

Gene R. Donney

December 4, 2025

To: Frederick County Board of Education
Jessica Fitzwater, Frederick County Executive

Re: Interest in Serving Interim Board of Education Vacancy

Hello Board of Education Members,

President Kennedy famously said, “*children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.*” I believe the highest destiny we possess is to serve others. My adult life has been characterized by service to students and education, both professionally and personally. While children are the future, they’re also leaders of today. Supporting public education, in my view, is the single most important investment we can make within our communities. I’m writing to express my interest in serving the remaining term resulting from former board member Allen’s resignation. I possess a servant’s heart, board & leadership experience, specialized knowledge and experience in education, and decades of experience serving others. I’m a neutral yet seasoned interim appointment, one not previously involved in pursuing a Board of Education position.

My passion in life has always been supporting young people and enhancing educational opportunities for all. I served in AmeriCorps, graduated with from a public interest law school with a specialization in education law, have served on boards and deliberative bodies, and have advocated and supported hundreds of students and families across several different education, athletic, and leadership development domains. Personally, I am a county resident and a parent of four children, three of which are FCPS students.

I offer a combination of high-level professional experience in business and extensive experience centered on advocating for youth. As a juvenile justice advocate, I supported vulnerable and special education students. I serve on a nonprofit board dedicated to developing leadership potential in students, and I’ve coached hundreds of young people in Maryland communities as a soccer coach. My deep knowledge of education law, systems and operations, coupled with my extensive nonprofit board and leadership experience make me uniquely qualified to capably serve out the remaining term.

As a FCPS parent, I have advocated for enhanced bullying support. My youngest child experienced bullying in a FCPS elementary school. Through that experience, I engaged with FCPS staff and made suggestions to improve the bullying reporting process. Suggestions included automated confirmation of submissions, conducting parent interviews as an initial step, and creating capacity for appeals. I’ve volunteered as a chaperone on numerous field trips and volunteered three times as a *Watch D.O.G.* I recently attended a FY27 budget feedback session and provided feedback to Dr. Dyson and FCPS leadership. My feedback recommended additional special education support in the face of diminished federal support from the Department of Education; and providing full-time athletic trainers at each county high school, a critical recommendation to mitigate significant financial risk exposure.



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In reviewing the Board of Education's rules of governance, those serving on the Board of Education cannot simultaneously be FCPS employees. I was a paid external JV Girl's Soccer coach at Frederick High School this fall. This was a one-time position to assist the varsity coach with an unplanned vacancy. The varsity coach and I coach together in Frederick County community soccer. The season is now over. I will immediately cease any activity as a coach in consideration of a Board of Education appointment and would fully abide by the prohibition on FCPS employment during and after Board of Education service.

Please let me know if you have any questions, require additional information, or would like to meet in person. I would be honored and delighted to serve out the interim term lending my time, passion, and experience to the FCPS Board of Education. Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,

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Gene R. Donney, JD