



Williamson Strong

VOTER TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Our county has been the focus of multiple extremist groups who broadcast misinformation in an effort to create partisan division and chaos in our public schools.

It's critically important that we separate facts from rumors, and share with our neighbors why it's so important to support our schools and show up to vote on August 4.

For a brief history of how we got where we are at, [read this thread](#).

VOTE AUGUST 4

EARLY VOTING: JULY 15 - 30

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JULY 5

[Invite friends & family to our virtual registration drive to encourage them to register to vote!](#)

Why Support WCS?

Williamson County Schools continually ranks among the best school districts in Tennessee. The state district report card shows WCS is well above the state average in every metric, despite slight dips that occurred everywhere due to the pandemic. US News & World Report continually ranks WCS High schools among the best in the state. The WCS Class of 2021 posted an ACT composite of 24.9. The state average is a composite of 19.1.

Our students receive an excellent education at an amazing value. We need to continue to support our students, teachers and staff members by electing a school board that understands and work for the unique needs of **our** schools district and growing community.

Students first, not Politics.

We don't believe partisan politics has any place in our school board. We must vote based on who we genuinely believe will prioritize the needs of ALL the kids in our community above all other interests. We are endorsing four Independent candidates, one Republican and one Democrat, who have all pledged to keep divisive politics out of their decision-making processes.

We must come together as a community to elect public servants who have a heart for students and a commitment to public education. Our school board is not the place for extremists with a grievance.

An Excellent Education for All Students.

The role of the school board is "to provide the best educational opportunities possible for all students." We all want our children to gain the skills to face the future. Learning about our history — the good and the bad — sets them up for success in the real world.

We want to prepare our children to work and succeed in a diverse and complex society. We trust that our teachers also want what is best for our students. Schools should continue to encourage curiosity and empathy and celebrate the freedom of ideas that make our country great.

WWW.WILLIAMSONSTRONG.ORG/ENDORSEDCANDIDATES

Frequently Asked Questions

What's all the noise about "parental rights"?

Parent involvement in their child's education is essential, working together with teachers and staff to provide support where needed. The hot-button political language of "parental rights" is nothing more than some people believing teachers and professional educators aren't qualified to make decisions on curriculum and operational matters. Rather than restricting the free flow of ideas and banning books and discussions in classrooms, parents and teachers should work together to expand what is possible for our kids...just like they've successfully been doing for many years.

Parents are already free to control what their own children read. Working directly with your child's teachers and school librarian is the best way to address any concerns about what books your child can access. Discussions with your children about what they are reading is also a valuable teaching opportunity.

I want curriculum transparency in my child's school. Are educators hiding course materials from parents?

Of course parents should know what's going on in their children's classroom and school building. Parents and teachers must work together to ensure a quality education for every child, and having a working relationship is always encouraged. Transparency isn't a bad thing - what's not great is using "transparency" as a way to ban books and restrict the free flow of ideas and conversations in classrooms. Many resources are already available on the district website, including the [Scope & Sequence](#) for each course and the [Elementary ELA text and materials](#). And the best way to know what is going on in your child's education is to simply talk to your child and your child's teachers.

Doesn't teaching divisive topics (related to racism, sexism, etc.) in our schools teach children that they are the victims?

Learning about our nation's history helps children understand our country's progress as well as its challenges. These conversations can be empowering — they equip our children with the knowledge and experience they need to successfully navigate the world around them and make it a better place. Children are intelligent and curious and always looking to understand the world around them, and they're growing up in a world where they have or will soon have unlimited access to the world via devices. School is where our children should feel safe to learn and grow together, which sometimes includes having difficult conversations and teachers are prepared to carefully navigate tough topics in age-appropriate ways.

Which School Board Candidates are up for Election this year?

School Board members in Williamson County serve a four-year term. Only the **even-numbered districts** are up for election on **August 4th**. Odd-numbered districts will vote for School Board Members in 2024. If you are in an odd-numbered district, **you can still help** by supporting a candidate in an even-numbered district, and help spread the word to others about how important it is to vote!



Frequently Asked Questions

Why are a few people saying children are reading vulgar and inappropriate materials in school?

Wanting to make sure material is age-appropriate is a valid concern. It's important to remember that available books were selected by trained and credentialed WCS librarians and educators, with very thoughtful consideration given to the value of the material as a whole and the age/grade level for which it's appropriate.

Some of the books currently being challenged are about great American heroes like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ruby Bridges or are by Pulitzer Prize-winning authors like Toni Morrison. When we ban books and restrict ideas, we aren't protecting our kids; we are censoring free thought and discussion - and harming our kids' education.

Books widen our children's minds, help them learn about themselves and others, inspire creativity, and help them navigate life's most challenging moments. They help children feel valued and accepted and form healthy identities. They also help students learn about how others feel, especially those whose race, ethnicity, or background is different from their own

Shouldn't school be about teaching knowledge and facts rather than values and attitudes? Isn't it a parent's right to teach their child values at home?

Parents and educators want every child to reach their full potential for success in the real world after graduation. We all want our children to receive an honest, quality education, including an understanding of accurate American history that prepares them to be good citizens and leaders. Learning is about so much more than reading from a textbook, and our children succeed when they have the opportunity to strengthen life skills like curiosity, understanding, and communicating across differences. Schools are a place where children learn how to interact with others outside of their family and those that may look different from them. The relationships they build here are crucial for building a more perfect nation.

There is also a lot of misinformation out there about what is really being taught in schools. If you have questions or concerns, we encourage you to reach out to your child's teachers.

Is a book really "banned" if you can just go get it at the public library? What does it hurt to remove a book from the school library?

PEN America defines a school book ban as any action taken against a book based on its content and as a result of parent or community challenges, administrative decisions, or in response to direct or threatened action by lawmakers or other governmental officials that leads to a previously accessible book being either completely removed from availability to students, or where access to a book is restricted or diminished.

Librarians and educators carefully select books & materials because they've determined it will be valuable to some or many students. Professionals have evaluated them for age-appropriateness. Overriding their decisions and making books unavailable to ALL students based upon the complaints of a few is book banning (you can certainly make this decision for your own children, very easily!) The recently challenged books are often about marginalized and victimized groups, and removing them prevents some children from being able to see themselves reflected in the books they read.

Not every child can access the public library because of transportation or other issues. But more importantly, book banning is a slippery slope. The United States Supreme Court has affirmed that students have the right to read and censorship restricts their First Amendment protections. Allowing anyone to restrict access to a book that they personally don't like is a dangerous precedence, restricts the free exchange of ideas, and is un-American.





AUGUST 4 ELECTION

EARLY VOTING: JULY 15 - 30

The deadline to register to vote is July 5. Go to our [Voter Toolkit](#) for links to look up your district, register to vote or request an absentee ballot.

On the Ballot:

County Office General Election:

- School Board (Even-numbered districts only)
- Williamson County Commissioner (2 per district)
- Judicial and countywide offices

State/Federal Office Primaries:

(Voters choose their party ballot and choose their preferred nominee):

- Governor
- US House Representative (TN 5th or 7th district)
- TN State Senate (District 27)
- TN House Representative (District 61, 63, 65, or 92)
- Republican / Democratic State Executive Committee (District 27)

SPEAK UP AT A BOARD MEETING

School Board Meetings are generally the third Monday of every month. Public comment is a great way to show support. You must sign up to speak ahead of time.

Take Action

We believe our followers are engaged and committed to seeing the best school board members elected. Now it's time to step up and do the work to make sure your neighbors are aware of what is at stake. Here are some easy things you can do to help.

- Talk to your friends & neighbors about why this election matters. Use the Frequently Asked Questions in this document for talking points.
- Write a letter to the editor.
- Share our [Virtual Voter Registration Drive](#) to encourage others to register by July 5.
- Like, follow, comment, and share on [candidates' social media pages](#).
- Request a candidate sign to post in your yard.
- Sign up to volunteer for a candidate's campaign. You can write postcards, text, knock on doors, etc.
- Organize a group to write postcards or host a meet & greet.
- Donate to a candidate or [Williamson Strong](#).
- Encourage everyone to go vote on August 4. RSVP to our [Facebook event](#) for reminders.

[HTTPS://WWW.WILLIAMSONSTRONG.ORG/ENDORSEDCANDIDATES](https://www.williamsonstrong.org/endorsedcandidates)



D2: TIFFANY ECCLES



D4: BOB BRITTON



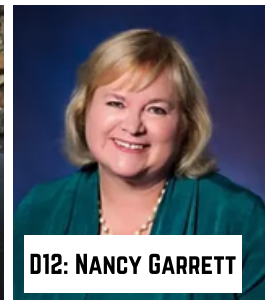
D6: KRISTI BIDINGER



D8: KEN CHILTON



D10: ERIC WELCH



D12: NANCY GARRETT