

Coalition for a Better Memphis Candidate Questionnaire Shelby County School Board

The Coalition for a Better Memphis is an independent non-profit organization, made up of Shelby County individuals, businesses and organizations. Its mission is to assist area voters in identifying qualified candidates for public office.

In 2008, CBM's Candidate Assessment Committee is interviewing candidates for the Shelby County School Board with the intention of publishing a "voter guide" of candidate evaluations.

Completed questionnaires may be emailed to: peggy@bettermemphis.org
Or Mailed to:

**Coalition for a Better Memphis
7730 Goshawk Cove
Cordova, TN 38016**

Direct any questions to:
Peggy Callahan
peggy@bettermemphis.org

Please complete this questionnaire and
return it to

The Coalition for a Better Memphis

No later than 5 p.m.,
Friday, June 6, 2008

*Please answer all questions carefully – your responses will be printed on the
CBM website EXACTLY as they are provided to us.*

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

1. In your opinion, what are the three greatest issues (problems or opportunities) facing the Shelby County School system in the next four years?

(1) Funding – Adequate funding is necessary in order to continue being one of the top school systems in the state. This year we were one of ten school districts in the state to receive A's in all categories. If we can get Special School District Status, this would save millions of dollars.

(2) School Safety – This would be one of my top priorities. We MUST provide a safe environment for our students.

(3) Court Order – Many decisions will have to be made during the next four years as we implement Judge Donald's court order. We need board members with experience and vision. The Board will also have the responsibility of finding a replacement for Dr. Webb since he will retire in three years.

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

2. Describe briefly your qualifications for holding the office of Shelby County School Board member.

My qualifications for being a Shelby County School Board member are a successful 52 year career in education, including ten years as a member of the Shelby County School Board. I have been a teacher, coach, guidance counselor, assistant principal, principal, school system president, and have received two degrees in education.

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

3. What do you think is the primary role of the School Board in leading the Shelby County School System, and what is the primary role of the superintendent?

The primary role of the School Board is to establish policy, appoint the Superintendent, and to be a strong advocate for Shelby County Schools.

The primary role of the Superintendent is to carry out the policies adopted by the School Board, be a strong advocate for the School System, and employ and oversee all employees of the school system.

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

4. School construction costs have been a major contributor to the county government's debt load. What, if anything, should the Shelby County School Board do in the years ahead to help the county avoid adding to the debt?

The number one thing is to gain Special School District status. This would save millions of dollars in construction costs.

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

5. Raising student achievement is a critical mission for the school system. If you could implement only one initiative, enhancement or management change, to raise student achievement in the Shelby County schools in the next four years, what would it be?

We would want to maintain the straight "A" status which the school system has achieved. Our young children would be better prepared for school if we implement more early childhood classes.

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

6. Are there opportunities for collaboration between the Shelby County School System and the Memphis School System that aren't being pursued today? If so, what are two that you would favor?

(1) For Shelby County Schools to have Special District status we must have Memphis City Schools' support.

(2) Continue working together in the future on building new schools as we did with Cordova High and Southwind High schools.

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

7. How would you propose the Shelby County School system cooperate and comply with the current court order to achieve unitary status?

The Shelby County School Board Court order is under appeal to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals at this time. It would be inappropriate for me, as a Board Member, to comment.

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

8. What is your position on Special School District status?

I am 100% in favor of Special School District status.

SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD QUESTIONNAIRE 2008

NAME: *JOE CLAYTON*

9. As a public servant, how do you propose to be accessible to the people you represent?

My phone number and e-mail address are public, as they have been since becoming a Board Member. I attend all School Board forums, PTA meetings, and many other events as requested.