

Richland One School Board Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this candidate questionnaire.

GROW is a non-partisan, pro-public education 501(c)(4) organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for children in Richland County School District One (Richland One) through education, advocacy, and leadership accountability.

An informed public is integral to a successful election. In that spirit, please answer the following questions. GROW reserves the right to publish candidate responses, in whole or in part, with attribution. If a candidate does not respond, GROW reserves the right to share a "Did Not Respond" statement.

All responses must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, September 22, 2024.

Thank you for your time and for running for office.

Email *

richardmooreschlbd@gmail.com

Name *

Richard E. Moore, Ph.D.

What seat are you running for? *

At-Large

Seat 2

Seat 4

What in your background leads you to believe you would be an effective school board member? What skills *
do you bring to the office?

I bring decades of experience as a student, teacher, parent, principal and administrator within this district to the board. I have been a principal in two different schools in District One for 15 years each. Both schools were Title One schools with high populations of disadvantaged students. After district rezoning, one of the school populations changed, becoming a school that was predominantly middle/upper-middle income. So I have worked with all the students represented in our district. Both schools were considered effective when I was there. Teachers wanted to work in those schools and there was little teacher turn-over. I also spent 5 years in Human Resource Services as the Coordinator of Elementary schools, where I worked to recruit and retain teachers and other staff members. I have spent many years working with teams of people to reach consensus and move forward to advance student achievement. My two main competitors are the incumbents holding the at-large-seats. They have consistently supported the current administration. Based on the data and the issues that have arisen over the last few years and the inconsistent student performance, change is needed and I will help provide that change. It is never effective to keep doing the same thing over and over when it is not producing the desired result.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you think Richland One is fulfilling its mission of educating students? *

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Failing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excelling

What are the top three issues that the school board needs to address and why? *

Student achievement is number one. We need to focus our resources and efforts on providing safe, nurturing, challenging, and effective learning environments for students and teachers. That includes addressing the fiasco that is the Vince Ford Learning Center. I am not convinced that this was the best way to spend the funds involved and I certainly find it inexcusable that so much time, effort and money have been wasted on it.

Number two is recruiting, developing and retaining high quality teachers and administrators at the school level. We have to address the atmosphere created by the current administration that has led to so many teachers and others leaving the district. Teachers are responsible for classroom environments, principals for school environments and the superintendent for the work environment in the district. Safe, nurturing, challenging and effective environments.

Finally, holding the administration accountable for their actions and results. As stated above, the majority of the current board has consistently supported the current administration. I believe there needs to be a change in the current administration, either in practices or personnel.

According to the most recent test results, only **23%** of 8th grade students met or exceeded math expectations and only **45%** met or exceeded English Language Arts (ELA) expectations. With so many of our students failing basic reading and math, it's no surprise that **39%** of Richland One high school graduates are not career or college ready. *

In light of these results, is the current superintendent meeting expectations? Please explain how he is or is not.

There is a basic problem with answering this question that goes to the heart of my current concerns about this administration. I am not sure what expectations the majority of the current board have for this superintendent. In light of the data quoted, and the fact that the superintendent's last contract was renewed, it seems as though the majority of the board is satisfied with progress towards state levels of achievement. The issue there is, of course, that the state levels show that over half of the students in South Carolina are failing to meet expectations. Even those areas in which there has been positive movement are still at disappointing levels. As far graduation rates, the information provided by the district is often confusing and delayed. Research shows that quality teachers are the determining factor in student achievement. The current administration has created an atmosphere that has resulted in the loss of teachers and administrators and little success in filling vacancies in a timely fashion. No, I do not feel that the current superintendent has been successful in meeting his obligations to the students of the district.

Per the State Inspector General's report, Richland One "mismanaged" \$31 million related to the Vince Ford Early Learning Center. This mismanagement led the [State Superintendent](#) to elevate the district from "fiscal watch" to "fiscal caution." *

What would you recommend as the course of action for this particular project?

I would describe the district's actions as irresponsible and misleading. There was more advance work that needed to be done, and the administration should have taken full responsibility and cooperated fully with any investigations. I will immediately familiarize myself with all the pertinent information on this issue. As I look at it now, I believe the board needs to take whatever steps are needed to put this behind us with the least amount of additional cost. In my opinion, the early Learning Center is not needed when all of our elementary schools already have four-year programs and three-year-old children are served in Montessori programs and special needs programs. We need to look at how to achieve the goal of supporting families with the facilities we have currently. More information (which has been difficult to get) could cause me to re-evaluate my stand on this.

As a school board member, will you pledge to: *

	Yes	No
make your decisions in an open and transparent manner that is compliant with FOIA laws?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
govern by the established school board policies?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
prioritize dollars going into the classrooms versus administrative overhead?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
set measurable goals and expectations for the superintendent regarding student academic achievement?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What kind of actions do you support to hold the superintendent accountable for meeting goals and expectations? *

The board needs to establish an evaluation tool that is fair and equitable and that results in the development of goals that are consistent with board policy and expectations. The superintendent would then be expected to determine strategies that support those goals in the development of a work atmosphere that results in safe, nurturing, challenging and effective learning/work environment for all employees and students. Those strategies should include measurable and realistic benchmarks towards meeting the established goals. Evidence of achievement of goals should come from test scores, teacher, staff, student and parent surveys as appropriate graduation rates, state report cards, recruitment and retention data ,review of financial and other information relevant to the established goals and strategies. This evaluation tool should be used consistently, at least annually, to provide evaluation of results and informative feedback. This should be accomplished in accordance with specific procedures and timelines. The appropriate results should be made public.

Is there anything else you want to share with GROW regarding your candidacy?

Our children's success should always be our top priority. I believe in setting high expectations and ensuring our policies and practices reflect those standards. I'll hold our administration accountable for creating safe, nurturing, challenging, and effective learning environments for students and teachers. I am a fair and balanced voice, committed to asking the hard questions. When elected, I will leverage my expertise, experience, and unwavering commitment to review and establish policies that prioritize student achievement in every school and for every student.

