Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

Candidate Information

Name on Ballot: Patrick C Watson

School Board District: 10B

Home Address 11244 S. ST Lawrence Chicago, IL 60628

Employer/Your Title 9th Ward Alderman Beale Aldermanic Aide

Phone 773-592-6982 **Email** patrickcwatson65@gmail.com

Candidate signature attesting to the truthfulness, accuracy, and authorship of this Questionnaire.

9-19-26	Patrick C Watson	Patrick C. Watson
Date	**Print**	**Signature**

[Please feel free to attach primary campaign literature, bio or vita]

Campaign Information

Campaign Manager Tanya Watkins

Phone 224-999-5530 **Email** tanyawatkins78@gmail.com

Website PatrickforCPS.Net

a. Have you held or run for public office before, and if so, what office[s] with what results?

I have never held any public office.

b. COMMUNITY. In what community roles do you currently serve? Or in what capacity have you served the community in the past? Have you been appointed to any public committees, commissions, task forces?

In my current community (Pullman) I have been a block captain as well as a Zone Director.

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c. Please list your top three contributors who have donated $1,000 or more, and include the corresponding amounts as reported on your D-3 form (if applicable):

Contributor	Amount
William Silverstein	$2,000
Kate Johnson	$2,000
Linda & Joseph Erlinger	$1,000

d. Who has endorsed you and what are your political/stakeholder alliances (if any)?

Fraternal order of Police
IUOE Local 150
State Rep 34th District - Nick Smith
Common Ground Collective
4th Ward Alderman Beale
10th Ward Alderman Chico
17th Ward Alderman Moore
21st Ward Alderman Mosley
Illinois Network of Charter Schools

Candidate's Plans and Goals for the School Board

e. Why are you running for *this position*? What expertise do you bring to the board? What makes you the best candidate for *the School Board*?

I'm running for this position because for too long our kids have been ignored by the leadership at CPS. I believe our kids need to see that they will have a strong advocate in me especially our black kids. School was a place for me that allowed me to dream and imagine that anything was possible. It was a safe place and I want our kids to have that same experience.

f. Please describe your Educational agenda.

My educational agenda (1) Eliminate any barriers for student success (racial, language etc) (2) Equip schools with the tools specific to the students (No one size fits all approach) (3) Celebrate and champion diversity & inclusiveness.
(4) Provide Physical and nutritional education and mental health support
(5) Provide access to Post Secondary ~~real~~ readiness (college, trades, etc)

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ACCOUNTABILITY / TRANSPARENCY

1) We believe that it will be important for you to communicate with District constituents on a monthly basis. Communications should include, but not be limited to, updates to inform and receive feedback on upcoming CPS votes and initiatives, as well as progress monitoring. Will you commit to implementing some form of monthly communications for your constituents?

YES ☒ **NO** ☐ **(Please provide an example)**

- Visit LSC's
- Create a web page for all 108 schools/Parents
- Electronic News letters

2) What measures do you want to put in place to promote transparency in the school board system?

- Conduct business in plain sight
- follow the laws of the open meetings act
- Detailed minutes and vote tracking

3) What methods will you put in place to understand the interests / positions of your constituents, to ensure your Board votes align with your constituents, and not political funders or special interests? **(Please be specific)**

- Visit LSC meetings and speak with them on the priorities
- Speak with Principals
- Visit community groups
- talk with students

4) What measures do you suggest the school board implement to ensure that CPS is held accountable and is responsive and transparent to school stakeholders?

- Set clear measurable student outcome goals
- manage the superintendent
- open tracking system for external NFP and district programs to guarantee funds directly boost student outcomes
- Fiscal responsibility + open budgeting

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5) Will you support a third-party independent audit of Chicago Public Schools? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ **(and why?)**

- It removes internal biases to reveal the true operational and financial health of the district.

6) Recognizing that parents of CPS students are a critical portion of your constituency, what will you do to build and nurture a relationship with parents in the District?

- Be true to my word with them, make myself available to them, be consistent and follow up at all times. Be open to ~~criticism~~ suggestions and feedback.

BUDGET / FINANCE

7) In what ways should the school district engage Springfield for funding? In what ways will you engage external partners to assist with funding CPS initiatives?

(1) The district should engage with the state to lobby the state to cover pensions like other districts. (2) Push for full funding under the EBF model.

I would use the structure guidelines to route private donations through the Children first fund, Collaborate with the office of community Partnership engage with local corporations to find different initiatives.

8) What are your ideas to address the School District's consistent $500-$700 million budget gap?

- Scale back personnel to match the drop in enrollment
- Consolidate underused buildings to reduce maintenance overhead
- Shift operational dollars away from admin inefficiencies directly to the classrooms.

9) How will you hold CPS accountable for ensuring equitable funding for all schools? And how should the Board / CPS prioritize to ensure funds are allocated where needed?

- Work through the LSC since they hold power over approval and oversight of their schools budget.
- As a board we need to use our authority to govern to make sure there are policies the make accountability the norm.

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10) What are your ideas for **funding** the mental health needs of students, faculty, and staff?

- Government & federal grants
- Insurance and 3RD Party partnerships
- Private grants geared toward student wellness
- Reallocate funds from wraparound services that have not proven to be successful.

EDUCATION / STUDENTS

11) Achievement Gap: The data show persistent disparities in measures of educational performance among subgroups of students, especially groups defined by socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity and gender. How do you plan to address/close the intransigent achievement gap for African American students?

Like I said earlier, I would address barriers that hinder academic success ~~such~~ due to racial discrimination, and social economics.

Equip the schools with the tools specific to the students in the community instead of the one size fits all model.

Engage with parents to address how schools can mentor them to help their families.

12) Opportunity Gap: The disparities in providing access points and multiple pathways to position students for post-secondary success. How do you plan to address/close the opportunity gap for African American students?

- Increase funding for underserve schools (technology, up to date ~~learning~~ learning materials
- Expand or provide early childhood Education
- Hire more black teachers
- Culturally relevant curriculm

13) What are your thoughts and/or ideas on **policies** to address the mental health needs of students, faculty, and staff?

I believe that the policies should be more focused more on the neighborhood/environment especially for elementary schools since they are more heavy towards kids in that area.

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14) How will you work towards all schools providing recess and physical education equipment, healthy food offerings, and classes in the arts, shop, and technologies, as well as foreign languages?

I would work to make sure that was mandated in all CPS schools because I believe a well rounded, kid who is properly feed and exposed to the arts, tech and the trades is a kid that will be set up for success.

15) The elected representative school board legislation includes the establishment of a board-level *Black Student Achievement Committee*, to develop actionable strategies to close the achievement gap for Black students. What actions will you take to ensure that this committee is staffed appropriately to give it its best chance of achieving measurable improvements in the education of Black students, system-wide? And, importantly, will you commit to the African American community having a strong voice / autonomy in the selection of Black Student Achievement committee members? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ **(and why?)**

I would engage with the students and their families to share the importance of taking ownership of the things they want to see in their schools that will ensure success. I am running for this seat because I am committed to see our kids have the same opportunities as anyone else. I want our kids to know they have an advocate that looks like them and was raised in the same area as them.

GOVERNANCE

16) What are your thoughts on the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Career and Technical Education (CTE), Computer Science (CS), and other emerging technologies in education for students, faculty, and staff?

I believe it should be embraced because this is going to be the way of the future. With these new data centers being talked about this is the ideal time to Incorporate this into the cps Curriculm. This would be an ideal partnership ~~espec~~ especially funding.

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17) Do you think the school board should have autonomy to override LSC decisions that are made at the local level? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☒ Please explain your answer with an example.

As someone who served on two LSC's, the great thing about it was the parents and community felt invested in the success in the schools achievements which included keeping the Principal and ~~staff~~ accountable for student success.

18) LSCs are responsible for principal selection; should CPS be required to obtain LSC review to remove a principal? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ **(and why?)**

I believe it is a great way to hold LSC's accountable for this decision to ensure ~~such~~ that option is done with objectivity and not as personal or ~~political~~ political decision.

19) What are your thoughts on establishing an independent review board for terminations within CPS?

My thought is this is one of the reason an elected school board will be in place. Our charge will be to govern and that is what we should do.

OPERATIONS / POLICY / PERFORMANCE

20) What is one challenge or area of growth you see within CPS? What are your solutions for addressing this challenge?

The one biggest challenge within CPS is the constant budget and financial instability. Some solutions could be (1) More responsible spending, adjust cost based on enrollment (2) Close schools (3) Pension reform from the state (4) corporate Partnerships

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21) What are your thoughts on the financial and academic oversight of school choice, and do you believe guardrails should be put in place? If so, why?

I think it is important to ensure accountability and equitable outcomes for students. Implementing guardrails can help maintain standards Prevent misuse of funds and ensure that educational quality is upheld across various schools

22) What are your thoughts on school closings and consolidation?

My thoughts on this issue is I believe Consolidation should be a serious consideration especially with the constant budget issues the district is facing.

23) What criteria should be used to identify which schools should be considered for closure/consolidation?

(1) student achievement should be one way to judge
(2) What does the yearly enrollment numbers look like; are the declining and if so at what rate
(3) What is the cost to maintain the upkeep of the building

24) What existing CPS policies would you like to change, or what new policies would you like implement?

I would like for schools to be year round. for more Class room instruction

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CHARTER SCHOOLS

25) Funding Equity: Chicago Public Schools provides funding to both district-operated and charter public schools. Do you support funding parity between charter public schools and district-operated schools? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ **(and why?)**

I do believe in funding Parity because if charter schools are considered Public schools then they should be treated the same. It promotes equity in education.

26) Equitable Access to Resources: Do you believe funding for student support services should be allocated equitably to all students, regardless of whether they attend a district operated or charter school? Yes or No If a school accepts public funding for a student should it also be responsible for continuing to serve that student the entirety of the year? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ **(Please explain in detail.)**

Again, if the charter school is considered a public school, the should be allocated the same level of support as any other type of public school.

27) Parent Choice and Educational Options: Well-to-do families have the resources to afford the type of education they want for their children. Many Black and Brown families who may be unable to afford private or parochial schools, choose charter schools because they believe those schools best meet the educational, social, emotional, or cultural needs of their children. What role do you believe charter schools should play within the Chicago Public Schools system, and how would you ensure families continue to have meaningful educational choices?

I believe charter schools play a vital role within the CPS School system because they have proven to be a viable option for chicago families because they have proven to have high academic Achievement success

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28) Charter Renewal Stability: School board meetings can involve lengthy discussions on charter renewals. What are your thoughts on charter school renewals, including multi-year renewals?

I think it is a great way to ensure is a wonderful tool to help maintain accountability and that they are meeting the needs of the students. I believe all public schools should go through a process like this for the same reasons

29) Accountability and Student Outcomes: Should charter schools and district-operated schools be evaluated using the same academic, financial, operational, and student-outcome standards? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ Where might they differ?

Yes they should but there are unique issues that may effect the evaluations because charter schools have more freedom in governance and curriculum, goals for charter may differ from district schools as does any funding sources.

30) Long-Term Vision: What is your vision for the relationship between Chicago Public Schools and public charter schools over the next five years, and how would your policies support improved outcomes for all Chicago public school students?

My vision long-term is that the district-operated schools can be mandated to use the model the charter schools which have proven to be successful in student achievement.