

9 QUESTIONS FROM



Meet the Candidate: Alison Crumbley

1. I am running again for several reasons.. we will have a new Superintendent and it an important to have experienced board members for a smooth transition. I want to continue to raise the grades for all students in our core subjects of math, reading and science. AI (artificial intelligence) shows great promise as a technology but we must have strong guardrails in our schools. Students must learn critical thinking skills at this age and not rely on Chat GBT. The expansive growth must be managed for our students of Pasco County, while staying within budget restraints and I have that experience.

2. We have an established mission for career and life readiness. We now have created two technical high schools as well as we have career academies in all of our high schools. I have been a part of all of that during the past several years. We have expanded our Pathways Programs to include many school choice options for students whether college bound or not. We will continue to expand these programs.

3. Underperforming schools must be taken seriously and immediate suppets put into place. I just spoke rot the Superintendent today about our plans for those underperformers according to recently released grades from the DOE. In most cases these schools are located in areas of poverty so these children and families need extra support and resources, much like we have established at the Hudson K-12 complex. We actually start with pre-school suppprt there. Emphasis must be place on the child and relationships and then success will follow. I am planning a trip to Miami-Dade to research best practices there as that district is making successful strides with underperforming schools.

4. Last year I campaigned for the teacher referendum to be on the ballot, which our Pasco voters kindly voted in. The raises we have been able to give as a result have already worked and our recruitment and retention is up for this year! I think we can improve on classroom conditions in areas such as student behavior and workload as well by being innovative. Some initiatives Will be in place this coming school year.

5. I am fine with school choice although we have responded in our district by creating a vast array of school choice options for our students. As a school board member I strive for our options to be the best....

6. Sometimes yes and sometimes no! You may have a school grade that is only 1 or 2 points away from the next one up and that can be frustrating for the school and staff. All of our teachers are dedicated and as I said earlier some schools need more resources. If a child comes to school in fright or flight mode or hungry how can they possibly get good grades???

7. Since all studies show that involved parents equate to high student achievement it would be unwise to not want engaged parents.

8. Yes.....our safety protocols in Pasco have been recognized around the State and Nationally. We work very closely with Sheriff Nocco's team and are constantly updating our practices!

9. We can always use more can't we?? As someone who got on the board during a \$55 million budget cut in 2010 I learned how to squeeze the budget and keep dollars flowing into the classroom. This year we are able to save the IA's instructional assistants even though the ESSR funds are now gone. I always will advocate to pay teachers what they deserve and to keep the benefits we have.

9 QUESTIONS FROM



Meet the Candidate: Jessica Wright

1. Why are you running? If elected, what would be your top goals as school board member?

I'm running to ensure every student in our district has access to a high-quality education and is supported in their learning environment. Unfortunately, my parental rights were denied when my son was severely injured on campus and it opened my eyes to the lack of transparency in Pasco County. My top goals are to enhance transparency and accountability in school operations, support teachers with the resources they need to succeed, and eliminate any political extremism. I'm committed to fostering a collaborative environment where parents, staff, and the community work together to provide the best educational experience for all students.

2. What can be done to ensure everyone who graduates is either ready for college or a vocation?

Addressing reading proficiency requires integrating phonics instruction in K-2 alongside whole language methods. Phonics teaches letter-sound relationships, crucial for decoding words and building foundational reading skills. While the whole language approach fosters comprehension and a love for reading, it may not adequately address basic decoding skills. Combining both methods ensures students develop strong reading abilities and comprehension. This balanced approach lays a solid foundation for lifelong literacy and success in all areas.

3. How should the district address underperforming schools?

Florida's school grading system can be flawed, as it often emphasizes standardized test scores and may not fully capture a school's efforts or challenges. To address underperforming schools, the district should use a more comprehensive evaluation approach that includes qualitative factors like student engagement, teacher effectiveness, and community support. Providing targeted support based on these broader assessments can more effectively address specific needs and drive improvement. This holistic approach ensures a fairer evaluation and better-targeted interventions.

4. Local and state initiatives have been launched to address the need for more teachers in our classrooms. What more do you think needs to be done to recruit and retain teachers in your district?

To effectively recruit and retain teachers, we must address the root cause of high turnover: a lack of respect, support, and poor working conditions. We need to listen to our school site staff, ensuring they feel valued and heard. This involves providing competitive salaries and creating a supportive work environment with functioning safe facilities. Additionally, recognizing and celebrating their contributions can boost morale and retention. By prioritizing these areas, we can foster a positive culture that attracts and keeps dedicated educators.

5. What is your stance on the state's current school choice program?

Florida's voucher program expands educational opportunities for families, particularly benefiting students with disabilities by providing access to diverse schooling options. However, the program's \$1B budget increase raises concerns about accountability and effective resource use. It's crucial to ensure that the program includes robust oversight to guarantee that funds are used efficiently and that all participating schools meet high educational standards. Strengthening accountability measures will help maximize the program's benefits while safeguarding quality and equity in education. Every dollar should be following the student to ensure we are also not defunding traditional public education and overburdening our schools.

6. Does school testing really give an accurate portrayal of the education quality/experience of a school?

School testing often fails to provide an accurate portrayal of education quality. For students, standardized tests can stress them and may not reflect their true abilities or learning experiences. For teachers, these tests can lead to a narrow focus on test preparation rather than holistic teaching. Additionally, they may not account for diverse learning styles or individual progress. As a result, both student and teacher assessments through testing can be misleading, failing to capture the full scope of educational quality and student development.

7. Issues surrounding gender, sexuality and race have created controversy between school boards and parents. How much say should parents have in deciding what is and is not included in the public school curriculum?

As a board member, I am committed to ensuring that all curricula are age and developmentally appropriate, aligned with educational standards, and accurately reflect history. Parents should have a meaningful role in shaping curriculum content. While it is essential to maintain educational standards and factual accuracy, I believe in a balanced approach where parents can provide input and opt out of specific content if they have

concerns. Open communication and collaboration between the school board and parents are crucial to addressing these issues respectfully and effectively.

8. Do you feel students are safe at school? Or does more need to be done to protect school campuses?

Students' safety at school requires urgent improvements. Lower student-to-staff ratios and reduced overcrowding are crucial to addressing safety concerns effectively. Portable classrooms lack the protection of cinder block walls, which raises safety issues. Ensuring adequate staffing and reducing overcrowding will enhance supervision and emergency response capabilities, creating a safer environment for all students. We must prioritize these changes to better protect our school campuses and ensure that every student has a secure learning environment.

9. Do you feel any changes are needed to your district's budget? Is money being spent in the right places?

Changes are needed in Pasco County's almost \$2B budget. We should focus on improving funding for classroom resources, staff salaries, and student support services. Cutting the bureaucratic fat while allocating more funds to reduce student-to-staff ratios and address overcrowding will enhance safety and educational quality. Additionally, we need to ensure that investments in infrastructure, including secure facilities, are prioritized. Reviewing and reallocating resources to areas with the greatest impact on student outcomes will ensure that money is spent effectively and supports our educational goals.