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Rebecca Cox

Rebecca Cox has been on the school board for six years, serving as school board president for the last two years and running for reelection. Before that, she served as PTO president of Community Park Elementary School.



During her tenure, she has managed to keep the budget increase under 2%, (it was just under 1% for the current school year). As school board president, Cox has developed more ways for schools to communicate with students and their families. She has introduced text messaging and is redesigning the Princeton schools website to be more intuitive.

Cox is proud of the fact that Princeton has managed to maintain high educational standards even with losing a lot of state funding as well as being subject to many new laws and regulations. Some of her accomplishments during her time as school board president include developing more methods to communicate with students and families by using text messaging and redesigning the Princeton Regional Schools website to make it more intuitive.

Cox comes from family of educators and is a parent of two boys, one in middle school and one in high school. She has worked as a financial journalist for Bloomberg News and occasionally does freelancing. She was a banking reporter and editor, which she feels came in handy because she can describe budgets to the public, such as the audited budget, operating budget and general fund budget.

As school board president, Cox feels concerned with what she calls “deregulation of schools through the governor’s Choice program vouchers and charter schools that will end up increasing the overall cost of education for the taxpayers. Some good things may come from this because of the state evaluations of teachers, which may be good. The board will be required to do it, and we will try to do the best we can.”

Cox does not think that it is appropriate to assign a single grade to a teacher such as in New York City. “Some of the research says that you cannot base a teacher’s performance on one year because of so many factors based on student learning, such as absences or construction that can be distracting. The research says you need to look at data over many years to tweak a teacher’s style if such a thing is needed. Education is very collaborative among everyone, teachers, students, parents, board members and is not adversarial at all,” says Cox.

Cox is part of a committee with the New Jersey School Board Association that is rewriting the policy on charter schools, which is also publicizing the effect of charter schools on high-performing school districts. “Writing letters to the Commissioner of Education was not enough. The elected official has to protect taxpayers’ interests as well.”

Cox's favorite part of meetings is hearing from students. There are two students from the high school who give report at meetings. "There's a presentation every month on something that's happening at school. Going to concerts, plays, sporting events is a great part of being a member. People who don't go to schools don't realize all the good things going on."

Cox thinks the governor would do well to spend time in the schools talking to students and teachers. The Idea Center at the high school has volunteer tutors, and it is an important part of teaching at the high school.

The next major project is revamping the evaluations of teachers in anticipation of the changes in the state law. Cox feels that this will be a very big job. "We need to make sure teachers' voices are heard in the process and need to be supportive. The evaluation is to improve the craft of teaching."

"One of basic rules in life is that you can always improve. Our role is to support the superintendent and improve. The board exists not to run the school district. The school board members' function is to make sure the school district is well run, not to run it themselves," says Cox. Currently they are waiting for word on the new law on bullying. It is in limbo because the state council has ruled that it is an unfunded mandate put on the school districts by the state. The state has only 60 days to fix the law before it is unfunded.

Cox feels that the public should also know that board member positions are elected positions but unpaid, that everyone on the board works as a volunteer.

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