

Ms. Beth Allen - Professional Biography for Election Process

Beth Allen is an elementary school teacher at Westchester Elementary in Baltimore County. She has been at Westchester for the past 21 years. Ms. Allen has held a variety of teaching positions at Westchester – from first grade teacher to fifth grade teacher, and most recently as a Social Emotional Learning Teacher. This new position has given Ms. Allen a new perspective and insight into the school as a whole. It has allowed her to see that despite being talented educators and putting in a tremendous amount of work, many teachers are struggling to handle an increasingly needy student population, an increasingly vocal parent population and a deluge of new administrative tasks.

Ms. Allen works hard to make every student feel seen and heard. From the bus driver to the cafeteria staff, the custodial staff to the teachers in her school, she wants all people in the school community to know they are appreciated. She works to build relationships within the community as well. Ms. Allen delivered food to students during the pandemic, provides outings for students like bowling or movies, and often cheers on her students at various sporting events. Ms. Allen knows that building relationships is the key to improve the community and school environment.

Ms. Allen is an active member on her school's Equity Team. She works with a team of educators to help bridge the gap that many of our students of color face. She believes that representation matters and that seeing a teacher that looks like them is important for students of color. She was the Lead Teacher at her school's Re-Engagement Program, providing opportunities for our students to feel empowered to achieve future success. She has also served as a coach for her school's Black Saga teams.

Ms. Allen was motivated to apply for this position because over the course of the pandemic it became clear that teachers' voices have not been heard. Ms. Allen has worked in Maryland schools long enough to remember a time when teachers were treated by the system as professionals. She understands that teachers know what is best for their students and our current approach significantly underestimates the talent and abilities of the State's teachers and, just as importantly, does a disservice to its students. Ms. Allen would like to prioritize providing administrative resources to teachers to help with the data entry and other administrative burdens that teachers face so that teachers can do what they have been trained to do – educate students.

Ms. Allen believes that transparency is the key to making the education system fair for all. As a board member, Ms. Allen aims to work with her colleagues to have clear and open dialogue to make meaningful change. She believes that teachers are the engine of the education system and their voices need to be heard. She will work for them to build a better system for all.

BETH ALLEN

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Baltimore County Public Schools, Westchester Elementary

Catonsville, Maryland

Fifth Grade Teacher, 2001 – 2003

Fourth Grade Teacher, 2003 – 2005

First Grade Teacher, 2005 – 2011, 2012 – 2019

Second Grade Teacher, 2011-2012

Social Emotional Learning Teacher (SCLS Program), 2019-Present

Camp Invention

Catonsville, Maryland

Director of STEM-Focused Summer Camp, 2002-2021

King Kaunualii Elementary School

Hanamaulu, Kauai, Hawaii

Special Education Teacher – Inclusion and Self-Contained Classroom

Fifth Grade Teacher, 2000-2001

EDUCATION

Syracuse University

Syracuse, New York

Bachelor of Science in Inclusive Education and Special Education.

Various Educational Institutions

Masters equivalency with continuing education credits from various educational institutions.

CERTIFICATIONS

Advanced Professional Certificate – Elementary Education 1-6

Middle School Generic Special Education 1-8

Ancillary Credits – Special Education and Reading

LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Leadership Positions

Member of Institutional Leadership Team; Member of Equity Team; Lead Teacher for Saturday Re-Engagement Program; Coach of Black Saga (Black Excellence) Team; Member of Behavior Intervention Team; Grade Level Team Leader; School Store Sponsor; Director of Camp Invention, a STEM-focused Learning Summer Camp.

Community Involvement

Fourth of July School Parade Volunteer, Community Food Delivery During Pandemic; Outings with Students in the Community (movies/bowling, sporting events); Fundraising Coordinator for school events.

AWARDS/OTHER RECOGNITION

Nominated for Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Year.

Nominated for Catonsville Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Year.

Beth Allen - Personal Statement

I have been a teacher in Baltimore County Public Schools at Westchester Elementary for the past 21 years. I have held a variety of teaching positions at Westchester – from first grade teacher to fifth grade teacher, and most recently as a Social Emotional Learning Teacher. My new position has given me a new perspective and insight into my school as a whole. It has allowed me to see that despite being talented educators and putting in a tremendous amount of work, many teachers are struggling to handle an increasingly needy student population, an increasingly vocal parent population and a deluge of new administrative tasks.

I work hard to make every student feel seen and heard. From the bus driver to the cafeteria staff, the custodial staff to the teachers in my school, I want all people in the school community to know they are appreciated. I work to build relationships within the community as well. I delivered food to students during the pandemic, provided outings for students like bowling or movies, and often cheer on my students at various sporting events. I know that building relationships is the key to improve the community and school environment.

I was motivated to apply for this position because over the course of the pandemic it became clear that teachers' voices have not been heard. I have worked in Maryland schools long enough to remember a time when teachers were treated by the system as professionals. I understand that teachers know what is best for their students and our current approach significantly underestimates the talent and abilities of our State's teachers and, just as importantly, does a disservice to its students. I want to prioritize providing administrative resources to teachers to help with data entry and other administrative burdens that teachers face so that teachers can do what they have been trained to do – educate students.

I believe that transparency is the key to making the education system fair for all. As a board member, I will aim to work with my colleagues to have clear and open dialogue to make meaningful change. I believe that teachers are the engine of the education system and their voices need to be heard. I will work for them to build a better system for all.

January 29, 2022

Maryland State Board of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for the candidacy of Mary ("Beth") Allen for the teacher member on the Maryland State Board of Education. I have known Ms. Allen for over a decade. I came to know her when she was the first-grade teacher at Westchester Elementary for my two children, James and Maddie. My children are now thriving high schoolers in part because of the wonderful introduction to schooling they had with Ms. Allen.

In particular, here are a few of the things that made my experience as a parent of a child in Ms. Allen's room so wonderful:

- She always made my kids feel like they were special and important;
- She had great communication with parents and had an open door policy;
- I always felt welcome in her classroom;
- Ms. Allen let the kids be kids and have fun but also had high expectations of them;
- She was not a pushover and didn't let the kids steamroll her;
- She advocated for kids and did what she thought was best for them even if it meant more work for her; and
- She would take on the "troubled" students and give them structure and love in order to help them succeed.

In the years since Ms. Allen was my children's teacher, Ms. Allen and I have become friends. From being in the community with Ms. Allen, it is clear that her impact on our community has been enormous. It is difficult for her to go anywhere without a parent or former student coming up to her and saying "hi." With each interaction, it is obvious that Ms. Allen not only remembers children she taught from 10, 15 and 20 years ago (which is no small feat!) but that the students and parents still value their connection.

All of this shows how good Ms. Allen is at building relationships to achieve success. It is that same quality that would make her an excellent teacher member on the Maryland State Board of Education.

I am also a teacher in Maryland. I teach fourth grade in the Howard County Public School System, and I know how special Ms. Allen is as both a teacher and a person. With the growing demands on teachers and the increasing number of teachers exiting the profession, I think it is important to have a teacher with experience that has creative ideas about how to tackle the problems facing our students and teachers. I think Ms. Allen is that person and that is why I support her candidacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Kelly

January 31, 2022

Maryland State Board of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to recommend Beth Allen for the teacher member position on the Maryland State Board of Education. I have worked with Beth since she joined Westchester Elementary in 2001. She is a hardworking and dedicated teacher and would be an excellent addition to MSBOE.

Beth is not only incredibly smart and creative but she cares about students and the community. She will spend her nights and weekends planning individualized lessons, creating innovative bulletin boards and communicating with parents to make sure they are informed and aware of their child's needs and progress.

Beth has a special place in her heart for children with special needs – whether the needs are educational, social, behavioral or economic. She gives these children special attention and has a unique ability to figure out how to give these students what they need to enjoy learning and be successful students and people.

It is important to Beth that both students and teachers be given the chance to succeed. As a voice for teachers, I am confident that she will serve as a powerful and thoughtful voice for teachers. She also happens to be one of my favorite people in the world.

She has my highest recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Haynes", with a stylized, cursive script.

Lynnette Haynes
First Grade Teacher
Westchester Elementary

January 31, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to highly recommend Ms. Allen as an educator and advocate for educators. During my tenure at Westchester Elementary School, I interacted with Ms. Allen in various capacities and most recently as Assistant Principal from 2018-2021. During that time, she has proven herself to be professional, dependable, and knowledgeable.

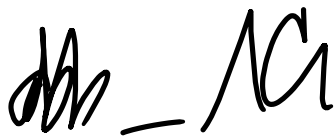
Ms. Allen is well versed in all levels of elementary school and has taught both primary and intermediate grades. Ms. Allen currently serves as our school-based Social Emotional Learning Teacher. In this role, she works with challenging students including those participating in the BCPS Regional Social Communication Learning Support Program. Ms. Allen seizes every opportunity to support and celebrate the students of Westchester but also the families and larger community.

As a staff member, Ms. Allen plays an integral role in the school's success and positive climate. She has been known to write positive notes of encouragement or organize surprise "thank you" parties for our bus drivers. Her leadership and positive outlook are an inspiration to all those she encounters.

Ms. Allen demonstrates her compassion and dedication through her active participation and community involvement. Some of these roles include serving on the Instructional Leadership and Equity Team. She has worked as Black Saga Coach for the past five years and always runs a successful Camp Invention Summer Camp at Westchester Elementary. She works with a variety of families in the community and most recently delivered food to our neediest of students.

Ms. Allen would be an asset as the Teacher Member to the State Board of Education and I highly recommend her.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Crabb', with a horizontal line under the name.

Amanda Crabb