



2016 Candidate Responses to PFT Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Kevin J. Boyle

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Running For: Pennsylvania State Senate - 5th District

RESPONSES TO PFT EDUCATION PLATFORM:

(1 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree and Commit):

#1: A restoration agenda should be a top priority for Philadelphia education. Candidate response: **5**

Comments: *I believe that the road to improvement for our public schools begins with ensuring that they have the funding needed for infrastructure improvements and meeting staffing requirements as it pertains to teaching vacancies, as well as support staff such as school nurses and school counselors.*

#2: Advocating for a fair contract for our educators. Candidate response: **5**

Comments: *Our educators deserve fair pay for their work, period. As has been shown in countries such as Finland and elsewhere, offering competitive pay and fair benefits for teachers correlates with better educational outcomes, and the idea of viewing good pay for educators as an investment rather than a cost should prevail in the public policy arena in Harrisburg.*

#3: Advocating for more charter school accountability and a moratorium on new charter schools while the financial crisis goes unresolved. Candidate response: **4**

Comments: *While there are some charter schools across our region that provide an excellent education, we must take a holistic look at current charter school laws to ensure that any funding allocated is being spent in the best possible way in terms of student achievement. Public money spent must result in the best overall educational environment for our children, and our charter laws and education policy as a whole should be reflective of this goal.*

#4: Pushing back against privatization of our workers. Candidate response: **5**



Comments: Privatization of educators and support staff presents unnecessary and potentially harmful consequences in the form of new regulatory challenges and oversight. Adequate funding for basic education and fair contracts for union educators are the most direct and surest way to alleviate these issues, not the outsourcing of education related jobs in public schools.

#5: Dissolution of the SRC. Candidate response: **5**

Comments: Rather than an entity such as the SRC being able to unilaterally impose decisions on schools and impact the lives of thousands of teachers, support staff and hundreds of thousands of students and their families, I support the restoration of an elected school board that is selected and accountable to the taxpayers in our city.

#6: Partnering with the State Legislature to implement a weighted funding formula Candidate response: **5**

Comments: "I have supported a revision of our Commonwealth's school funding formula and the positive impact it would have in terms of addressing structural inequities in our public schools across Pennsylvania. We must ensure that our schools are funded with factors such as high poverty rates and a high proportion of ESL students adequately taken into account at every step.

#7: Working to find additional, recurring revenue that will help sustain our schools. Candidate response: **5**

Comments: Unlike my opponent, who voted with Republicans and against a tax on natural gas extraction that would've generated additional funding for our public schools (HB1950, A6347, 2011-2012 session, 11/15/11), I have always supported taxing natural gas extraction to create badly needed funding for public education in our Commonwealth. Hundreds of millions of dollars of new investment via a real tax on gas drilling would restore many of the cuts to basic education suffered during the Corbett Administration.

#8: Committing to working in partnership with the community to develop and implement 25 unionized community schools. Candidate response: **"5**

Comments: Offering resources such as various social services and other essential services within the context of a local school is a step that offers many potential benefits, and would take a holistic approach to ensuring greater quality of life for students both in and out of the classroom. I would be supportive of measures to implement such a program and to analyze its efficacy for potential future expansion.



#9: Highlighting the negative impact high-stakes testing has on students. Candidate response:

5

Comments: *As the husband and brother-in-law of educators, I believe we cannot teach to the test, and that standardized testing cannot possibly encompass the breadth of learning that takes place in the classroom at any age. While testing can serve some useful purposes, it should not be sole or even primary determinant when making personnel decisions. Education is a nuanced process, and decisions concerning schools and personnel should be reflective of this fact.*

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

How has your past career experience prepared you for working in the office you are seeking?

As a state House member since 2010, I feel that I have established a track record of supporting our public school teachers and educational support staff in our shared goal of providing a quality education to children in every single circumstance. My familiarity with the legislative process as a whole, as well as the implications of decisions made in the General Assembly as they pertain to education policy would enable me to continue this work in the state Senate immediately and to great effect.

Are you a proponent of school vouchers, school choice, or charter school expansion?

I support providing the best possible educational outcomes for every student across our Commonwealth, without regard for income, zip code or other circumstances. I believe that the most fundamental investment is in education, and I support increasing funding toward this end.

Would you work to rescind Act 46? Why or why not?

I believe that the concept of reducing or taking decision making power out of the hands of local elected school boards and unilaterally imposing conditions via a state takeover is counterproductive to the principles of providing for the best educational outcomes, and that there are more effective approaches to improving public schools without a state takeover.

RATE THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES FOR YOUR TERM IN OFFICE

- **Reducing class size:** *H (high priority)*



- **Increasing support personnel in schools:** *H (high priority)*
- **Settlement of a fair contract that is good for Philadelphia's educators and students:** *H (high priority)*
- **Mandating full time, unionized certified school nurses in every school:** *H (high priority)*
- **Mandating full time, unionized counselors in every school:** *H (high priority)*
- **Mandating wraparound services in schools:** *H (high priority)*
- **Attendance and graduation improvement initiatives:** *H (high priority)*
- **Access to high quality technology and high-speed Internet access in every classroom:** *H (high priority)*
- **Expansion of pre-k eligibility and opportunity:** *D (disagree with this statement)*
- **Elimination of teacher seniority:** *L (low priority)*
- **Using taxpayer money to pay tuition for private and religious schools:** *D (disagree with this statement)*
- **Modifying or reducing pensions:** *D (disagree with this statement)*

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: