January 14, 2020

Code of Civility and Community Engagement

As a Member of the School Board, I will strive to improve education, and to that end I will:

Attend all regularly scheduled board meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;

Recognize that I should endeavor to make policy decisions only after full discussion at publicly held board meetings;

Clearly distinguish opinions from facts and, render all decisions based on the available and verifiable facts and my independent judgment;

Ensure that all sides have a fair opportunity to present their respective positions;

Encourage others to become informed and involved, seeking full and open communications between the board and parents, students, staff, and all members of the community, and sharing relevant data on the performance of the schools;

Respect all board members, parents, students, staff and all members of the community through words and actions, demonstrating respect for the diverse views of all citizens in our increasingly multicultural society;

When advocating for a belief or position, ensure that criticism of opposing viewpoints is expressed as criticism of a position, not a person;

Be a positive role model for public discourse – practicing courtesy, politeness, and consideration;

Engage in respectful, non-judgmental, active listening;

While working toward the will of the majority, respect the rights of the minority and recognize the importance of building consensus as an important tool in community-building;

Work with other board members to establish effective board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the superintendent;

Communicate to other board members and the superintendent and discuss the opinions of parents, students, and all members of the community regarding board policies and school programs;

Learn about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information;

Support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school staff, and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;

Follow the letter and the spirit of the ethical rules included in the Code of Virginia and board policies, avoiding being placed in a position of conflict of interest;
Conduct all business in an open and transparent manner, consistent with the intent and spirit of the open meeting law requirements; using confidential processes only in regard to information that is privileged under applicable law;

Take no private action that will compromise the board and administration, and

Remember always that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the Falls Church City Public Schools.

Greg Anderson
Laura Downs
Phil Reitinger
Lawrence Webb

Susan Dimock
Shannon Litton
Shawna Russell
Niharika Singhvi,
Student Representative