



School Board Candidates Questionnaire on Environmental Issues

Climate change is among the most urgent problems facing the country and threatens the health and future well-being of our children. For Arlington to achieve its goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, expanding access to natural resources, and reducing waste, all members of the Arlington Community need to participate, especially Arlington Public Schools. To help inform voters on your positions in addressing these pressing issues, we request that you answer the following questions. We will share your answers through our e-newsletter and social media. Please respond no later than **Friday, September 19.**

Instructions - Please provide your name and answer to each question below and email to office@ecoactionarlington.org.

Name_Monique “Moe” Bryant_____

1. **Aligning with the County’s Climate Action Resolution:** In February, the County Board adopted a [Climate Action Resolution](#) that calls for a whole-of-government, whole-of-community comprehensive energy and environmental strategy to address the climate crisis. Should APS commit to meeting the goals laid out in the resolution and what strategies should APS adopt to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in its buildings and transportation fleet to become carbon neutral no later than 2050?

Yes, APS should commit to meeting the County’s climate goals because climate change is not just a future threat; it is already impacting our students, families, and facilities. At the same time, we must recognize the current and real funding threats and constraints APS faces. My approach is always rooted in collaboration and equity, this means finding shared solutions that reduce emissions with saving costs, like phased energy-efficient retrofits, solar where feasible, and electrification over time.

During COVID, I had the privilege of moderating working groups, one of the groups focused on climate change, where we discussed strategies like expanding tree canopies and addressing urban heat islands. Those immediate conversations showed me that when experts, educators, and community members come together, we can

design practices that meet high standards of excellence while caring for the most vulnerable. That's the approach I would bring to APS's climate commitments.

2. **Reducing harmful diesel bus emissions and reducing greenhouse gases through transportation improvements:** Despite the known health benefits, APS has been slow to commit to electric school buses, citing, in particular, space constraints for EV charging infrastructure. At the same time the iRide program allowing students to use ART and, most recently, Metro buses for free has proven very popular among middle and high school students. How would you approach building on both these efforts to most efficiently meet student transportation needs?

I believe we must continue reducing harmful diesel bus emissions while balancing funding realities. Transitioning to electric buses is necessary, but it will require thoughtful phasing, partnerships for infrastructure, and grant funding. At the same time, I support expanding the iRide and free Metro programs, because they are proven successes, not just for convenience, but because they model sustainable, equitable transportation choices for students.

How do we build on this?... This is where empathy and collaboration are centered for me: when students see their parents, educators, and community members also choosing greener ways to commute, it becomes a shared cultural shift. To make this possible, I would like to expand infrastructure by pursuing federal and state grants for bus electrification, and partner with local organizations leading on clean energy and transit innovation.

3. **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. 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?

Access to nature improves overall student wellbeing and learning, so I will prioritize integrating it into both school design and curriculum. That means expanding opportunities by creating more outdoor classrooms and gardens, and building strong partnerships with parks and conservation groups. In the climate working group I moderated, we focused on inequities around heat islands, and I carry that lesson with me in observing school communities: every student deserves daily, safe access to nature. By collaborating with experts and the County, I will push APS to model excellence in green space planning and ensure equity across all neighborhood schools.

4. **Achieving zero waste:** Arlington County passed a zero-waste resolution in 2015. In recent years, APS has had a poor record of recycling and waste reduction. When APS centralized food preparation, that led to a great deal of packaging for meals. Such packaging, along with single-use plastic utensils and food waste, now accounts for a large portion of the APS waste stream. What would you do to reduce plastic, paper, and food waste and maximize recycling at schools to help the County achieve its goals and what benefits will this provide for Arlington students?

In researching sustainable options, other districts have shown success with reusable service ware, clear sorting stations, and student-led waste audits. I would like to see some of these strategies piloted in APS. These initiatives would help us cut costs and create long term learning opportunities. The most basic and low-lying benefit is that cleaner schools improve student health and model sustainable habits. By collaborating with experts like EcoAction Arlington and students, APS can achieve excellence in waste reduction while advancing equity and long-term savings. The overarching benefit for Arlington students is the longevity of care and wellness that will impact future students and generations.

5. **Climate Education:** Our students will face the impacts of climate change throughout their whole lives and need to be prepared to prosper in a changing world and yet currently climate change and its solutions are addressed only sporadically. What changes would you advance that would integrate climate change and other related environmental issues more comprehensively into the curriculum?



Our students will inherit the full weight of the climate crisis, they deserve a curriculum that prepares them to understand and address the climate challenges head on. APS should integrate climate education across subjects with a lens on equitable solutions like renewable energy, and environmental justice issues. Embedding climate education ensures our students are able to build the knowledge, skills and empathy to lead in an ever changing world.