

Glassboro Public Schools

560 Joseph Bowe Boulevard
Glassboro, New Jersey 08028

www.glassboroschools.us

Phone: 856-652-2700
Fax: 856-881-0884

Danielle M. Sochor
Chief Academic Officer



Scott D. Henry
Business Administrator

Mark J. Silverstein, MBA, Ed.D, Superintendent of Schools

July 26, 2016

Mr. Charles E. Smith, Jr.
Glassboro Community Awareness Association (GCAA)
P.O. Box 13
Glassboro, NJ 08028

Re: **GCAA Positions on Public Education**

Dear Mr. Smith:

We appreciate you, Mr. Simmons, and Pastor Clay taking the time to meet with representatives of the Glassboro Board of Education on June 20, 2016. Dr. Redondo and I shared the Glassboro Community Awareness Association's positions on public education with the Board of Education and Administration.

While we support some of our positions, such as promoting student achievement, we do not support nor find evidence to support other positions. Below is a summary of the positions presented and feedback regarding those positions:

1. Residency of Staff

It was suggested by GCAA that all administrators and teachers be required to reside in the school district.

Governor Christie signed into law the "New Jersey First Act" (P.L. 2011, c. 70). The law, which took effect on September 1, 2011, amended an existing law (R.S. 52:14-7) that regulated certain state government residency requirements. The new law establishes new residency requirements for all public employees and officers at all levels and types of New Jersey government agencies. In September 2015, several key lawmakers are talking about scrapping the law altogether. According to State Senator Sen. Peter Barnes, "Experience has taught me that when you have strict residency requirements, you exclude a lot of people who might be very qualified for certain jobs." The GCAA may want to take this matter up with the state legislature.

2. Clayton School District's Honor Roll System

GCAA suggested that Glassboro implement the same Honor Roll System as Clayton based on recent recognition.

The Glassboro Board of Education applauds the Clayton School District for being recognized by The College Board in its 2015 Gaston Caperton Honor Roll. The districts featured on the honor

roll have expanded access to higher education by providing students with rigorous academic offerings and innovative college-preparation programs. 2015 Honor Roll also included Atlantic City and Camden. There is no application to be on the Honor Roll; instead the College Board looks across multiple data sets to identify recipients. Since Glassboro has consistently encouraged underrepresented students to take the SAT®, AP courses, and apply to multiple colleges, it may be unlikely that we are recognized on the Gaston Caperon Honor Roll.

3. CSA & Administration Hiring Process

The Glassboro Community Awareness Association recommended the removal of the Chief School Administrator and GHS Principal. GCAA suggested the board hire someone in the community and conduct a search with community input.

The selection of a superintendent is considered to be one of the most significant decisions a school board makes. A systematic procedure for selection is used, requiring months of careful planning and well-organized steps in screening the most qualified candidates. Over the past 20 years, the Glassboro School District has had five Superintendents. With each new hire, the New Jersey School Boards Association was involved to assist in obtaining community feedback on qualities, qualifications, and experience.

In addition, state law requires that boards evaluate superintendents annually. An effective evaluation process is based on the achievement of specific, agreed-upon goals between the board and the superintendent. The CSA has received consistent “commendable” ratings by the Board of Education.

N.J.C.A 18A:12-24.1 Code of Ethics for School Board Members, requires board members to vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the chief administrative officer, support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties, and refer all complaints to the chief administrative officer and will act on the complaints at public meetings only after failure of an administrative solution.

Should you have any specific complaints, the Board of Education would refer them to the Superintendent for consideration.

4. Requirements to be on the Glassboro Board of Education

The Glassboro Community Awareness Association expressed concern about the Chief of Police being on the Board of Education

To become a member of a local board of education in New Jersey, candidates must:

- Be able to read and write
- Hold U.S. citizenship and one year’s residency in the school district
- Be registered to vote in the district before filing the nominating petition
- Have no interest in any contract with, or claim against, the board

July 26, 2016

Re: GCAA Positions on Public Education

- Not hold office as mayor or member of the municipal governing body or, in the case of county school districts, the county governing body
- Not simultaneously hold two elective offices
- Not be disqualified from membership for the conviction of certain crimes.

The Chief of Police is qualified to serve on the Glassboro Board of Education.

5. Football Programs

The Glassboro Community Awareness Association want the GHS Football Programs to be reinstated.

For the past 15 years, a volunteer of the Football Boosters has been preparing and distributing the programs in support of the Booster Club. The volunteer was a School Board Member. The School Ethics Commission issued two public advisory opinions regarding board of education member conduct. Specifically, when board member's volunteering as the leader of the club, which is a regular, on-going activity involving contact with students, personnel and administrators, including the supervision of school administrators, created the potential to compromise the board.

The concern will be presented to the Athletic Director. Additional volunteers are welcome to support the Booster Club.

6. Employee Termination Process

The Glassboro Community Awareness Association expressed concerns about complaints their organization fielded regarding administrators and the union.

The Glassboro Board of Education has established a grievance policy (#3340) that assures each employee has the opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of concerns and grievances. Employees who are covered under a collective bargaining unit (CBA) must follow procedures specified in those agreements. The CBA includes a formal grievance process. Neither the Board of Education nor the administration had received any grievances in the past few years. We suggest complaintants be referred to district policy or the CBA to appropriately address their concerns.

7. Graduation Rates.

The Glassboro Community Awareness Association expressed concerns that Glassboro ranked 9th in the county on their graduation rate and want to see improvement.

The State publishes four year cohort graduation rates for each district. The most recent 2015 rating showed Glassboro ranked #9 in the county, ahead of Pitman, Deptford, Clayton, Gateway, and others. The four year cohort rate shifts based on the cohort population. The Glassboro Board of Education is proud of our 2015 outcomes and continue to strive for improvements each year. We support the opinionion and GCAA and will continue to implement programs to ensure all students are college and career ready.

Page 4 of 4

July 26, 2016

Re: GCAA Positions on Public Education

As mentioned during the June 20th meeting, we would like to schedule a follow-up meeting to further discuss the positions of the Glassboro Community Awareness Association and explore opportunities to work together to continue improving the perception of Glassboro Public Schools and the Glassboro Community. Please advise us on dates in which your organization can be able to meet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Peter J. Calvo", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Peter J. Calvo

President

Glassboro Board of Education

Copy: Dr. Mark Silverstein, Superintendent of Schools
Glassboro Board of Education