding Excellence in Education**Candidate: Joycelyn Hall, District 2**

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? The school system can better equip our black boys with the tools that they need for success instead of quickly labeling them and placing them to the wayside. The school to prison pipeline is alive and thriving, and if we can start making initiatives now, when children are young and still developing cognitively and will be able to make rational decisions. There should be more "Real Men Read" initiatives taking place in our schools. Our black boys need to see positive representation of us, and not just the negative images that they spew on the television screens. D.A.R.E officers need to build a positive rapport with students, and should be extended beyond the 5th grade. School leadership is also important. School leaders should be be racially bias, and they should have a school environment that reflects the makeup of the population.

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? There should be more initiatives made with industrial companies to allow trade programs into high schools that will allow students who want to go into the trade field an opportunity to go once they finish high school. For students that want to pursue a field that requires a Bachelor's degree or higher, there should be more push for students to become involved in TRIO Upward Bound, and many other college bound programs that get students involved and excited about post-secondary education.

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? I support ITEP if it is in the best interest of the students, but I don't agree with a billion dollar company not investing back into the economy of the state in which it operates, which means overall I oppose it. Between tax exemptions and the increasing number of charter schools being approved in EBR, EBR can not continuously allow for monies to be funneled away from our children. If ITEP brought about a beneficial and mutual agreement that was in the best interest of the students first, but then everyone else that works and makes EBR run, only and only will I stand by approving an ITEP tax exemption. If the agreement is only going to be in the best interest of the industrial company, then I oppose, and will continue to oppose until these companies start doing right by the people in this community.