

Jessica Fitzwater
Executive Director
Frederick County, MD
December 9,2025

Executive Director Fitzwater,

I write to express my interest in filling the current vacancy on the Board of Education. I am a lifelong Frederick County resident, and a product of FCPS. I was employed by FCPS as a Spanish teacher at Governor Thomas Johnson High School early in my career before my move to higher education. At Frederick Community College I taught Spanish, Developmental Reading, and Learning Skills for academic success while enrolled in the University of Maryland College Park doctoral program. It was during my tenure at Mount St. Mary's University (MSMU) that I worked closely with principals and FCPS leadership to establish and operate Professional Development Schools (PDS), working initially in Hillcrest, Waverley, Orchard Grove, and Ballenger Creek Elementary Schools. The network of schools expanded to include additional elementary schools, as well as middle and high schools so that all MSMU teacher candidates could complete Internships I and II in a PDS. My two sons are also products of FCPS, having attended schools in the Walkersville feeder. And now my grandchildren attend Spring Ridge Elementary School where I volunteer one day per week as classroom support.

As my curriculum vitae reveals I have served on numerous boards and advisory councils throughout my career. These include executive boards of organizations to which I was elected such as the Frederick County Reading Council, State of Maryland International Reading Association Council (now State of Maryland Literacy Association), and Maryland Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; appointments or invitations such as the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, Faculty Advisory Council to the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and Mother Seton School Board; as well as varied university-specific councils such as Mount Council, Center for Catholic School Excellence, and PDS Advisory Council.

My work as a reviewer with accreditation agencies such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education expanded my knowledge of organizational planning and budget allocation to mission, human resources and facility management. For each accreditation review I read an institutional self-study, conducted on-site interviews, wrote a report of findings for two of the standards of the governing bodies, and contributed to the final team report.

I am a positive individual with knowledge and experience in educational systems. I have a record of working collaboratively to achieve goals; I listen carefully, read thoroughly, and contribute as appropriate. Most importantly, I care about supporting the learning and development of all students and staff, and the well-being of the FCPS learning community. I believe I would contribute positively to the work of the FCPS Board of Education.

Barbara Martin Palmer

Barbara Martin Palmer, Ph.D.
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