

Questions for Candidates for Board of Education – District 2:

1. What do you feel are the top three issues facing the Glynn County school system?

Marion Cherne:

- Safety/Security
- Trust
- Accomplishing the mission

Mike Minutelli:

- Student achievement discrepancies among schools;
- Family factors and their impact on student achievement;
- Assuring teacher training, fidelity of program implementation and student resource materials for core and intervention reading programs, as we strive to increase student reading proficiency achievement.

Sharon Robinson:

- **Better prepare high school graduates for workforce entry.**

Glynn County's high school graduation rate has soared to greater than 90% from a rate of 83% in 2016. This dramatic increase in the graduation rate can be credited in part to the dual enrollment program established with the Golden Isles College and Career Academy (GICCA).

Part of GICCA's charter is to "increase the number of students graduating annually" by offering courses geared toward delivering a skilled, well-trained workforce to the community.

Going forward, GICCA should strive to expand current business partnerships to include more paid internships, apprenticeships, and co-op programs whereby companies offer annual summer employment to selected students who receive top consideration for full time employment upon graduation.

Technical training should also be high on the list of priorities for the school system. Technology continues to evolve at a fast pace, requiring that students continue to acquire computer competence in order to achieve at school, at home, and eventually at work.

In a recent interview, Tim Cook, Apple's CEO, stated that in order for our country to be strong, "we need to code." He explained that coding is a language that is everywhere in our lives (think apps) and can be simply taught beginning at an early age. Everyone Can Code and Everyone Can Create are software packages designed for exactly that.

Like Pre-K, investments made in early education set the stage for proficiency throughout the academic life of a child and beyond. The development of problem solving and critical thinking skills will serve students well in the 21st century!

- **Narrow the academic performance gap between schools in higher vs. lower income areas.**

As documented in the latest CCRPI index (Georgia's statewide school accountability system), the performance of Glynn County schools have shown overall improvement under the

leadership of Superintendent Virgil Cole. Although District 2 schools Oglethorpe Point and St. Simons Elementary continued to report some of the highest scores in the region, many of their counterparts on the mainland did not fare as well. (Notable exceptions are Altama Elementary and Golden Isles Elementary both of which saw dramatic improvements.)

Underserved and impoverished communities need affordable access to education that begins in Pre-K. Even a cursory review of the latest findings in brain development suggests that the educational experience in a child's early years makes all the difference in academic performance and lifelong well being.

Although I am running to fill Millard Allen's seat on the School Board from District 2, I will lend my voice to those calling for expanded access to Pre-K, including public transportation and the elimination of the lottery system.

- Attract and keep the most qualified teachers from a shrinking pool of young educators.

Last May the Glynn County public high schools held an inaugural event: Future Educators Signing Day. On this day 16 Brunswick High and 8 Glynn Academy students who plan to pursue careers in education were honored. They comprises less than 1% of the student bodies. One of the grandmothers at the ceremony was quoted as saying: "Teachers have it tough and we need more teachers." She said she was proud of her granddaughter for selecting teaching for her career: "I'm so proud, because it's a tough thing to do."

When did teaching become such a formidable challenge that so few are interested? Long hours, disciplinary problems, and low pay have been the case for decades in Georgia whose national ranking in education remains relatively low.

In the 60's and 70's you could find sizable groups in Georgia high schools who regularly attended meetings of the Future Teachers Association. Indeed it was one of the most popular extra-curricular organizations. When those people graduated from college they sought hard fought after teaching jobs and were happy with their employment choice. But those teachers are now retired and it's difficult to find enough high quality educators to replace them.

In a marketplace teeming with candidates, competition has the desired effect: the best and the brightest attain their employment goals. But without such competition, School Systems depend on candidates with education degrees to continue the long tradition of selfless devotion.

Glynn County citizens are lucky to be served by a School Superintendent and Board of Education that carefully monitors their hiring practices and in no way rubber stamps renewal contracts. But assuming we are able to hire the very best, how do we keep them?

We must incentivize our best teachers to remain in our school system and even agree to transfer to lower performing schools and help raise them up. There is little discretionary funding to count on and so we must turn to the private sector. An aggressive outreach program should be implemented whereby our largest employers endow an annual fund to be used for the purpose of rewarding the best teachers to both remain in the Glynn County School System and comprise part of a solution for raising overall student performance and teacher satisfaction.

Eddy Sams:

The **safety** of our children while in the school environment is of national concern. I feel that preparedness through planning and training, logistical assessment of the current risk factors and improvements needed, and effective communication is imperative. In addition, I feel that student emotional well-being largely plays into the degree of safety in our schools. Many outside factors contribute to the mental state of our students, and it is vital that we have effective emotional support opportunities within the school setting.

In studying **discipline** strategies for my own personal use as a parent, I have come to find that setting clear expectations of behavior, combined with consistent enforcement, is most effective.

Within the school system, the additional constraint of mandated process is meant to streamline procedures used in discipline. With these factors in mind, we must set policies that will aid our teachers and administrators in efficiently addressing discipline issues within our classrooms in a manner that will allow minimal interruption to learning. I am in favor of researching best practices in discipline that have proven results in other communities and can be integrated into our current discipline policy.

Just as distracted drivers are prevalent on our roads, so are **distracted students** in our classrooms. We should set our children up for success by setting policies regarding cell phone usage in class, restricting social media use during instruction, and enforcing the consequences of tobacco and other prohibited devices in our schools. As a society, we are programming ourselves to have limited attention spans due to the prevalent influence of technology. Educators are concerned with lost instruction time. I believe removing distractions from the classrooms will gain instruction time through students that are focused on learning.

David Sharpe:

Safer schools and classrooms. We must secure our schools. Ensuring the daily safety of our students and teachers should be our top priority. Another aspect of this issue is discipline. We need to raise classroom behavior expectations so that our teachers can teach and our students can learn. Leaving students with behavior problems in the classroom is not the answer. Too often our students and teachers face conditions that we would not tolerate in our own workplaces. 2. Greater focus on academic achievement. We need to strengthen college readiness to include Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) opportunities. Our system strives to win state championships in athletics, while accepting only the state average in academics. Our athletics are top-notch and provide a valued extracurricular opportunity for a good number of our students. However, I believe it's time our system and our community raise academic expectations for all students. We need to be competitive not only on the field, but in the classroom. 3. Fiscal responsibility. Our school system is the second largest employer in Glynn County. The BOE receives 70 cents of every local tax dollar and an additional penny sales tax through the ESPLOST. I will advocate for objective evaluation of all programs, so that the Board and the public understand how their tax dollars are being spent and the return on these investments. Safety and instruction have to be moved to the top of our budget.

Lance Turpin:

- Discipline in classroom:
 - o I have talked with various teachers and they state that the one size fits all standard for discipline is not working in their schools. A formal review of our

discipline policy should be done by the BOE in conjunction with representatives from each school in the district. Once the recommendations have been reviewed, the BOE should revise the policy and submit for legal review. Once in place, we need the administrators to engage and to empower our principals and assistant principals to restore discipline and order in our schools. Additionally, parents play a key role in helping the district maintain its focus on educating our kids without interruptions.

- Security in and around our schools
 - o Mansfield St. at Glynn Academy needs to be closed during the day when school is in session. A perimeter fence should be installed that can be opened after hours. If St. Francis Xavier Catholic School can close off a street during their school day, the BOE should be in a better position to immediately address this issue.
 - o Security cameras and other equipment should be in good working order at all times which is not true at all of our facilities in the district.
 - o We should continue to work with local law enforcement, FLETC, and other leaders to eliminate elements of risk within our district.
- Budget
 - o Current reserves are projected to be \$21 million for FY18 which is equivalent to about 2 months of general fund expenditures.
 - o Several pending issues:
 - County Class Action Lawsuit related to property taxes; if the County loses in court, this could require the BOE to pay out \$10 million from its reserves
 - Teachers Retirement = the state is mandating that in FY18 that Glynn County contribute almost \$3 million to true up the TRS for our teachers.
 - BGJWSC Lawsuit related to BOE water/sewer service – this could cost the BOE \$500,000 if it loses in court.
 - Items 1-3 above could reduce to BOE's reserves to less than 1 month of operating expenses.
 - Local property taxes fund approximately 50% of the general and special revenue funds. The state continues to underfund systems like Glynn County with the FY18 contribution of 38% of total general and special revenue funds. The federal government funds only 11%.
 - It should be noted that 1 Mill is approximately \$4.4 million in revenue based on recent data and SB486's FY18 net reduction in local tax revenue totaled just under \$6 million.

2. Many students are graduating high school without the skills necessary to compete successfully in the workplace. What do you propose to address this problem?

Cherne:

This is the vision for Glynn County Schools: "To create 21st century learning environments that offer opportunities for all students to pursue higher education and develop skills that meet workforce needs while producing informed, conscientious and productive citizens who give back to their community." The question should be what skills do students need/require for any workplace or beyond? Our school system is graduating students for Georgia's colleges and universities as well as Ivy League and other major colleges and universities. Perhaps we need a true career academy/apprenticeship school that will allow students that want to pursue careers as electricians, plumbers, builders, automotive techs/mechanics, and the like to do so.

Minutelli:

Turning the clock back and having our leaders familiarize themselves with Scans 2000: What Work Requires of Schools. Penned in the 90's, it speaks to Workplace – Knowhow comprised of 5 Competencies and 3 Foundations. I **successfully** incorporated workplace competencies into the daily conversation and curriculum, as a high school principal.

Robinson:

I consider this to be one of the top issues facing the Glynn County School System and believe that integrating employability skills into our public school curriculum is a top priority and the #1 issue I identified in my answer above.

While attaining a graduation rate of 90% is a major achievement, it is important to look at the large minority of students who are not college bound. Many of these students are at risk of joining the growing ranks of “disconnected” young adults who neither work or go to school.

According to the Georgia Department of Education, the lack of “soft skills” is the number 1 reason for firing AND the possession of these skills are the primary reason for hiring. Soft skills are defined as the top skills required to be successful in the workplace: attendance, punctuality, teamwork, communication skills and attitude.

The Golden Isles College and Career Academy (GICCA) offers curriculum aimed at creating a workforce-ready population of high school graduates. Included in the curriculum are courses designed to improve soft skills. These courses are offered in conjunction with the Georgia BEST (Business Ethics Student Training) program, created by the DOL for the express purpose of improving the soft skills of students and reducing the 89% termination rate of first time hires

The Georgia BEST program offers a soft skills curriculum for both middle and high schools. The program should be incorporated across the board by the Glynn County school system.

Improving the employability of our high school graduates will have a dramatic effect not only on the career opportunities for our students but for the economic future of Glynn County.

Sams:

As a nation, expectations for high academic achievement have soared, however even students exhibiting the highest academic achievement will not be prepared for life after graduation without exposure to basic life skills. I would like to see **required courses and training in essential skills** such as personal finance and budgeting, interviewing and resume writing, and social skills that develop self-discipline, civility, and personal pride that many graduates struggle with once on their own.

During high school, students begin their transformation into adulthood by discovering themselves as individuals, apart from their family unit, and determining where their potential can take them beyond graduation. Whether bound for career or continued learning post-graduation, there is great merit in implementing programs in the early years of high school that aid students

in exploring career opportunities and **identifying their passions and natural skills and talents**. Equipped with this knowledge, students can better set the direction of their studies and work to strengthen their comparative advantages to increase their perceived personal value to our community.

Sharpe:

First, we need to view graduation as an expectation, with a higher end goal of students being college or workforce ready when they walk across that stage. Since two-thirds of all jobs now require at least some training and education beyond high school, we must look beyond the graduation rate and examine the quality of our graduates. While our graduation rate has consistently gone up, our college readiness scores have not. Our system's graduation rate is over 90%, yet only 67% of our graduates are college ready. It is important to realize that the term "college readiness" is not as lofty as it sounds. It is a very basic measure that shows the likelihood that our graduates can successfully pass basic freshman year subjects at an average college, including technical colleges. If we as a system are focused only on moving students out the door with a diploma in their hands, then we are not serving our community nor our students. The second change links back to my immediate priority of school safety and discipline. Values such as respect, integrity and courtesy – along with soft skills such as attendance, time management and communication – can be reinforced and developed through clearly communicated and consistently enforced expectations. By not setting higher standards and addressing these issues in the schools, we are only passing the problem on to our community and employers once these students graduate. There are some longer-term initiatives that can help improve the quality of our graduates. Our system has recently focused on raising literacy levels, which is a positive move. Less than half (45%) of our Glynn County third graders are reading at or above grade level. Research shows that early literacy leads to academic success. We can build on these efforts through enhancing our partnerships with community organizations such as our Library and Communities in Schools of Glynn so we can reach these children earlier and through year-round programs. Expanding access to STEM education is also a strategy that I support to raise technology literacy. We need to increase our investment in STEM opportunities for all students, whether they are headed straight for the workforce or to college. In talking with our principals, superintendent, teachers and students, it is clear that we need to raise awareness that all students can find a place in STEM education and careers. Many students I've met mistakenly believe that STEM courses are only for the "smartest" kids. Comfort levels with STEM subjects can be raised through the early introduction of these subjects in the elementary grades.

Turpin:

- The graduation rate continues to improve along with our CCRPI scores. We are not where we need to be but making progress.
- Dual Enrollment is gaining momentum with our partnerships at Coastal Pines and College of Coastal Georgia. This provides a platform for helping our students prepare for life after high school.
- Golden Isles Career Academy (GICA) helps prepare our high school students for the workplace. GICA continues to develop new programs based on employer needs.
- The Career Technical & Agricultural Education (CTAE) program provides 46 pathways and 17 career paths for our high school students. This program provides additional opportunities to develop skills.
- Every student is required to have 15 hours of work related experiences that can be satisfied in various ways (GICA, CTAE, other business classes, etc.).

- The new strategic plan focus area 2 states that the district will develop more curriculum that teaches character traits and soft skills necessary for our graduates to compete after high school.
3. Have you examined the current school system budget? How are the Board of Education priorities reflected in that budget? What would you add or change?

Cherne:

I have examined it, however it does not appear in detail on the county's website. In my opinion the budget only represents the interests of the majority on the board which does not necessarily mean that the budget is in the best interests of the system in meeting its stated mission: "To create 21st century learning environments that offer opportunities for all students to pursue higher education and develop skills that meet workforce needs while producing informed, conscientious and productive citizens who give back to their community."

Minutelli:

Yes, but not a 'deep-dive'. Based on in-person and in-home viewing of meetings, I believe appropriations accurately reflect the introduction and sustainability of programs to support improved student achievement.

As an example, I followed closely the discussion of incorporating Read 180 into the Glynn County Schools. My experience of introducing Read 180 as an assistant superintendent and building principal, and knowing the positive results achieved, delighted me when this program was chosen to support the improvement of student reading achievement.

I have no recommendation for change at this point. When elected, as I have always done as a building and/or district administrator, I look forward to listening to staff, parent, student and community input as we seek to move from good to great as a school system.

Robinson:

There were no big surprises in the 2018 school budget that passed in January. Like other employers experience, health care costs and pension funding continue to rise as expected. Also expected were the largely state mandated teacher pay increases of 3%.

Increase in teacher pay would help improve the quality of education across the board but at the local level there isn't enough funding to support such a widespread cost uptick. Like the teacher incentive programs included in my answer question #1, partnerships with the private sector are needed and necessary in order to provide our teachers with the positive feedback they deserve and to enlist their help in establishing best practices at under performing schools.

One area for potential budget reduction would be the build out, renovation, and maintenance of our facilities, especially as related to energy costs. There are a number of energy efficient solutions that can be applied to new and retrofitted appliances and other plant installations.

Sams:

Yes, I have reviewed the current budget and financial report, as presented on the system website. Overall, the largest expense to the General Fund budget is **Salaries and Benefits** at

86% of the total fund expense budget. Rightfully so, it is obvious that a high value is placed on the human resources of the system. I would be in favor of investigating measures aimed at **cost-benefit analysis** of the overall system given the 6.7% increase in Per-Pupil Expenditure over the prior three-year period of consistent enrollment and plateaued CCRPI (College and Career Ready Performance Index) scores.

Sharpe:

I have reviewed the current and projected budgets. As a small business owner and founder of a national nonprofit, I understand the importance of the budget in setting priorities and influencing the direction and focus of an organization. Aside from state-mandated expenditures for teachers, physically securing our schools to ensure the safety of our students and teachers should be our immediate spending priority. My discussions with teachers and students, especially at the middle and high school levels, reveal shared concerns about safety. I am very concerned that not all of our schools are physically secure with the cameras, intercom systems, and other basic frontline measures that help our school resource officers protect our schools from threats. As a Board member, I will support Dr. Cole, Chief Ellis, and our principals in strengthening our school system's physical, personnel and cyber security capabilities. There is no reason why our children and grandchildren should not feel 100% safe in Glynn County schools. ESPLOST revenues can and should be used to secure our schools. I do not know of anyone in our community who would argue against fully addressing our K-12 facility and instructional technology needs to help Glynn County students succeed before we spend \$20 million in capital funding on a performing arts center. In addition to safety, my ongoing budget priority would be improving classroom instruction to raise academic achievement. Our system currently spends heavily on vendor programs. While these programs can supplement teaching, they are unable to be an effective substitute for teachers. Our resources must be balanced to provide the number of teachers we need at each school. We must also ensure that our students have access to the print and digital resources that support academic success in and out of the classroom.

Turpin:

- I have reviewed the budget and it is closely aligned to the strategic plan and our mission of providing a quality education in Glynn County.
- All but one of our elementary schools and all of our middle schools are Title 1 eligible. We have students in our community that rely upon the school system to provide more than education due to their economic and household situations.
- Out of 1915 associates in FY17, there were over 1400 involved in teaching or supporting the efforts of teachers in the district.
- 64% of the proposed budget for FY18 is for instruction
- 18% of the proposed budget for FY18 is for facility maintenance/operations, transportation and food services.
- 6.5% for student support, education media and instructional services.
- The remainder of the budget is spent mostly on administration.
- When I was on the board in 2007 & 2008, we lowered the millage rate by 1 Mill. I will look for ways to keep our millage rate low.
- I am concerned that we are not allocating enough funding for repairs/maintenance of our infrastructure. I am also concerned that our reserve fund is at risk with pending lawsuits and weather related operational challenges that occurred in 2016 & 2017.

4. What would you do to increase citizens' knowledge about School Board activities and inform citizens about how the School Board is spending citizens' tax dollars?

Cherne:

I would see if a Board website that links to the district's that citizens can easily access as well as use social media could be undertaken. I would also like for the board to have an advisory group of parents, teachers, and student

Minutelli:

As a member and current vice-chair of the ESPLOST Citizens' Oversight Committee, I believe the committee template and processes would be of value in exploring 'like opportunities' for knowledge sharing. I believe it would increase public confidence in the expending of educational public dollars.

Robinson:

I would like to see the School Board return to the previous practice of holding monthly meetings on school premises. From strictly a facilities point of view, the Board of Education meeting room is filled to overflowing on many occasions. Holding the meetings in rotating school locations might provide easier access for interested citizens and improve attendance by students, school teachers, and administrators. Budgetary considerations are discussed in most meetings, all of which are open to the public. I would propose, however, that a general Q&A be added to the monthly agenda to invite more public scrutiny.

The relationship between the Glenn County School System Administration and the PTSA is a strong one, as evidenced later this week by Glynn Academy PTSA's sponsorship of a presentation by Glynn County Schools Police Chief Rod Ellis and the School System Administration. The presentation will address school safety and the public's participation is invited. Joint events such as these to address timely matters of concern should be encouraged and supported by the Glynn County Board of Education.

If elected as the District 2 representative to the School Board, I will attend all PTSA meetings at Oglethorpe Point, St. Simons Elementary, Glynn Academy, and Brunswick High and will request some time in advance to update the audience with regard to Board of Education Initiatives.

Sams:

According to Georgia Code Section 20-2-49, a local board of education is responsible for system vision setting, policy making, budget approval, financial oversight, and hiring a qualified superintendent. The board conducts a monthly open meeting and posts meeting minutes and financial report information on the district website. The ESPLOST Citizens Oversight Committee is a seven-member committee appointed by the Board to ensure ESPLOST projects are properly managed, and provides financial transparency and accountability to the community. Superintendent Dr. Cole has also initiated the Leadership Listens series of evening meetings at schools throughout the district where district administrators are available for citizen

comments and questions. The best route to increase citizens' knowledge might be through **media communication of these existing opportunities.**

Sharpe:

I believe education is everyone's business. Our school system receives the lion's share of local tax dollars. Therefore, our budget process should be open with opportunity for input from our community. Our local spending in Glynn County averages more than \$9,500 per student. I will advocate for objective evaluation of all programs, so that the Board and the public understand how their tax dollars are being spent and the return on these investments. I will also build stronger transparency and communication with citizens through the addition of social media and annual town halls for District 2. I have created a "SHARPE 4 SCHOOLS" Facebook page on which I share facts, statistics and opportunities for improving education, as well as celebrate local success stories. I will maintain this page as a Board member. I have launched weekly informal listening sessions with teachers, parents and students. This is important because students are our ultimate, yet sometimes overlooked, stakeholders. I commit to an open door for constituents and welcome your comments, ideas and concerns. My cell is 912-222-3014. Let's talk or meet for coffee.

Turpin:

- The BOE website is a direct link to budget, audit, financial reports and other information about the system's operations and activities.
- Each school has a page within the BOE website that provides information to parents and taxpayers.
- The BOE's monthly meetings (work sessions and regular meetings) are televised and available on the internet. Of course, these meetings are open and available to the public at the BOE office.
- I would offer to provide updates via my Facebook page, attend PTA meetings to answer questions, and would be willing to hold town hall meetings to gain feedback from the community.

5. Are the current measures of student achievement the right ones? What would you change or add?

Cherne:

Unless we are measuring students' abilities to write and think critically we are not measuring achievement. The current measures only reflect what students' have "memorized" or been taught to the tests. There is no long term proof that students have internalized or expanded their knowledge in the course work that they are required to have to receive a diploma. Multiple choice questions are not the be all and end all of assessing knowledge or understanding.

Minutelli:

Yes, if formative assessments are used to guide teaching. Yes, if summative assessments are used formatively by teachers to evaluate their teaching and to support continued scaffolding of learning for their students. Yes, if research-based interventions are used in our RTI programs.

While we have no choice when it comes to the Georgia Milestones Assessment System, I appreciate its standards-based criterion-referenced approach and the inclusion of Terra Nova norm-referenced assessment items.

The criterion-referenced information communicates to parents, students and teachers student achievement specific to individual learning outcomes; the norm-referenced score provides the parents, student and teachers, an opportunity for a national comparison of how the individual student has achieved in comparison to same-level test takers across the nation. Two important looks!

Robinson:

Teachers are in virtually unanimous agreement that the fewer standardized tests the better! It should be obvious that test taking is a skill in itself and tests often measure that ability to take tests. There are many other ways to gauge student achievement and creative ways to encourage students to express themselves subjectively, in writing, speaking, and other ways. Here are a few examples of ideas expressed by teachers in Glynn County:

Strengthen English departments by requiring Creative Writing. Writing down thoughts and ideas reinforces knowledge. This works in both remedial and advanced studies.

Fewer Multiple Choice tests in all subjects!

Start a debate program. There is a skill involved in articulating ideas students care about.

Require history, English, or homeroom teachers to teach current events. Invite and monitor reasoned, informed dialogue.

READING - The REAL thing, using material they are interested in. Short stories are especially good for students with short attention spans!

Sams:

In our state, the recognized measure of student achievement for grades 3 through 8 is the End of Grade Georgia Milestones assessment in math and English language arts, and in science and social studies in grades 5 and 8 only. Performance is scored and categorized in four types of learning – Beginning, Developing, Proficient, and Distinguished. High school achievement is measured through End of Course assessments in ten courses designated by the state Department of Education. These assessments represent performance on one particular day, therefore the score may not always be a reflection of true performance. Since our teachers work with their students throughout the school year, I might suggest the State consider **adding a component of teacher assessment**, using a standardized rating system, in an effort to have a measurable method that presents a broader spectrum of improvement and performance throughout the school year.

Sharpe:

Although many of our indicators for the elementary grades are appropriate, I believe we have focused too much on testing at all grade levels at the expense of teaching and learning. While

some of this is mandated from the Federal and State levels, there are extra assessments that have been imposed locally. As Georgia rightly shifts away from high stakes testing and makes some tests optional, I want to see our local system do the same. I doubt any of us would want our annual work performance evaluated on how we did on just one day of the year. As described earlier, our system has focused on the high school graduation rate as the final indicator of success. This narrow focus on quantity does not address the quality of our graduates and how we have prepared them for work and college success. The products of standardized testing are students and teachers who are conditioned to meet minimum standards. As a result, too many Glynn County youth are left unchallenged and fall short of their full academic potential. For a better understanding of the level of student achievement and success, we must look at other factors such as national college admissions tests and college retention data for our graduates. For Glynn County graduates who do go to college, the Board should consider how many actually earn a degree. We also need to look closely at job placement data and collect employer feedback on the quality of graduates entering the workforce.

Turpin:

- I believe the GA DOE has sufficient measurements in place to address student achievement.
- The system continues to use AIMS and other measurements to help it achieve its goals within the strategic plan (continue to improve graduation rates and test results).
- Honestly, I am more in favor of eliminating bureaucracy to free up time for teachers to plan and teach their kids. The feedback I am receiving suggests that teachers don't have enough time to spend in the classroom with their students. If there are discipline issues, the teacher's focus is shifted away from their primary focus and the other students suffer. Let the teachers teach

6. What ideas would you propose for the Glynn County school system to better align its curriculum with the need for a more advanced workforce in Glynn County?

Cherne:

First of all define more advanced workforce. Are you talking about professional or semi-professional careers or semi-skilled and skilled workers? As long as Glynn County schools teach all students to read, write, perform high-level math skills, think, and problem solve students will be prepared for any workforce. Whether or not students want to stay here is a completely other problem that the Chamber of Commerce and community leaders will have to solve, not the schools.

Minutelli:

The components of curriculum alignment should include purposeful, intentional and a guaranteed curriculum for all. Within this alignment should be a continuous review of course offerings as we strive to increase the knowledge, skills and abilities of all our students.

Assuring a Glynn County business community-school district dialogue establishes the opportunity for real-time business community input in creating a more 'timely curriculum'.

I would propose mentorships, which isn't necessarily a new idea; and exploring the college model of 'co-oping', whereby students receive on-the-job training, in the Glynn County business community.

And we must not forget the sustainability of meeting all of our students' need for improved reading, regardless of their age!

Robinson:

The stated goal of the Golden Isles College and Career Academy is to “effectively meet the educational needs of the citizens of Glynn County, as well as the employment requirements of businesses throughout southeast coastal Georgia.” It is hard to imagine how the Glynn County School System can better align its curriculum than to expand and improve the public charter school established for that purpose.

Georgia's Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) program offers 100 career pathways that prepare students to pursue higher education, enter the military, accept an apprenticeship opportunity or immediately begin their career. The Glynn County School Systems offers 46 pathways. The adoption of additional pathways connected to relevant employment opportunities in our home county could translate to a higher state of readiness and longer term careers for our students.

It is important for the School System develop and keep strong partnerships with those businesses that comprise the Chamber of Commerce. These businesses share ideals that create a fair and equitable work environment and are valuable employers in Glynn County. Internships, apprentice positions, and co-op programs expose Glynn County students to our business community in ways that are difficult to teach in a classroom setting.

For decades students have been indoctrinated into believing that their greatest chance of success requires a college degree. These “college prep” students have seen this message reaffirmed in guidance counseling, parenting, and college recruitment. Indeed, our economy and nation depend on college educated professionals to fill some of our most important jobs.

But for too long, students not on the college track have fallen behind without any cohesive strategy to address their academic and vocational needs. The Glynn County Board of Education and the Glynn County School System have fully recognized the importance of the needs of this student population and are poised to do more.

Sams:

As mentioned in my response to question 2, students who are interested and engaged in their course material are more likely to gain valuable knowledge needed to perform well in a future career or in their higher education. Adding curriculum requirements for essential life skills would help round out the education of our students beyond the academic scope. Many job training and soft skill courses offered by our Golden Isles Career Academy provide opportunities to students seeking specific industry workforce training. Another consideration would be to partner

with the Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce and other local professional organizations to **formalize an internship or work-study program** which would provide job training specific to our community's industries.

Sharpe:

Graduating is no longer enough. We must strengthen academic achievement. This means moving beyond a focus only on graduation rates to look for ways to improve work and college readiness for more Glynn County students. Our youth will need additional training and skill development for almost any career, especially for the ones that will allow them to continue to work and live in Glynn County. Our school system must take a more proactive stance in preparing our graduates for not only jobs with existing employers, but for potential employers as the County seeks to diversify its economic base. We can introduce more STEM learning opportunities to prepare our students for the high-demand, higher-wage jobs of the future that include the high growth advanced manufacturing, information technology, and aerospace sectors. A prime example is the Spaceport in neighboring Camden, where employers will look to Glynn and surrounding counties to fill workforce needs.

Turpin:

- See question #2 above.
- When I was on the board in 2007 & 2008, we moved our system forward in its curriculum development to include the Golden Isles Career Academy (GICA).
- GICA continues to grow in its offerings and partnerships with our business community to develop courses that they believe will help them and their businesses in the future.
- We need to review our CTAE and other curriculum to make sure that they incorporate work ethic and character traits that employers expect of their workers. Additionally, we need to provide our students with "soft" skill training.
- We need to introduce CTAE and GICA opportunities to our middle school students every year.
- The administration recognizes that more can be done as evidenced by the strategic plan.