

## School County Board Candidates Questionnaire on Environmental Issues

Name: Major Mike Webb

1. **Achieving the County goals for renewable energy and carbon neutrality:** Fairfax County Public Schools recently committed to achieving [carbon neutrality for its operations by 2040](#). Should Arlington Public Schools make a similar commitment and what strategies and policies would you pursue to reduce carbon emissions in APS?

In July, Fairfax County made headlines to announce its resolution to commit to remove carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous gas from its by 2040, which like the agreement in 1984 of the Beijing to join the civilized nations of the world by depositing accession documents to the Biological Weapons Convention sounded like a bold, noble effort, I was most intrigued by the diplomatic statement that the emissaries had attached that candidly called out the obvious flaws in the accords that refrained from any specific definitions, sounding more in pious platitudes that appeal to the less educated, like an opiate religion, and who stated with cynical aspirations how they looked forward to addressing, at some more convenient time, in the future, the failure of the civilized nations to include any enforcement provisions. At least we can say that the Chinese know a lot about electoral politics. Not running as the Democrat candidate in Arlington, Virginia, the local newspaper has already declared the election result on the day I qualified for the ballot; so any reasonable goal of my candidacy would be only informational, which I have dedicated to reopening public schools safely, contributing my experience as the most junior commissioned officer to have ever served as the operations officer for all U.S. Army Strategic Counterintelligence in the Continental United States, where I played an instrumental role in helping to launch the precursor to the NMIC, which ABC News had reported in April 2020 was supposed to have alerted the former President in November 2019. Additionally, as not only one of only 13% of African American males with a baccalaureate degree, and a graduate of the most competitive college in the Commonwealth, where not even one student of any color has been accepted in over a decade, I thought someone might want some helpful advice in public schools where the plurality of children are of color, suffering in an achievement gap, in schools where, with twice the chance to be awarded a National Merit Scholarship, nobody was able to figure

out how to administer the PSAT safely to qualify for that prestigious scholarship, but have figured out how to get over 60% to volunteer to be administered an unapproved product for an emergency use, which is defined as a significant threat to national security, generally understood as members of the active duty military, and citizens residing abroad, which includes very few of us in Arlington County. But perhaps if politicians talked less we could address avoidable carbon dioxide emissions.

- 2. Incorporating nature into development and protecting green spaces:  
Numerous studies demonstrate the importance of access to nature on the mental and physical well-being of children. With the pandemic, the need for increasing connections to nature is extremely critical. How can APS create an environment that incorporates nature into the school environment and curriculum and what policies would you promote to ensure that all of Arlington's students have easy access to nature?**

I had the great privilege to attend an elite private school in a municipality with failing public schools, and where, foregoing the opportunity for greater financial remuneration, our teachers enjoyed the freedom to develop their own curriculum to best educate children they had in relatively small classes, and, at the beginning of middle school, we had the opportunity, in one of the coldest Marches in recent history, to spend a week at a nature center in Stokes Forest, and the bitter cold and snow were probably the most memorable experiences. In my first year in the Ranger Battalion, we had the opportunity to train in the triple canopy rainforest of Panama, and while conducting patrols, we didn't have to be constantly reminded that the first priority of work while encamped was security, in an environment where life was abundant and danger lurked around every corner. In our Jesuit high school, we first learned about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which provided a philosophical framework with which to analyze these various experiences, as the first ordered needs of human beings tends to involve those of subsistence, and only after fulfillment of those basic needs, can we successfully proceed to more advanced needs and goals.

**3. Achieving zero waste: Arlington County passed a Zero Waste Resolution in 2015 and will begin a residential curbside food scraps collections program in early September. What opportunities does APS have to reduce its waste overall and maximize recycling and composting of waste to help the County achieve its goals and what benefits will this provide for Arlington students?**

APS is a public school system with incredible budgetary waste problems, where we awarded teachers, administrators and staff Tiffany vases in a year in which we had a large deficit. We spent millions to purchase more busses to ensure that kids K-12 could have transportation from as close as one mile away from the school. The number one comorbidity in the public health crisis, according to CDC, is obesity, which Dante Alighieri compared to gluttony in his classical work. Perhaps, a walk to school might provide a communion opportunity with nature and help to address a systemic failure that has made even children a higher fatality risk to a less than five percent infectious pathogen with only a 1.8% case fatality rate, sufficient yet enough to close schools for a year, even though children fatal nationwide has yet to exceed 500, from among over 34 million infections.