

PROTECTING OUR SCHOOLS:

THE URGENT NEED FOR A COMMON-SENSE SCHOOL BOARD

Public schools should be places where all students feel safe, respected, and empowered to learn. But across the country, extremist school board members are pushing dangerous policies that harm all kids, bully LGBTQ+ students, ban books, and censor honest discussions about history. These attacks threaten not only our children's education but also the fundamental values of equality and free expression.

In 2023, Red Wine & Blue worked to get common sense school board candidates elected and ousted Moms for Liberty extremists. In 2025 many public school districts in Virginia will be electing new school board members. It is critical that we all understand the importance of a common-sense school board and make sure our friends and neighbors are ready to join us in voting for candidates that support public education.

THE DANGER OF EXTREMIST AGENDAS

When school boards fall into the hands of extremists, the consequences are dire:

- **LGBTQ+ students face discrimination and erasure** – Policies that restrict LGBTQ+ inclusion, remove affirming resources such as books, flags, symbols of allyship, or force teachers to out students put vulnerable youth at risk. Studies show that LGBTQ+ students with supportive environments have better mental health and academic outcomes. And when we make school feel safe, it benefits all students.
- **Book bans limit intellectual freedom** – Censorship of books on race, gender, and identity robs students of the opportunity to see themselves in literature and learn about diverse perspectives. Parents—not politicians—should decide what their kids read.
- **History is rewritten for political gain** – Attempts to whitewash history by restricting discussions of systemic racism, civil rights, the Holocaust, and other hard truths do a disservice to all students. An honest, well-rounded education prepares young people to think critically and engage meaningfully in society.

THE COMMON-SENSE SOLUTION

A responsible school board should prioritize **educational excellence, inclusivity, and critical thinking** over divisive political agendas. We need leaders who:

- Support **safe and affirming schools** for all students, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Trust **teachers and librarians** to provide a rich, diverse curriculum that fosters curiosity and understanding.
- Defend **honest education**, ensuring that students learn the full, complex history of our country so they can build a better future.

The future of our schools—and our democracy—depends on electing school board members who put **students first, not politics**. It's time to stand up for **common sense, fairness, and a quality education for all**.



HOW SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS WORK IN VIRGINIA

ELECTED VS. APPOINTED BOARDS

- Most districts ($\frac{119}{132}$) elect their school board members; a few (e.g., Hanover County, Roanoke City) are appointed by local governments
- Communities can switch between *appointed* and *elected* systems via petition and referendum

TIMING & FREQUENCY

- Elections align with general elections on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November
- City/town boards typically follow even-year cycles; county boards often hold elections in odd-numbered years, either biennially or quadrennially

TERM LENGTHS

- Terms mirror the local governing body which is usually 4 years, sometimes 2.

NONPARTISAN BALLOTS

- School board races are nonpartisan: candidates appear without party labels and qualify via nominating petitions

THIS ELECTION SEASON LET'S STAY INFORMED AND DON'T LET'S ELECT COMMON-SENSE SCHOOL BOARDS IN ALL OF OUR COMMUNITIES!

