

Candidates for District School Board – District 3

Responses to League of Women Voters of Collier County Education Fund / eBella Magazine Survey  
June 2010

<p><b>Question 1:</b> Communication is an area of importance to parents, staff, students and the community at large. What specifically would you like to see done to foster more and better communication between the school district and Collier County residents?</p>		
<p><b>Barbara B. Berry</b></p>	<p><b>Reg Buxton</b></p>	<p><b>Kathy Ryan</b></p>
<p>Before communication can improve between the Collier County School District and the residents, communication must improve within the District schools. Communication is a two-way street. The recent high school grading issue is a case of not being properly vetted at a timely school board meeting, an excellent venue for communication.</p>	<p>Of all the needs, communication is the most important. The community yearns to understand the actions of the administration/board, what is being done for the children. Communication must be a two-way street; parents want answers to their questions concerning the “bigger picture.” I will work to make that happen.</p>	<p>Face to face communication is the most effective. There needs to be more meetings held in the various sectors of the county. A Board member and the Superintendent should attend together. Advertising for these meetings should include all stakeholders, including those who may not have children in the public schools.</p>
<p><b>Question 2:</b> The Superintendent has stated that the time for public input into District business is during the meetings of the strategic planning committees and the School Board meetings should be business meetings and should not be used as a public forum. What is your position on eliminating public participation/comments at Board meetings?</p>		
<p><b>Barbara B. Berry</b></p>	<p><b>Reg Buxton</b></p>	<p><b>Kathy Ryan</b></p>
<p>I disagree with the Superintendent’s position on this issue. Comments should be relevant to the issues under discussion by the Board. It is also opportunity for the Board to be made aware of other circumstances.</p>	<p>Never! When citizens can no longer reach their elected officials publicly about the district’s business, democracy is gone. We need citizens to speak out, to let us know what they need for the children and the community. Hearing only the pleas of the administration without hearing from others results in a serious limitation of ideas.</p>	<p>Unfortunately, the formal School Board meeting is frequently the only meeting a large percentage of the population is aware. It would be tragic to cut off the public’s main venue for their input into district decision making.</p>
<p><b>Question 3:</b> What changes in Florida’s public education system would you like to see?</p>		
<p><b>Barbara B. Berry</b></p>	<p><b>Reg Buxton</b></p>	<p><b>Kathy Ryan</b></p>
<p>Less direction from the State might be good, but if they must give direction, then attach dollars to meet the new demand. With the new high school requirements for math and science, perhaps a tiered system for high school graduation would be in order.</p>	<p>Let’s stop the experimentation with <i>new ways to teach children</i>. We should have gotten it right by now! We need basics to be real before anything else. I understand the problem of having children unable to function in English. Teach that intensively so they can function, then begin teaching what they need to function as citizens here.</p>	<p>Florida is one of the strongest State controlled educational systems in the country. County Boards need more local control for decision making. There needs to be fewer unfunded mandates, and more funding to allow for more (200) and longer (8 hr.) student days.</p>