

NAME: Antonio Jones

DISTRICT RUNNING FOR: District-4

1. What are two specific reasons you want to serve as a leader of Durham?

*I want to serve as a leader in Durham because I have a passion for community service and ensuring our students are prepared for their futures. I have a solid reputation of working with our youth and supporting various student groups in DPS.*

2. Given recent and past school shootings, students are concerned about their safety. How would you improve staff and student training and what other measures would you take? How would you balance safety with student privacy and other rights?

*To improve student safety, I will always support eliminating bullying, intimidation and/or harassment of students and employees. I will advocate for teacher to receive additional trainings to identify students who may need mental health, trauma services and make sure funding and resources are available. Balancing safety and student privacy is important to maintaining trust between students, teachers and parents. Open communication and providing meaningful solutions to problems before they get bigger is the key to maintaining safe schools.*

3. Often, there are racial and other disparities in suspensions in Durham Pubic Schools (DPS). How would you support the new Equity Affairs department and other ways to address this? How would you fund these efforts?

*I fully support the Office of Equity Affairs. On March 14, 2018, I was recognized by Duke University School of Medicine for my work on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. I will fight to implement a culturally responsive curriculum for all grade levels, provide professional development and teaching strategies that honor cultural customs and traditions of our students. Most importantly, I will fight to eliminate of the "Gatekeepers of Information" mentality so that all students and parents are given clear information on all programs to include: AIG, AP, IB and Honors courses that could provide opportunities, benefits and raise the level of academic expectations of our students.*

*I believe some of our students are not given the opportunity to excel academically due to teachers not believing in their abilities based on their neighborhoods and backgrounds, which could turn into a disciple problems because our students are not being challenged in the classrooms. As a former DPS School Treasurer, I am the only candidate who as managed a school budget. With that being said, I will fight for increased funding by requesting a realignment of existing programs and contracts to create cost savings and make sure DPS is applying for grant funding from various organizations. Most importantly, the Office of Equity*

*Affairs needs to be fully staffed to effectively address issues of equity in our schools and departments.*

4. How do you think Durham Public Schools can better talk about consent and reproductive health and safety with their students? Do you think the current education program DPS offers is adequate?

*Talking about reproductive consent and health is a difficult subject due to personal and religious beliefs. Being that DPS is an institution of education, I believe we have an obligation to teach a developmentally appropriate curriculum on reproductive health and safety. As always parents would have the option to opt out if they deem the materials not up to their standard. With the advancement of technology and availability of information online, parents and DPS should continue to work together to provide clear and honest information to our students so they will be well informed.*

5. How do you plan to find and keep effective and qualified teachers, and what role do you see students playing in that evaluation?

*Teacher recruitment is a major concern across the country. Specifically, minority and bilingual recruitment is extremely difficult when the pool of potential educators are declining as a whole. DPS needs to take more of an aggressive approach to partner with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) across the state and country to ensure we have made every attempt to contact students who graduate from Schools of Education and/or who may be interested in lateral entry positions. Once contact is made, we need to foster a relationship conducive to effectively recruiting potential educators. DPS cannot continue to sporadically attend college recruitment events, set up tables and not recruit qualified teachers. I would recommend recruitment incentives and benefits to separate DPS from other schools systems such as signing bonuses, conditional employment offers for college seniors or short term housing vouchers for selected hard to fill positions. Our recruitment strategies has to be aggressive and intentional if we want to find and keep qualified teachers. Students should play more of a role in evaluation of teachers. There should be a section or school based data collections based on a student survey especially in middle and high schools to allow teachers and administrators an opportunity to better understand the student's perspective and effectively address their needs.*

6. What issues influenced your decision to run for school board this year?

*We have a lack of vision and we need people who are serious about educating all of students in DPS. As a former employee of DPS, I witnessed our students and educators receiving the short end of the stick which led to decreased student enrollment, high teacher turnover and persistent low test scores. I know we have great teachers and students in DPS. Our school*

*board needs someone who will stand up for our parents, students and teachers and promote academic excellence for all students in all of our schools.*

7. If you could have any super power, what would it be and why?

*I would have the super powers of T'Challa, the Black Panther, King of Wakanda. I would use the knowledge, strength and wisdom from my ancestors to make the world better for all people and my senses would increase to super human levels. Using these abilities I would be able to protect our students from danger and make our neighborhoods safe and free of crime while protecting the Vibranium.*



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