

NAME: Adrienne Simmons
PARTY: Non-Partisan
SEEKING: School Board, District 4

1. Why are you seeking your office?

I am running with and for Teachers, Learners, and Community. As a former teacher, I know many of the challenges educators face. I will advocate for appropriate class sizes, additional supports, and innovative incentives to retain and attract high-quality employees.

Our learners desire more inclusivity in the content. They likewise want safe schools that are welcoming. GCPS should strive to be responsive to student needs and interests.

Parents, businesses, and community members should be active participants in school improvement efforts. I will work to put two-way communication structures into place that are accommodating and easily accessible.

2. What do you expect to accomplish if elected?

As one of five members on the board, I will work to establish policies and approve budgets that fund safety, academic, social, and emotional supports that best serve all students and staff. I will advocate for innovative incentives to attract and retain a diverse, high-quality workforce. Curriculum offerings that are future focused and appeal to the interests of learners will be prioritized. Equitable funding across schools will also be a priority. I will evaluate the superintendent against key metrics to ensure GCPS is making adequate progress.

3. What distinguishes your candidacy?

It is an honor to have served in public education for 20 years. I am the only candidate that has been a classroom teacher, instructional coach, and state administrator. I have a doctoral degree in educational leadership as well as a master's degree in reading and literacy. Not only am I knowledgeable in creating policy, but I am experienced in supporting stakeholders with effective implementation of policy. I am furthermore skilled in evaluating personnel and approving budgets, which is specifically what the Board is tasked with accomplishing. Lastly, I have two children in GCPS and serve on their school's council.

4. Pick any one issue. Expand on how you will address it.

GCPS should offer stakeholders a welcoming environment to share their varied experiences. This requires culture building and establishing districtwide norms such as

active listening and collaborative problem solving. I will advocate for school level governance teams that empower students, school staff, parents, and community members to make decisions. Educators should also have outlets to voice their concerns and opinions, anonymously if needed, in working to help all students meet their full potential. I will furthermore advocate for more counselors to support students as well as parent liaisons to facilitate ongoing parental engagement that yields positive outcomes.

5. What are your ideas on curbing all the many area-wide shooting?

Recently, a 13-year-old boy shot a 10-year-old boy who at the time of this submission remains in a coma. The ease in which people can purchase and sale guns facilitates this type of incident, which is terribly unfortunate for both the shooter and the victim. We need to make guns less accessible to our youth. I believe knowledge and training can help. We should consider mandatory training for those who own a gun. This way, gun owners are better informed on how to safely store weapons as well as provided guidance on when they should/shouldn't use their gun.

6. Please give a 100 word summary on your background.

I am a Black woman of Christian faith that has a deep appreciation for diversity of people and perspectives. My husband and I chose to move to Gwinnett County because of the diversity it offers coupled with the top-notch school system. The state of Georgia became my home 20 years ago when I first began teaching. Since working as a classroom teacher, I have been an instructional coach, literacy coordinator, and state administrator. I have also served as board member and volunteer with several organizations such as Mind Bubble, the Faith Center, and Fertile Ground.