2014 Frederick County Council
Candidate Questionnaire

CANDIDATE: Jerry Donald

OFFICE (DISTRICT OR AT LARGE): Dist 1, County Council

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CAMPAIGN TREASURER Beverly Donald

I confirm that the responses provided here are my official positions in seeking local office, and I understand that FCTA reserves the right to share my responses with members and interested parties.

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE: Jerry Donald **DATE SUBMITTED:**

Candidates: In order to be considered for a recommendation, you must respond to each of the questions. Clarifications, explanations, and other information may be attached, but please be certain to indicate clearly the questions(s) to which you refer. Please return your completed and signed questionnaire to ***the Frederick County Teachers Association.***

Frederick County Council
Candidate Biography

Education: HS Diploma - Middletown High School, M-town MD
BA - Western MD college
MS - Western MD college

Pertinent Employment History:
1986-88 House of Representatives Staff
1988-89 South Hagerstown HS
1989-91 Heather Ridge School
1991-2003 Linganore High School
2003-present Middletown High School

Previous Political Offices:
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Organizations/Community Involvement:
- Board member, Secretary, President of Braddock Heights Community Association
- Multiple boards and committees, Trinity United Methodist Church
- Assistant Commissioner, Frederick County Football Officials Assoc.
- Board of Directors - FCTA
- PAC Chair - FCTA

1. What is your vision for the future of Frederick County Public Schools? As a member of the County Council how would you support this vision?

FCPS should be a first class school system that can give every child the opportunity for a first class education.

I would support this by having a capital budget that updates old schools and builds new schools as needed. The operating budget must do better than just MOE forever.

2. For the last five years the county government has funded the school system at Maintenance of Effort (MOE) levels even in years the county revenues increased. MOE is the lowest level of county education funding allowed by law and does not take into account inflation, unfunded mandates or other increased costs to education. FCTA has been very clear that MOE funding over this extended period is not adequate to meet the needs of our students. Do you believe MOE funding for Frederick County Public Schools is sufficient or do you think additional funding is necessary? Explain.

No Yes

MOE should be a floor not a ceiling. To be a first class system we must do better.

3. One of the duties of the County Council is to approve the county budget. In FY14, 47% of county funds were allocated to the Board of Education. How will you determine the appropriate amount of funding for the Board of Education? Do you think the current County Commissioners have adequately funded education? Explain

I will look at the budget of the BOE and, if satisfied it is a reasonable budget, approve it and try to find the money to fund it.

No, the current Commissioners have in no way adequately funded the operating budget of the BOE

4. FCTA supports a revenue structure that will provide a predictable, reliable and stable source of sustained funding for education. FCTA opposes tax cuts or limitations that directly or indirectly have an adverse effect on public education. The current County Commissioners have called for tax cuts and rebates while claiming the county faced structural deficits and they imposed flat funding for public education. What is your view of the current local tax structure? What, if any, changes would you advocate?

I have no interest in tax cuts while we underfund the BOE. Flat funding will, in the long run, deeply harm FCPS.

5. Recruiting and retaining high-quality employees is essential to improved student achievement. It is made more difficult in Frederick County by our proximity to higher paying school systems and the high cost of owning a home in Frederick. What would you do to help the school system recruit new staff and keep experienced staff in Frederick County?

I will work to fund FCPS at a level above MOE. I hope FCPS uses some of that money to attract top new teachers and keep good teachers in Fred. Co.

6. In spite of an accelerated building schedule, many of our schools remain overcrowded. Enrollment data indicates 13 of the county's 66 public schools exceed full capacity. This includes; Centerville Elementary, at 140 percent; Hillcrest Elementary, 130 percent; Urbana Middle, 128 percent; Tuscarora Elementary, 120 percent; Yellow Springs Elementary, 112 percent; North Frederick Elementary and Whittier Elementary, 111 percent; Waverley Elementary, 109 percent; Urbana Elementary, 108 percent; Oakdale Middle, 105 percent; Deer Crossing and New Market Elementary, 104 percent; and Monocacy Elementary, 102 percent (source: Frederick News Post, October 7, 2013). What is your plan to provide adequate space for all Frederick's school children? What would you do to alleviate overcrowding in schools, particularly in the city and in the Urbana area? What role does the county's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance play in mitigating/ preventing overcrowding of schools?

APFO has been gutted by the current Commissioners. We need to bring it back. Growth should not be a huge cost to current residents and harm FCPS students.

7. Inequities in technology, space and functionality exist between new and newly renovated buildings versus older buildings. How do you see the need to renovate older schools fitting into the Capital Improvement Plan? How should the renovation needs of older buildings be prioritized?

Every part of the CIP should be ranked on need. Older buildings are as important as new schools. Except for two years I've spent my entire career in buildings that need renovation.

8. FCTA opposes any public funding of private schools, including but not limited to, vouchers to cover private school tuition. What is your position on vouchers and other forms of public funding for private or home schooling?

Vouchers - No

Public money should be in public schools.

9. FCTA and the Frederick Association of School Support Employees (FASSE) oppose the outsourcing and privatization of jobs currently done by the dedicated education support professionals of FCPS. Do you think it is appropriate for the school system to privatize aspects of their operations? Under what circumstances, if any, would you support privatizing or outsourcing work currently done by FCPS staff?

Outsourcing is okay for solitary projects. It is not okay for routine things. Privatizing school copiers, grass cutting, etc. is not a good idea.

10. FCTA supports efforts to protect and enhance the state's collective bargaining laws and opposes "right to work" laws which restrict freedom of association and weaken organized labor in Maryland. Do you support public education employees' right to bargain collectively? Currently, county employees do not have collective bargaining rights. Do you support county employees' right to bargain collectively?

Yes

If they want to organize I won't stop them, but I'm not going to organize them.

11. As a member of the County Council, how will you work with the elected Board of Education, particularly regarding issues related to funding the BOE capital and operating budgets?

I will, to the best of my ability, try to fund the BOE capital and operating budgets. I will try my best to find the money necessary to do this.

12. As a member of the County Council, how will you work with FCTA, FASSE and the Frederick County Administrators and Supervisors Association (FCASA) so that the experience, knowledge and expertise of professional educators will help inform your decisions on issues related to public education?

Call me and I'll listen, ask for a meeting and we'll meet.