

1. What life and professional experiences do you bring to this position? Please explain how these experiences would influence your work.

I have served as a teacher in multiple roles in education for over 2 decades (as documented in my resume at www.oneill4ed.com/experience.html). I am currently the Department Chair of Anatomy and Physiology at Ivy Tech-Bloomington. I've won multiple teaching awards at both IU and Ivy Tech. I served as the campaign manager of the 2016 referendum that kept teachers in our classrooms educating our children. I have also been involved in local politics for most of my life and understand the importance of providing clear explanations of my principles and positions, listening to other points of view, and compromising to move forward. I was born in Monroe County and educated at MCCSC and IU. I have deep roots in the community and will bring this knowledge to the board as well as my expertise as a professional educator.

2. What connection can be made between higher quality education and higher quality of life?

Public schools, properly supported, are the greatest engine of social justice and upward mobility that exist. A quality education provides people with the ability to fully function as citizens in a participatory democracy, to acquire the skills to earn a productive living, and to become lifelong learners through reading, culture, and the arts.

Public schools are uniquely positioned to provide this to every child in contrast to private and charter schools. It is critical for our economy, our community, and our democracy that ALL students receive the benefit of a rigorous and comprehensive education, not simply minimal instruction.

3. What can be done to and ensure students are career-ready?

We need to keep pace with the increasing educational requirements for knowledge-based work in order to stay economically competitive, and we need to ensure that we serve the diverse needs of high ability, average and remedial students equally effectively. We need to integrate better with the Ivy Tech system which provides high quality vocational education as well as a cost-effective transfer pathway to bachelors' programs. And we need to do a more thorough job of identifying and serving high ability students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

I currently direct the Anatomy and Physiology program at Ivy Tech-Bloomington which prepares students for nursing and careers in other healthcare fields. According to the Department of Labor, healthcare is projected to account for just over half of all job creation in the next 10 years. It is critical that our K-12 schools prepare students for the coursework required for these fields. This means a commitment to academic rigor, the courage to challenge students to achieve, and the finesse to inspire and support them through this learning process.

4. Our schools should place greater emphasis on equity – so that all students receive the resources they need to graduate prepared for success. Please explain whether you agree or disagree with this statement and how you would address equity in access to education.

Of course, I strongly agree with the principle that all students should receive the resources they need to succeed; the purpose of public education is to ensure that every individual, regardless of race, gender or other identity, graduates with the basic skills necessary to continue their studies, pursue a career, and earn a living wage. Universal access to quality education is a right. The mission of public schools is, at its simplest and most powerful, to provide a baseline of literacy and technical knowledge to ALL without barriers. Equity is inseparable from this mission, but it cannot become the mission itself. Equity is the means to ensuring that all students acquire the discipline to learn on a continuing basis. Our mission emphasis must elevate critical matters of equity without diminishing our core responsibility of providing rigorous education.