

**NAME: Everton “EJ” Blair**  
**PARTY: Democratic**  
**SEEKING: School Board District 4**



**Why are you seeking your office?**

Gwinnett County Public Schools gave me an environment in which I could thrive academically as a student and leader and gave me the exposure and experiences to pay that service forward. As a former educator and someone who works in school systems across the country, I have seen how many doors a high-quality education can open, and I want to ensure that each of Gwinnett’s 180,000 students has the opportunity to unlock them.

**What do you expect to accomplish if elected?**

I will ensure that there is a strong presence of teacher and student voice in our decision making as a school system, and I will improve the communication and transparency between the board and the community. I will support increasing access to competitive options and programs in our school system and increasing the investment in opportunities that give our teachers the time and space to grow and teach, instead of testing and doing administrative tasks.

**What distinguishes your candidacy?**

I’m the only candidate who is a 21st century Gwinnett graduate and a former teacher. I have also worked in local, state and federal education policy and have worked with highly effective superintendents across the country. I believe that the teaching and student challenges of the 21st century require 21st century leadership. It is therefore time to elect someone who is in touch with our students, our teachers and our community.

**How can we improve school safety?**

We can all do our part in speaking up when we see, hear or notice something suspicious or alarming regarding student safety. As a school system, I support a stronger commitment to preventative mental health and counseling in collaboration with service organizations that exist in Gwinnett County and a saavier use of technology and surveillance to oversee the security of our buildings.

**Pick one issue. Expand on how you will address it.**

Accessible school options. Gwinnett County has a wealth of diverse and specialized school programs and curricular options (dual immersion, STEM schools, IB, etc.). However, the availability of these programs is limited and sometimes restricted to

students who live in a certain attendance zone. I would like to see our resources and staffing better mirror the demand for these programs and ensure a commitment to providing more availability when the interest exceeds the available spots.

**Please give a 100 word summary on your background:**

I'm a product of Gwinnett. After graduating from Shiloh HS, I matriculated to Harvard College where my career in education began. My first internship was with GCPS, and, after college, I chose to come home and teach math in Atlanta Public Schools. Those years in the classroom showed me how much support teachers need in order to deliver high-quality instruction each day, and I think it's important that our Board members have that perspective. I've spent the last few years working with teachers and leaders across the county and am ready to use my learning to positively impact our system.