1. **What do you see as the primary challenge to accommodating the demographic changes in FCPS?**

The primary challenge is figuring out how to ensure that FCPS students, regardless of which zip code they live in, receive equal access to educational resources and opportunity as envisioned by [OneFairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/2016/fairfax-board-adopts-social-equity-resolution.htm). In doing so, we must always recognize the individual needs of each student.  Many areas of our county have seen an influx of new residents, many of whom are children with special needs or different educational and language backgrounds. In addition, some incoming students feel marginalized. We must consider these needs when developing budgets and short-term and long-term plans for our schools.

1. **What measures would you advocate for to close the minority student achievement gap.**

President Obama described education equality as the civil rights issue of our time. Addressing the achievement gap will require multiple strategies including prioritizing quality early childhood education with pre-k readiness. We must ensure that minority students are identified for advanced academics and we must proactively provide remedial services when teachers identify students at-risk of falling behind. This is especially true for reading intervention; third grade reading levels have been found to predict future societal problems for these students. FCPS should also focus on assisting its staff in sharing strategies that support our most vulnerable students while providing staff development.  Some of our Title I schools have made significant progress and we should continue this positive progress. Next, we should embrace our diversity and treat it as an asset to the learning experience through curriculum development and diversity training for our teachers.  I also believe students in each pyramid should have access to advanced learning in the elementary years to prepare students for such programs in the Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) field and the International Baccalaureate (IB) program.  With early intervention and a focus on enhancing the learning experience to assist children in developing critical thinking skills, I am confident that our children will perform well.  I also believe that we need to take a concerted effort to reach out to parents who may want support.  As parents, teachers and staff collaborate, we are best equipped to provide an optimum learning experience.

1. **A recent George Mason University study demonstrated that FCPS has been systematically discriminating against black teachers for several years. Fairfax NAACP believes that among other measures, FCPS should invite an outside firm to oversee its hiring and retention policies and practices. Would you support that effort?**

In my experience as a Guardian *ad litem*, staff members have spoken to me regarding concerns in the workplace.  Addressing these type of concerns will take a concerted effort that may require oversight from an outside entity; however, I would like to explore in house supervision that is focused on best practices in hiring and supporting our staff.  This should include a method for staff members to report concerns anonymously.  It should also include a think tank that allows our staff -- both past and present -- to come together and develop best practices for improving the concernsraised. Additionally, staff members should have the ability to communicate directly with the School Board.  If elected, I would work to eradicate any form of bias that negatively impacts our hiring practices and hinders our ability to hire and retain the highly qualified staff members.

The Minority Student Achievement and Oversight Committee (MSAOC) and the Advanced Academics committee have been concerned about hiring practices for some time.  Thus, the concerns raised in the George Mason study should be clearly identified and addressed**.**

1. **Fairfax NAACP supports changing the name of J.E.B Stuart High School because he was a traitor and fought and died for the Confederacy, whose values included white supremacy and slavery. Do you support this effort?**

Yes. I am especially proud of the students who first raised their voices to #changethename.  These students exemplify 21st century learning skills.  They identified an issue, they studied that issue, they communicated the problem, they worked collaboratively, and they utilized community networks to achieve their identified goal.  Their efforts should be applauded and we as a school system should respond to their legitimate concerns. We do not need another committee; we need a resolution.

1. **FCPS has repeatedly failed to make the budget adjustments needed to adequately fund Pre-K programs such as FECEP and Head Start. As result, there is a 3-4 year long waiting list for pre-K, which contributes to the minority student achievement gap. Will you commit to reducing the pre-K waiting list from 3-4 years to 1 year by 2019, and ultimately eliminate the waiting list by 2020?**

Yes, I would support a budget that reflects our values. Pre-K readiness is one key component to close the achievement gap.  I am committed to reducing and eliminating the Pre-K waiting list. The formative years are extremely important to the development of the human brain.

1. **The existing standing FCSB Stakeholder groups do not reflect the community’s diversity with respect to ethnicity, race, sex, or disabilities. Will you support adjusting the composition of these groups to make them more inclusive?**

Yes, I would support efforts to review the composition of the FCSB Stakeholder groups with respect to diversity. Such efforts should create a more representative network of stakeholder groups that can serve to more fully inform the Superintendent, the central office staff and the school board.

1. **Many students have reported to us that the atmosphere in their schools has become increasingly toxic because of racially- and religiously-charged bullying; and in many cases teachers have offered little support. How will you address this issue?**

Sadly, bullying is an issue in our schools. Every child has a right to learn in an environment free of intolerance.  As a School Board member, I would actively take steps to create a culture that supports a respectful learning environment.  Our teachers and staff are currently receiving training to assist them in identifying children who may have experienced trauma or may be the victims of bullying.  However, we must also take steps to assist our students in rejecting any form of bullying, including cyber bullying.  This may be achieved through education and by providing support to our students who have experienced bullying and encouraging students to assist one another through various forms of kindness.  We could encourage students who exhibit leadership skills to learn to support incoming students who may feel isolated and create a reward system for students who show compassion toward their fellow classmates.

1. **Students have reported to us that their curriculum largely ignores black history, except for brief references to the most prominent civil rights leaders and a watered-down explanation of slavery. Will you support changes to the curriculum to be provide a more holistic depiction of American history that reflects the accomplishments and contributions of all races?**

Yes.  I strongly believe that students learn best when they have access to a broad world view.  Our nation is indeed a melting pot.  Every child should have the opportunity to understand how immigrants, including people of color, have made positive contributions to the development of our nation.