



2024 SURVEY FOR COLONIAL HEIGHTS SCHOOL BOARD

Candidate: Joseph O. "Joe" Cox, Jr.

1. Please tell us a bit about your background and involvement in the community.

I grew up in Colonial Heights. I attended North Elementary, Colonial Heights Junior High School (CHJHS), and graduated from Colonial Heights High School (CHHS) in 1972. I was a classroom teacher at CHJHS and CHHS where I taught Virginia History, United States History, Civics, and United States Government from 1976-1985.

I was Superintendent of Schools in Colonial Heights from 2001-2019. I also served as the Interim Superintendent for Colonial Heights Schools from March through June of 2023.

While Superintendent, I was a member of the Colonial Heights Chamber of Commerce, Mayor's Economic Development Council and Colonial Heights Education Foundation for Excellence. My brother Kirk Cox and I also coached Recreation League Baseball for many years.

2. Do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent? If Republican, are you in accord with [The Republican Creed](#)?

I am a Republican and I am in accord with The Republican Creed.

3. Please tell us why you are running for School Board.

I am very grateful for the opportunities that Colonial Heights Schools and the City of Colonial Heights has provided for me and my family. I am running for the Colonial Heights School Board not only to give back, but to work with others to continue to move Colonial Heights Schools forward in a way that benefits all. If I am fortunate enough to be elected, I would look forward to working with teachers, staff, students, parents, administrators, other School Board members and City Council members to achieve those goals.

4. What are two or three things that the Colonial Heights Public School is doing well?

Colonial Heights Schools have been SOL accredited for 20+ years. That should never be taken for granted, because accreditation represents the hard work of students, teachers, staff, parents, administrators and a supportive community. Our schools strive to be student centered and stress doing what is right for students. The maintenance of our facilities is very evident at each school site.

Our strong relationship with the Colonial Heights City Council and the Chamber of Commerce benefits all, as it relates to resources that enhance student learning.

5. What are two or three things that the Colonial Heights Public Schools need to improve on?

Maintaining a positive approach to mental health is important. This should continue to be a top priority.

Taking the necessary steps to combat chronic absenteeism will enhance student achievement and their well-being.

Retaining our valuable teachers and staff members is critical to the overall success of our school division.

6. How will you seek to be responsive to city residents if elected to the School Board?

I am out in the community often and attend a variety of school and community related events. I will always make myself available to talk and meet with residents to discuss opportunities, ideas and issues that are important to them.

7. What is the proper role of parents in their child(ren)'s public school education?

Parents play a vital role in their children's education. We should always encourage parent involvement. Attending parent/teacher conferences, extra-curricular activities and school board meetings are some of the ways parents can work with the schools to support their child's education.

8. Does critical race theory (CRT) have a place in public schools?

We are currently celebrating the 70 th anniversary of Brown v. The Board of Education. Since this landmark case, we have made great progress in public education and recognize that we need to work together to sustain that momentum. By contrast, CRT does not bring us together. CRT separates and divides us.

9. Is there anything else you would like to share that was not already asked?

If elected to the Colonial Heights School Board, I will work tirelessly to promote student learning, make every effort to communicate with parents and community members and be certain that our teachers and staff feel valued and appreciated.