

Dr. Patrice Sentino

Survey Response

Candidate for OP School Board - 1st District

Election Day - November 8, 2022

1. In your view, where should the school district direct any additional funding? : There are many areas in which funding can be directed, but I will highlight two. The first is in trauma-informed care professional development, including student crisis prevention and response. It is imperative that we be able to understand and respond to the trauma that our students have faced to make sure that they feel safe and ready to learn. The second area is providing funding for school building maintenance and repairs through the School Facility Preservation Program. This is particularly important for those schools that were not rebuilt or did not receive significant repairs after Hurricane Katrina. There is a significant gap between the funds that are needed and the funds available. Repairs that are needed after events such as Hurricane Ida only exacerbate the problem.

2. Do you believe the regulatory relationship between the school board and the charter schools is properly balanced? If not, what will you seek to change? : I believe the regulatory relationship between the school board and charter schools is not properly balanced. The autonomy given to charter schools comes with expectations of performance, as defined in the Charter School Accountability Framework. OPSB is responsible for the collective performance of its schools and must ensure that educational milestones are met. However, Act 91 keeps virtually every single power in the hands of private charter operators without any specific mechanisms for oversight of charter operators and their un-elected boards. I would propose legislation changes to Act 91; OPSB should not absolve itself from leading in those areas where it can leverage and implement large-scale change.

3. In your view, what has the district done well over the last five years? What has the district done poorly that you would change?: I believe charter schools have exemplified both negative and positive results. While school options have increased, with the expansion of several successful schools and steady improvements of assessment scores in some schools, the gains have not been enough to move schools above D and F performance ratings. Specifically, in District 1, there are nine K-8th grade schools, and 67% are D or F-rated. The dismissal of highly qualified veteran black educators replaced by non-credentialed inexperienced teachers should be noted. Research has indicated that teacher preparation, certification, professional development, and student/teachers sharing the same race/ethnicity are positive correlates of student achievement. The high-performing schools before Hurricane Katrina are predominantly the same

high-performing schools that exist today with few exceptions. In the meantime, schools have opened and closed without significant achievements for black and economically disadvantaged students. One thing I would look at in a system-wide approach to integrated trauma-informed care in the schools recruiting highly effective teachers and incorporating a robust ongoing training program for teachers. The most influential school-related factor of student learning and academic growth is the quality of the teacher.

4. What is your position on charter schools and their future in your parish? Do you believe we should Expand, Reduce, or Maintain the current make-up of charter schools in the district? Please explain. : We need to be clear about the expectations of the charters and with regular review and evaluation. We must also determine when it may be necessary for NOLA-PS to take over the management of a school if the charters are not meeting expectations and requirements. Across the country, about 200 or more charter schools close yearly due to flawed leadership, governance, financial miscalculations, and academic shortcomings. We have to change the narrative of charter school failure and expound on proven success to replicate and build upon quality school models in New Orleans. Options for support would include providing ongoing leadership - a collaboration with school leaders, teachers, and parents to set quarterly goals, offering strategies focusing on parental involvement, positive school culture, family needs, and individual student support and intervention, and providing the professional development needed for staff. School closures have severe ramifications on school staff, students, and parents. I would look at the unique circumstance of the school to determine if the school should have an opportunity for turnaround with provided support or direct run to assist the school with becoming independent again. If none of these options work after a specific period of time, I would consider takeover or closure. It is my belief that local communities, students, parents, and district and state policymakers are better off investing in persistently low-performing schools rather than closing them.

5. Across our state, our communities are experiencing a crisis particularly amongst our youth with properly diagnosing and supporting students living with a mental illness. If elected, what steps would you take to bolster support provided to students and families? : A System-wide initiative I would like to see implemented during this is a systematic framework to adopt trauma-informed practices by using a trauma-informed approach to help children feel supported, safe, and ready to learn. The uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic have raised concerns related to danger, safety, the need for protection, and emotional wellness. Trauma-informed practices assist teachers and administrators in transforming the way they support students, families, and teachers. The effects of COVID-19 have added to preexisting trauma, disparities, loss, and grief of our scholars. The expertise of social workers, mental health, and other healthcare providers should be leveraged during these times. I would assist with identifying evidence-based interventions proven to be effective, professional development, and establishing partnerships with students, parents, and community stakeholders to bolster support

for our students and families. I would work with the superintendent to develop a systematic framework for adopting such interventions.

6. Have you been a student or parent in this district? If so, which schools? : I am a product of public education and attended school in District 1. I attended Edward Livingston Middle School and graduated from Sarah T. Reed High School.

7. Across the country, a growing debate has centered around the contents of history and social studies in K-12. What content areas do you think need to be changed, deleted, or added in the current curriculum? : While this is a broad subject I believe it is important to make a segway to incorporate content on slavery, civil rights, important Black luminaries, and diverse groups—including the mention of the LGBTQIA population.

8. In your opinion, should the histories and perspectives of historically marginalized communities be a required point of study in schools or not? (Please Explain) : Yes, students must be affirmed in their cultural connections and cultural differences celebrated. Working with parents and the community, a plan can be developed to make instructional changes that reflect and better emphasize the student's diverse cultures. We must also focus more on recruiting teachers from the AAPI community, who can help serve as role models while reflecting their AAPI heritage. I would also encourage student-led initiatives and practices that promote diverse and inclusive student groups.

9. Studies have shown schools with higher engagement amongst families and community boost overall student performance and expected long term outcomes, if elected, what plans or ideas would you put forward towards deepening the engagement of families and the community within their children's schools? : I plan to bolster parental and community engagement through various methods: online engagement, forums, meetings, office hours, surveys, evaluations, and social media platforms. We must use every available means of communication to share information and provide opportunities for parents to provide input. We must also implement processes that ensure parents have a way to ask questions and receive timely answers from both the NOLAPS and their child's school, and then address frequent areas of concern in communications with parents.

10. How do you feel about schools creating support programs for students whose families are impacted by mass incarceration? If elected, what programming if any do you believe the school board should enact to support these students? : Incarceration breaks up families and creates an unstable environment for children that can have lasting effects on their development and well-being. Therefore, we must work with community-based health centers and other local and faith-based organizations to offer programs that foster children's mental and emotional well-being. We should seek to provide mentoring and support for children whose parents are in prison. This includes establishing appropriate connections to children and families in need of support. At Orleans Parish Juvenile Court I saw how under-resourced youth become

casualties of the school-to-prison pipeline I worked to reform a system of punishment into a rehabilitative one.

11. Recently, Florida, Texas and Arizona have made national news by amending teacher certification, including not requiring a college degree and offering temporary certification to military veterans. In your opinion, how should states and school districts address the issue of teacher shortages? What impact do you believe the measures listed above will have on student education? :

I believe that lowering standards for educators is misguided. How can we expect the best of our students if we don't provide them with the best teachers? Our students need more now, not less. While there is a teacher shortage, we must look at those issues that cause teachers to leave the profession or to not select teaching as a career at all, such as salary, excessive task requirements, etc. Lowering the standards is also insulting to those teachers who have met the professional requirements, causing them to feel that they are not valued, even more than they already do.

12. Law Enforcement in Schools: DECREASE

13. Do you believe that teachers have the right amount of discretion in schools? : NO

14. Do you believe that principals have the right amount of discretion in schools? : NO

15. Do you believe students receive adequate civics education, and if not, what steps would you take to change this? : No, I do not believe students receive adequate civics education. A high-quality civics education thus includes opportunities for students to engage in activities within the classroom that model what democratic processes look like, as well as opportunities to participate in the civic life of their communities and learn from this participation as a formal part of their coursework. Civic knowledge provides an understanding of government structure, government processes, and relevant social studies knowledge and concepts. Civic skills provide the abilities that enable students to participate in a democracy as responsible citizens, and civic dispositions develop attitudes important in a democracy such as a sense of civic duty and concern for the welfare of others. With respect to school climate and socials emotional learning (SEL) I would advocate for legislature to take advantage of a new opportunity to incorporate these dimensions of student learning into their accountability frameworks.

16. What, if any, financial interests does your household have in the educational industry? :
None

In 50 words or less, tell our community why they should trust you with their vote.: I'm Dr. Patrice Sentino, a candidate for Orleans Parish School Board District 1, with a dedicated commitment of over 25 years working with children and families, I have advocated for those affected by social and environmental trauma, mental and behavioral health. As a licensed clinical social worker, mental health provider, researcher, and educator, I continue my efforts to eliminate racial inequities in education and mental health. After Hurricane Katrina, I worked with New

Orleans Public schools to provide counseling, training on trauma-informed care, and supporting parents and students from a social-emotional lens. At Orleans Parish Juvenile Court I saw how under-resourced youth become casualties of the school-to-prison pipeline I worked to reform a system of punishment into a rehabilitative one. I am an Assistant Professor at SUNO, and CEO of the Center for Hope Children and Family Services; I hold a Doctorate in Education & Social work. I am running for the school board because I believe in the importance of ensuring that every child receives a quality education to be successful.

I am a servant-leader with deep community relationships and a strong track record of advocacy and impact. I have a proven track record of supporting parents and students from a social-emotional learning lens. I have transformed systems despite social and environmental constraints. These experiences have provided critically important perspectives that shape my values and my ability to lead our schools to be effective, efficient, and accountable. I will work to rebuild trust between the community and the Orleans Parish School Board, ensure the social and mental health of students is a priority, promote parental engagement, and provide equitable resources for students with special needs.