



## 2026 Board of Education Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE: Liz Cooper

OFFICE SOUGHT: Board of Education district 1

CAMPAIGN ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

PHONE NUMBER(S): [REDACTED]

CAMPAIGN EMAIL: [REDACTED]

CAMPAIGN WEBSITE: Facebook: Liz Cooper for Board of Education

*I confirm that the responses provided here are my official positions in seeking local office and I understand that EASMC reserves the right to share my responses with members and interested parties.*

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE: DATE SUBMITTED: Elizabeth Cooper 3-4-2026

Candidates: To be considered for a recommendation, you must indicate your response to each of the questions. You may use more space than is provided to elaborate on your answers and provide clarification, explanation, and other context, but please be certain to clearly indicate the questions(s) to which you refer. Please return your completed and signed questionnaire to EASMC.

**1. How would you solve the workload crisis facing educators and support staff in our schools?**

I believe there are multiple aspects that have to be addressed in order to solve the workload crisis. I have been out of the system for a while, so some of these issues may no longer be a problem, but I will focus my answer on three aspects based upon my past experience.

- Class sizes are very important. Class sizes should be kept as small as possible in order for the teachers and other staff members to give the students the attention they need. This is not a simple fix. Smaller classes create the need for more classrooms and additional staff.
- It is also important for teachers to have adequate and consistent uninterrupted planning time to take care of all of the administrative and instructional planning they have to do. If I were a school administrator, I would ask my staff (in all areas) what they would suggest to make their work easier and less stressful. They are the experts!
- Additional Staffing is key to lessening the workload. The school system is struggling to keep the instructional staff, Student Services staff, at optimum levels. This may or may not include the service/tech/maintenance/food workers as well.

I feel that the BOE's role is to make sensible and strategic decisions in regard to class sizes, available space, and adequate staffing. The BOE needs to work with the county commissioners and support the superintendent in his quest to find alternate funding sources such as grants.

**2. Districts across the county are working to recruit and retain diverse educators that reflect the students they work with. How will you address educator recruitment and retention?**

I would support the effort any way I could. I have done recruiting in the past. I was sent to Buffalo one time to interview prospective teachers. I would be happy to speak to candidates. Targeting colleges with diverse student is sometimes useful.

**3. As a member of the Board of Education, how do you balance honoring ratified contracts with other priorities, especially in tight fiscal times?**

A ratified contract is a "done deal," in my opinion. It is true that money is tight, especially this year with the loss of funding from federal sources (as reported in the national media.) However, those signed agreements need to be kept. The employees depend on those numbers and terms.

**4. As a member of the Board of Education, will you ask the local funding authority for resources that the school district needs or the funding you think the district is likely to receive?**

Yes! I think we are underfunded and we need to be proactive in working with the local funding authority to clearly state our needs.

**5. The Education Support Professional (ESP) Bill of Rights calls for livable wages so that ESPs: don't have to work multiple jobs; can access secure retirement and affordable healthcare; are assured of workload and staffing levels that allow them to succeed; are guaranteed safe and healthy work environments; have their job security protected against privatization, and more. If elected to the Board of Education, how will you work to make this a reality for support staff in our schools?**

I will listen, learn, and support the workers however I can. I will educate myself and learn how the negotiated terms are processed, but I feel that your ESP Bill of Rights is well-stated and doable.

**Curriculum:**

**6. How will you support diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students throughout the county? What specific policies do you support regarding equitable access, opportunities, resources, and supports?**

I will fully support DEI as outlined in the SMCPs policies as any issue or decision that comes up for BOE review or is related to decisions being made. I believe that every single student deserves to be treated with respect, and dignity. I agree with all of the policies listed by SMCPs: Anti-Discrimination & Harassment, Title IX Compliance, Special Education, Safety and Inclusion, Equity Initiative, and Community Advocacy.

**7. Do you support or oppose a curriculum that reflects the perspectives and backgrounds of diverse learners? How would you respond to families and public groups requesting changes to content and curriculum?**

I absolutely support a curriculum that reflects the perspectives and backgrounds of diverse learners. Quote from Publicschool.com "Deleting history doesn't erase pain—it erases the proof of who caused it. And when that proof disappears, so does the wisdom needed to stop it from happening again." That's how I would respond.

**8. EASMC supports honesty in education. To encourage critical thinking, we believe educators should have professional autonomy and should be afforded the deference to teach the truth in their classrooms, schools, and districts. Do you support or oppose this position? Why?**

I do support this position. Shielding children from books (book banning) is not in the students' best interest, especially when there is teacher-led discussions which encourage dialogue and critical thinking. However, I also believe that books should be age-appropriate.

**Support and Community Support:**

**9. If the federal government cuts funding to Title 1, free and reduced meals, and special education, how will you help students who rely on these programs?**

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We will need to look for ways to get community support or locate other funding sources. Children depend on these meals.

**10. How will you address the increased need for services to support the mental health and well-being of students in our school system?**

I believe we need the social workers to be retained. Grants were lost and the social workers are in danger of losing their positions. They do a wonderful job, and I know the current board and the superintendent are working hard to find alternate funding .

**11. What policies and procedures should our district adopt to ensure that school personnel follow a consistent, legally sound process when approached by immigration law enforcement agents, while minimizing disruption to the learning environment and protecting students and families?**

I personally think school properties should be off limits to immigration law enforcement agents. I need to learn more about this issue and the current law because I have not been educated on whatever policies are in place now. We need to have protocols for dealing with this current crisis if there aren't any in place.

**12. Do you support or oppose local efforts to create and support community schools? Why?**

I am not fundamentally opposed to local efforts to create and support community schools, however, in this current financial climate. I don't think there is enough money available to start such a project. It would be unacceptable to divert funds from current schools.