

## **Jerrod Anderson**

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### **1) Knowing what we do today about the COVID-19 pandemic, should Falls Church City schools have returned to in-person learning sooner?**

**YES.** A year later, we now know that in the Fall of 2020, schools were low risk environments for COVID transmission, and we have learned that virtual learning took an economic and emotional toll on many families, stunted student academic achievement, and had negative impacts on student mental health. However, weighing the consequences of our decision to stay closed against the fact we had a low-risk of transmission in Fall 2020 does not mean there was no risk. I believe schools were closed because that was thought to be safest for teachers, staff, and students. We couldn't have known then that teachers and kids over 12 would have access to a vaccine years before most people thought it would be available or that the risk of transmission at that time was significantly lower than it is today. While I don't have an interest in rehashing the decisions made last fall around initial reopening, in retrospect I do think the combination of the low transmission risk, our mitigation plan, and the academic and social tolls of virtual learning suggest we should have opened for in-person in the fall so long as (1) a virtual option was offered, (2) proper mitigation strategies were implemented (possibly with an extra long winter break), and (3) reasonable accommodations were made for teachers who were in high-risk groups. This should not be taken as a criticism of any decisions made under the uncertainty the schools faced last summer.

### **2) Do you support the mandate that all students wear masks at school for the Fall semester?**

**YES.**

### **3) Should transgender students be allowed to use the bathroom or lockers rooms of the gender with which they identify?**

**YES.**

### **4) Should the Board increase educational opportunities, including career and technical, for non-IB diploma high school students?**

**YES.** All students should be provided the necessary resources for educational success.

### **5) Do you support school faculty entering into collective bargaining agreements with the City?**

**YES.** I support collective bargaining if it can help maintain a high quality workforce and improve the education provided by FCCPS.

### **6) Should there be school resource officers in Falls Church City schools?**

**NO.**

### **7) Should Falls Church City curriculum include information on systemic racism in the United States?**

**YES.**

**8) Should all FCCPS teachers and administrators take annual diversity, equity, and inclusion training?**

**YES.** As with any other professional development, any DEI training should be high-quality, focus on the needs specific to Falls Church City schools, and be reviewed for efficacy in achieving stated goals.

**9) Should Falls Church City school curriculum include climate change, resiliency, and environmental justice?**

**YES.**

**10) Once the COVID-19 vaccine has full FDA approval, should it be mandated for all eligible students in order to attend school in-person?**

**NO.** I do not believe that this is a decision a school board should make. I was vaccinated as soon as I became eligible in the spring, and when my children (ages 4 and 6) are eligible, I will also have them vaccinated. But the process for determining which vaccines should be mandated for a child to attend school is complex and many factors beyond just FDA approval are considered. I think that this well-established regulatory process should be followed. Until the health authorities determine that a COVID vaccine is necessary for attendance, as a board member, I would continue the current work of the school board and school staff by providing information on vaccines, encouraging families to get vaccinated, and providing them opportunities to do so. Our efforts in this area have already helped 94 percent of 16-17 year-olds and 80 percent of 12-15 year-olds in Falls Church City to receive at least their first dose (as of August 10). There is certainly precedent for mandated vaccines for school attendance, and I would advocate that we follow the established processes for determining if a COVID-19 vaccine should be added to the list of required vaccinations.