

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers

Cincinnati Federation of Office Professionals



Local 1520 | AFT | OFT | AFL-CIO

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Protecting Public Schools

Ohio's public schools and their teachers are under assault from politicians in Washington and Columbus who seem more focused on serving the agenda of their deep pocketed donors than America's families and children.

About 82% of Ohio's children rely on our traditional public schools. But in Columbus, legislators are considering yet another effort to divert more of the taxes we pay away from the locally controlled public schools that most families rely on in their misguided effort to subsidize private and charter schools. These politicians want even more "school choice," despite scandal after scandal of waste, fraud and under-achievement emanating from Ohio's failing Charter school experiment.

In Washington, D.C., the Trump budget calls for a massive disinvestment in public education, even though parents have elected to send more than 90% of America's school children to traditional public schools. Under the leadership of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, the new "populist" administration is trying its best to shift federal education dollars away from our public schools to shady charter school operators like Ohio's infamous "Educational Classroom of Tomorrow" (ECOT). Even our Republican State Auditor David Yost has accused ECOT of collecting \$60 million from the state for apparently phantom students.

The Cincinnati Federation of Teachers (CFT) represents more than 2700 teachers and other employees of the Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS). CPS is on a roll, with student enrollment higher now than at any time in the last 20 years. CPS and its families face tough challenges that arise from a persistently high rate of poverty. But, we are proud that so many Cincinnati families have voted with their feet in recent years. Increased student enrollment means parents are turning away from the tawdry "choices" offered by too many fly-by-night Charter operators, like ECOT.

Considering the damage that politicians continue to do at the state and federal level to public education, our members know how important it is that voters elect local school boards and city councils that will put the needs of our public school kids first. We do not rubberstamp the recommendations of any local party, but interview and carefully vet the candidates.

In the school board race, we looked for candidates with a real dedication to *public* education and the skills and experience that can keep our district on its roll. The School Board should not be a stepping stone on the way to a political career. Serving our kids should be their focus over a four-year term. CFT's recommendations for School Board are:

- Renee Hevia – an experienced public school teacher and administrator
- Jacqueline Amos – a former Cincinnati public school teacher
- Ryan Messer- hard working community activist and father
- Melanie Bates- long time and effective Board member

One person we are not endorsing: candidate, Mike Moroski, who was quoted in a recent *Cincinnati Enquirer* article on discipline challenges at Western Hills High School. Western Hills has a student population that is 99.4% “economically disadvantaged” and 30% of its students have disabilities. It’s a challenging environment for students, teachers and staff that must be improved. But as far as we know, Mr. Moroski has not spent any time there. Yet, he told the *Enquirer* that the problem boils down to teachers. “If teachers can’t handle the environment, or if the principal can’t manage his teachers, then they need to go.” Simplistic finger pointing may be a crowd pleaser, like when Donald Trump shouts “You’re fired.” But, it shows a lack of seriousness we can’t afford on our School Board.

Members of City Council don’t run our schools, but they can help create a safe atmosphere for learning through attention to crime prevention and improving our neighborhoods. We endorse a diverse group of new candidates and incumbents that Cincinnati can count on to work with CPS to assure the health and safety of our kids:

- Michelle Dillingham
- Tamaya Dennard
- Derek Bauman
- Brian Garry
- Lesley Jones
- Greg Landsman
- David Mann
- Chris Seelbach
- PG Sittenfeld

CFT also urges Cincinnati voters to vote for Issue 24, a *renewal* of a tax levy, that CPS relies on to provide a quality education to our kids. Issue 24 will not raise your taxes.

Submitted by:
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President
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