

Lauren Venedam



December 8, 2025

Ms. Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive
Frederick County Government
Winchester Hall
12 East Church Street
Frederick, MD 21701

Dear Ms. Fitzwater,

I am writing to express my interest in the vacancy on the Frederick County Public Schools Board of Education. I am a Maryland native, a longtime Frederick County resident, a parent of children currently attending FCPS elementary and middle schools, and an active volunteer in our community. I care deeply about the well-being, safety, and success of our students, educators, and broader community, and I would be honored to have the opportunity to contribute my experience, dedication, and perspective to the Board.

My involvement in FCPS and community initiatives has been longstanding and hands-on:

- I volunteer directly for FCPS, such as recently serving on the FCPS School Start Time Feedback Group at Urbana Middle School, helping ensure that parent and community perspectives were thoughtfully represented.
- My advocacy for safe infrastructure led me to engage with the Division of Public Works after several fatal accidents along a portion of Gas House Pike. Through thoughtful correspondence, I ultimately helped achieve the installation of superelevation improvements, resurfacing, expanded curve radii, a recovery area near the headwall, and a new traffic barrier—changes that will help save lives.
- I volunteered with the Refugee Welcoming Coalition of Frederick, helping a newly arrived family from Afghanistan to navigate school enrollment, healthcare access, utility setup, and more, ensuring they felt supported and welcomed in our community.
- I have also advocated publicly for FCPS librarians and educators facing pressure around book access and have spoken out in favor of inclusive, comprehensive educational materials.

My professional background aligns with the mission and responsibilities of the Board. I spent much of my career in international development, including serving as Program Manager for USAID's Feed the Future initiative through Social Impact. These roles sharpened my skills in program management, budgeting, policy review, stakeholder engagement, and evidence-based decision-making—all essential competencies for effective Board service.

I also recently applied to serve as an FCPS substitute teacher to become more directly engaged with our classrooms and better understand the day-to-day needs of students and staff.

If selected for the Board of Education vacancy, I would bring a strong commitment to several core priorities that I believe are essential for the health, safety, and long-term success of FCPS students and educators. First and foremost, I care deeply about fostering inclusive, welcoming school environments where every

student—regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender identity, or family background—feels valued, respected, and safe. I believe FCPS must continue to champion diversity and ensure that all students can see themselves reflected in their classrooms, curriculum, and school activities.

I am also passionate about **student safety and emotional wellbeing**, including anti-bullying initiatives, mental health supports, and policies that create a culture of respect and belonging. Ensuring that students feel secure and supported is foundational to their ability to learn, grow, and thrive.

Another priority for me is **teaching accurate, comprehensive history** that reflects both the triumphs and painful chapters of our past. Students deserve an honest, age-appropriate understanding of the world they inherit, and I support FCPS educators and librarians who work to provide high-quality, fact-based materials free from undue political pressure or censorship.

I believe strongly in maintaining and expanding opportunities in **music, sports, the arts, world languages, and extracurricular programs**, all of which enrich a child’s education, build confidence, nurture creativity, and help students discover their passions. These programs are often where students find their sense of belonging, and they deserve continued investment and protection.

Lastly—and critically—I am deeply committed to **honoring, supporting, and retaining our teachers and school staff**. Our educators are the backbone of FCPS, and they deserve competitive compensation, safe working environments, and trust in their professional expertise. Strengthening teacher support directly strengthens student outcomes, family satisfaction, and the long-term health of our school system.

Together, these issues form the foundation of the vision I would bring to the Board of Education: a school system rooted in equity, excellence, safety, and opportunity for every child.

The Board is a leadership position, and I recognize that some community members will not share all of my views. I am committed to being a good listener to all.

Finally, Frederick County’s history and culture mean a great deal to me. As a personal point of pride, I acted in *Boomtown*, the film chronicling Frederick’s evolution—an experience that deepened my appreciation for this community’s story, resilience, and values.

I would be grateful for your consideration and would welcome the opportunity to serve Frederick County families through this meaningful role. Thank you for the work you do and for your thoughtful leadership on behalf of our residents.

Warm regards,

Lauren Venedam