

Candidate Responses – Orange County School Board

Gary MacFadden

Question 1: Position Seeking:

GM: District 5 School Board

Question 2: Have You Previously Held this Position?

GM: No

Question 3: Will you be attending the August 23, 2023, Orange County Candidate Showcase?

GM: Yes

Question 4: How will you foster relationships between businesses and the school community?

GM: I participated in developing the OCPS Strategic Plan. One of the central goals of the strategic plan is to leverage business resources within Orange County to partner with our schools. I am a strong advocate for increased spending for special needs and Career and Technical Education which promotes earning a good living without incurring a large college debt.

Question 5: Over the years, minority representation has decreased relative to administration and teaching staff. There is a growing concern among the African American community relative to the issue. What would be your proposal to help bridge the gap?

GM: In terms of ALL teachers, retention of well-qualified teachers of all ethnicities requires that OCPS offer competitive pay, and OCPS needs to support all teachers in the enforcement of rules of conduct. In recent years, teachers have left Orange County more due to poor classroom behavior and lack of consequences than salary. Teachers give so much of themselves – they need to know their concerns with classroom discipline will be addressed! We need conduct standards to which all will adhere. I support the compassionate use of alternative education. I will use my procurement skills to support programs which focus on increasing teacher pay and retention.

Question 6: Our youth are our future. Agricultural education and organizations such as FFA plug students into the pathways available to grow, supply, and create within the agricultural sector. How would you like to see agricultural education be best supported in Orange County Public Schools? Are you in favoring of continuing these programs; what changes, if any, would you like to see? What experience do you have working with said programs?

GM: Consistent with my involvement in helping develop the OCPS Strategic Plan, OCPS should expand business partnerships to increase job shadowing and internship opportunities, and develop actionable plans with requisite stakeholders such as local government, businesses, and community organizations to secure space for CTE expansion. OCPS should survey local businesses and industries regarding workforce skills.

Question 7: Please further explain your interest in a position with our local School Board. What is your connection to Orange County Public Schools?

GM: My daughter and son-in-law will be returning from Germany next summer and they plan to reside in Orange County. As such, my grandchildren will be prospective OCPS students. As a taxpayer, I want to see our tax dollars spent to good use.

Question 8: What is your stance on CTE education and internship opportunities in the community and how will you support these efforts?

GM: Consistent with my involvement in helping develop the OCPS Strategic Plan, OCPS should expand business partnerships to increase job shadowing and internship opportunities, and develop actionable plans with requisite stakeholders such as local government, businesses, and community organizations to secure space for CTE expansion. OCPS should survey local businesses and industries regarding workforce skills.

Question 9: What do you consider to be the greatest needs of the Orange County Public Schools that the School Board can resolve? If elected, what would be your top priority?

GM: In conjunction with a passing line-item budget veto, I will focus on spending that promotes students' achievement and increasing teacher pay and retention.
