

**From:** Nancy Garrett <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 8/8/2020 4:52:31 PM  
**To:** Rebecca Carter <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Re: Requesting Feedback from WCS Board Members  
**Attachments:** Outlook-qtybd3kl.png

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Hi, Rebecca, thanks for your email. I was out of town earlier this week, so I'm responding a bit late. Please see my responses inline below.

By the way, I know who you are. You and your daughter painted my mailbox for a cheer fundraiser last year. And I also see your posts on the Forrest Crossing page from time to time. I'm happy to discuss anything further and am always available at the number below.

Thanks,  
Nancy

(scroll down for responses)...

Nancy Garrett  
District 12, Williamson County School Board  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Rebecca Carter <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 5, 2020 10:33 AM  
**To:** Angela Durham <[REDACTED]>; Brad Fiscus <[REDACTED]>; Daniel Cash <[REDACTED]>; Eliot Mitchell <[REDACTED]>; Gary Anderson <[REDACTED]>; Jay Galbreath <[REDACTED]>; Candace Emerson <[REDACTED]>; Rick Wimberly <[REDACTED]>; Nancy Garrett <[REDACTED]>; KC Haugh <[REDACTED]>; Eric Welch <[REDACTED]>; Sheila Cleveland <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Requesting Feedback from WCS Board Members

**WARNING: EXTERNAL EMAIL** - Do not click on links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning.

I'm writing to you in hopes of getting some clarity. I'll begin by saying, I have never been that involved in local politics. My "day job" is spent worrying about people and working to create a better community for individuals and families. I've devoted my life to non-profit work and I care deeply about the greater Nashville community. Most of my work has focused on Davidson County until recently when my company merged with Cheatham, Hickman, Robertson and Williamson County. I was thrilled, since I live here! Serving the disenfranchised and helping to create impact in communities where the disparities are high has been my life's work... it's draining, depressing and a heavy load to carry on some days... so in my free time, I really want to just lay low and enjoy time with family and friends. It wasn't until last Spring, when we shifted to a remote learning platform, that I started to feel like I needed to advocate for my own kids and their friends. Social media is nothing but frustration and heartache – so I'm taking my questions straight to the source and hoping you will each respond, individually.

We have 12 districts. Many of the board members run unopposed year after year. This isn't healthy for a community. Please tell me why you care about Williamson County Schools, what qualifies you to speak for our parents and children, if you have or have had a child in WCS, and when he/she was last in WCS. I'm trying to understand what motivates you to serve this community as a board member for the school district.

*I am passionate about quality public education for all students. I think excellent public education is one of the greatest American accomplishments, and has been a game-changer for so many in our Country--*

including my own family. I have participated in education-focused volunteerism since I graduated from Belmont. Before I was a Mom, I helped found Hands On Nashville and set up its first partnership with MNPS, partnering with Park Avenue School (while they were still in the very old building that was later destroyed by a tornado). When I became an FSSD Mom, I set up a summer reading program for FSSD that ran for three years. And I was in FSSD and WCS PTO leadership roles for all years except Kindergarten. I'm also a graduate of WCS, my Dad was a teacher here, and my son graduated from Centennial in 2015. My family has three generations of investment in our schools. **I believe in our local schools and school community and want to be a part of helping them succeed.**

*Side Note: There are only two board members (out of 12) who have not had an opponent in at least one of the last two election cycles (since 2014). FSSD Board positions (and Franklin Alderman) have had far fewer contested elections. In fact, the last time there was a contested FSSD Board election was in 2014.*

Another topic I'm curious, and frankly concerned about – your role as it relates to oversight of our superintendent. You hired him, I'm assuming. What process is in place to set annual performance goals and measure effectiveness? I make WAY less money annually than Mr. Golden and I have employment expectations for performance. I have to assume an employee making a quarter of a million dollars would have clear expectations and processes for review. How do you measure performance? What action is taken when performance expectations are not met? Who monitors goal setting and achievement?

*The Board does hire the Superintendent and is responsible for his/her employment. There are four annual agenda items related to Superintendent Employment:*

- *Set Superintendent Goals*
- *Adopt/Approve Superintendent Goals*
- *Superintendent Evaluation*
- *Superintendent Contract Review and Possible Extension*

*The Board discusses these items in public at our work sessions and monthly meetings. All of these meetings, and the materials associated with each meeting, are available to the public via the WCS website. By law, the meeting notices must go out two days prior to each meeting. The Board packet of meeting materials to be discussed is also made available at that time. Here's the link to the page where these items are posted and archived: <https://www.wcs.edu/domain/1164>*

*I also have a standing call with our Superintendent every week. I provide feedback on an ongoing basis, as it's been my experience that just-in-time feedback is more valuable and actionable than infrequent feedback.*

Frankly, I have more on my plate that I can say grace over... I work full time, am a mother to two children (one in WCS and one in FSSD), a wife, a dog walker, house cleaner, laundry washer, cook, I'm going back to school to get my graduate degree, I serve on our Personnel Committee at my church, am part of a Pastoral Search Committee, serve on the Healthy Nashville Leadership Council at the Mayor's request, and run a taxi service for my daughter's competitive cheerleading squad. I tell you all this because I want you to know, I don't take commitment lightly. Yet I'm sitting here thinking – should I get involved in a school board? Should I run in 2022 when my district votes? I'll have one graduating in 2022, but one in the middle of high school.

*I'd encourage you to watch our Board meetings or attend in person to see if you think it's right for you. I attended all the WCS Board meetings for two years prior to my appointment to the Board, as I felt that I wanted to be ready if I chose to run. I will say that helped me get up-to-speed quickly, and I got to know the staff and other Board Members because of that attendance.*

When considering what actions were taken to prepare WCS for a new school year, I'm at a loss. If the board isn't responsible for the lack of planning and preparation, then the superintendent has to be responsible. Who is responsible? Teachers and parents were surveyed. Overwhelmingly, teachers said they wanted to return to school... very few said they didn't. Some expressed concern for safety and wanted some safety measures put in place to protect them and ensure their health was supported while returning to the classroom. The results were never shared with the community. The superintendent or the school board didn't take those surveys into consideration, or if they did there is no evidence. Five months... and no plan that would allow re-entry into the school building. A stark contrast – my sister's school district in Dallas, Texas - they presented a 200 page plan that outlined everything from returning in person, safety precautions, what teachers would have to support them, a 2 day a week plan, a 5 day a week plan, an A/B plan, a remote plan, face shields, masks... they thought of everything. They are ready. Her kids will be in class. Did we consult with other cities? Even last Spring when schools were dismissed, her kids had instruction every day. Attendance was taken, grades were given, and students continued to engage.

*The intent of the survey was to provide a resourcing model for planning for school reopening. The intent was documented on the survey itself, and also discussed in Board Meetings, and in follow up communications via InFocus. The surveys were taken into consideration when planning--that's why there are two models for return to school: In-person/remote and Online.*

*I'm going to double-check to see if the teacher survey was released to the public. I don't know offhand the answer to that question. There's no reason in my mind why it should not be.*

*School continuation plans used in the spring are not an apples-to-apples comparison unless comparing districts within TN. Interstate comparisons fail because they do not take into consideration what was decided at the State level for schools. In Tennessee, the State School Board met on April 9th, and retroactively closed schools as of March 23. I work with people across the country, and know that some other states made different decisions that allowed their students to continue with school.*

*Regarding fall reopening plans, messaging from the State of TN encouraged districts to make their own plans, because the TN DOE "did not want to restrict anything that districts would do, and districts know their areas best." Districts did begin planning independently of state guidance in the spring. Both Superintendents Golden and Snowden have been attending weekly planning meetings with other middle TN Superintendents since April or May.*

*There has been extensive planning and preparation for returning to schools. If you can provide some areas where you think it has been inadequate, it would be helpful for me to understand where you think that planning is lacking.*

SOMEONE failed our district miserably. It was either the collective board - which if that's the case, we need some new faces on the board, or it was our superintendent. If the board can say, we did everything possible and we weren't heard... YOU have the duty as an elected official to act in accordance. If you honestly think we have a good plan in place and we have done our due diligence to consider every option, then I'd like to see the meeting notes from those conversations and meetings. I'd like to see the planning sessions. I would expect LOTS of time was spent in conversations. I would expect agendas, meeting minutes, survey data, comparative data from other cities, interviews with multiple experts, etc. Can someone please share this with me?

*Could you please provide specifics on what you see as failures? I'd be happy to discuss these items further.*

*You can find details of Board agendas, deliberations and discussions, and associated materials at the link I provided above.*

I am super frustrated with how things have shaped up for the 2020-2021 school year.

*I am sorry to hear that and would like to offer my help. Please reach out any time.*

I realize my district doesn't vote for 11 of your positions, but surely you know Williamson County is a pretty tight community. We have friends at every school, in every neighborhood... We see neighbors at the Y, the ballpark, cheer competitions, even at the beach. Your response will be shared, where appropriate. I look forward to a response from each of you.

*Thanks for creating the opportunity to connect. --Nancy*

**Rebecca Carter**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]