

## Candidate Qualification / Position Statement For *Coalition for a Better Memphis* Website

The CBM will post your completed statement on our website, [www.bettermemphis.org](http://www.bettermemphis.org), exactly as it is submitted. It is important that your information be complete – please use extra space if needed and feel free to attach a resume or any supplemental information. Please email the Statement to [peggy@bettermemphis.org](mailto:peggy@bettermemphis.org).

Name: Dr. Freda Williams

Website: <http://fredawilliamsforschoolboard.com>

Candidate for: Office of City School Board, At-Large Position 1

Why do you believe you are qualified to run for this position?

I am qualified to run for this position because of my experiences as a career educator along with the knowledge and understanding gained as a result of my current role of Memphis City Schools (MCS) At-Large Position 1 Board Commissioner. I was appointed to fill this unexpired term because of my reputation as an excellent educator and the perspective from institutional memory that I add to the Board. My experiences with Memphis City Schools include positions as classroom teacher, Educational Resource Specialist for Technology, School Reform Coordinator, No Child Left Behind Professional Development Coordinator and MCS Professional Development Director. In addition to Memphis City Schools' experiences, I have taught at several local institutions of higher education, including University of Memphis, Christian Brothers University and LeMoyne-Owen College. In my present employment with Walden University, I work with educators who are seeking their doctorate degree in education. I value the perspective of classroom teachers and administrators that I gain through this role.

The Office of City School Board, At-Large Position 1 is extremely complex because of the requirement to make connections to all of the schools within the district. My experiences as district-wide administrator afforded me opportunities to work with school personnel and parents across the city. I understand the unique culture of schools within the district and can relate to school staff, parents and citizens of the various school communities.

Finally, I am qualified to run for this position because I am willing to invest the interest and time to improve the City of Memphis through contributions of leadership to Memphis City Schools. Our public school system is a valuable asset that needs the leadership of qualified professionals. I am a proven educational leader who possesses the character and temperament required for success in the Office of City School Board, At-Large Position 1.

Three specific things you would like to accomplish if elected:

Three things that I would like to accomplish as a Board member:

1. Establish Adequate Funding - Memphis City Schools is experiencing severe fiscal challenges during this time. As a Board member, I would like to contribute to solutions to the district's fiscal challenges through the identification of the appropriate local funding body(ies), the determination of adequate funding from state and the local funding body(ies) and the solicitation of increased funding from the Tennessee Department of Education.
2. Continue Academic Improvements – Although Memphis City Schools has achieved the status of “Good Standing” from the Tennessee Department of Education, we still have areas where improvements are needed. Data indicates that elementary students achieve at proficient and above proficiency in mathematics. I would like to contribute to the design of an instructional program that supports continued mathematics achievement through middle and high school. I also plan to work with other Board members to design policy that accelerates student achievement in reading and other academic areas. Continued academic improvements will decrease the dropout rate and increase the MCS graduation rate.

Parents and community members can make great contributions to the continuation of academic improvements. I would like to create stronger partnerships between families and schools by increasing the number of schools that have a Parent Center. The Parent Center is a place within the school where parents and community members can participate in educational opportunities through presentations by a variety of organizations. It is also a place where parents can learn how to better help

their children with schoolwork. The increase in the number of schools with Parent Centers will provide greater support for families and students.

3. Increase Accountability - Memphis City Schools' Policies, along with MCS Rules and Regulations establish guidelines for acceptable behavior of staff and students. As a Board Commissioner, I would increase accountability by pursuing adherence of district Policies, Rules and Regulations. Furthermore, I would contribute to the development of effective policies through the guidance of the **Broad Institute for School Boards: Reform Governance in Action**. Memphis City Schools was selected by the Broad Institute to participate in a 2-year leadership training program for the School Board and Superintendent. Through participation in this leadership program, Memphis City Schools will design and implement more effective policies. I would like to continue in this leadership training process to strengthen the leadership of the district.

Have you ever been delinquent on your property taxes? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_X\_\_

Have you filed for Bankruptcy? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_X\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_X\_\_

Explanation of any of the above items

List other elected positions you have run for and the outcome of the election:

I have not run for any other position.

### **Current Employment**

Company: Walden University

Length of Employment: 1 year

Brief Job Description: I am Part-time Professor in the Riley College of Education for Walden University. My students are beginning their dissertation to complete requirements for the Doctorate of Education Degree (Ed.D). Walden is an online university and my students live in various cities within the United States and Canada.

## Education

Please list all schools you have attended from High School on.

<u>School</u>	<u>Degree</u>	<u>Graduation Date</u>
Lester High School	High School Diploma	1965
LeMoyne-Owen College	B.S. Education	1970
Memphis State University	Masters of Education	1988
University of Memphis	Doctorate of Education	1996

Additional information as it regards to education: I have participated in many leadership institutes, including programs at Harvard University, Brown University and several sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education.

How long have you lived in Memphis? I have lived in Memphis most of my adult life. Immediately after completing undergraduate school, I lived in Nashville, TN for two (2) years. I have resided in Memphis except for those two years that I lived in Nashville.

Where did you grow up? Memphis, TN

Marital Status/Children: Divorced with 2 adult sons

Please identify up to five organizations that are actively supporting your candidacy.

1. Shelby County Democratic Party
2. Memphis AFL-CIO Labor Council
3. I have requested support from several other organizations and am in the process of completing requirements for their endorsement.

Please list your association memberships and identify any leadership positions you have held in the past.

1. Memphis Alliance of Black School Educators - President
2. National Staff Development Council – Regional Coordinator
3. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
4. American Educational Research Association
5. Tennessee School Board Association
6. National School Board Association

Please list your civic and community memberships.

1. Shelby County Democratic Party – Executive Committee Member
2. Memphis City Schools Board of Commissioners: At-Large Position 1
3. Downtown Neighborhood Association – Board Member
4. South Main Neighborhood Association
5. Brooks Museum
6. Memphis Alliance of Black School Educators
7. Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church

Other Contact Information:

Campaign Chair: Dianne Withers

Treasurer: Howard R. Richardson



*The following scenario was developed by the Center for Ethical Leadership at Christian Brothers University. It is designed to determine how you process information and make decisions. There is no right or wrong answer.*

### **Lost File – Ethical Dilemma Pitting Individual versus Community**

You have been involved in a very tight election, opposing a very popular incumbent. About two weeks prior to election day, the local newspaper runs a very negative article about your opponent and some “shady” dealings occurring during his tenure in office. Although the allegations do not point to any illegal activity, the reporter does imply that a particular financial transaction shows questionable decision making.

Your opponent denies the allegations and insists the transaction is above board. He claims he cannot locate the files associated with this particular incident and, therefore, cannot defend his actions with anything other than his honor, reputation, and good name. The press continues to have a field day over this issue, tearing up your opponent and leaving you in the enviable position of not having to comment on the situation.

You win the election by a surprisingly large margin. Exit polls show it was your opponent’s inability to produce evidence proving there was no wrongdoing that swayed voters your way. Your opponent walks away from the election not only defeated at the polls but also in public opinion and reputation.

About three months into your new position you are working on a case that causes you to rummage through some of your predecessor's old files. There you find the "smoking gun"... the evidence that clears your opponent of any wrongdoing. You are unsure if the information was accidentally or intentionally misfiled.

- (1) What will you do with this information? My first idea would be to share the information with the newspaper that printed articles about the issue.
- (2) Will you consult anyone before deciding what to do? If so, whom? First, I would consult the administrators in my office to find out if there would be a problem with me sharing the documents. If there were no objections, I would then consult the person who opposed me in the election to find out if he would object to the files being made public. Finally, if there were no objections from the former opponent, I would share the documents with the newspaper that printed the articles.
- (3) When making your decision about what to do, whose needs did you consider? My first consideration would be for my organization. Secondary considerations would be for the former opponent.
- (4) Was this an easy decision for you to make? If not, what were some of the issues that went through your mind that caused conflict? It was an easy decision.

Optional – Attach a resume. Resume attached

Please email the completed Statement and any additional information to:  
[peggy@bettermemphis.org](mailto:peggy@bettermemphis.org) by June 6, 2008.