

Lexington County School District One 11-06-2018 Board Candidate Information

Jada Boatwright Garris

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Q1 What is your full legal name?

Jada Boatwright Garris

Q2 Where do you live? Please provide full home address (no post office box).

Address	207 Centerville Rd.
City/Town	Gilbert
State/Province	SC
ZIP/Postal Code	29054

Q3 What is your telephone number?

8036226866

Q4 What is your email address?

JadaGarris@aol.com

Q5 What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received? **Associate degree**

Q6 What is your job title and place of employment?

Jada Garris, Certified Court Reporter. I'm self-employed and the name of my business is Garris Court Reporting.

Q7 Do you have children currently attending and/or children who will attend Lexington District One schools in the future? If so, how many?

Yes. I have a daughter who attends Gilbert High School and a son that attends Gilbert Middle School.

Q8 Have any of your children graduated from Lexington District One schools? If so, how many?

No.

Q9 Why are you running for a seat on the Board of Trustees?

Lexington District One has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. My mom has been a bus driver for over 30 years and I grew up on the bus. I followed in her footsteps and drove a bus for Gilbert until 2017. During this time I was fortunate to meet many kids and their families who touched my heart and started a fire in me to make sure they, as well as my coworkers and other support staff and teachers around the district were treated fairly and given a voice. I didn't see any obvious evidence that this was happening, and that is what led me here today. I began regularly attending board meetings and as I became more informed, I felt like I could bring something to the table.

Q10 Why do you think you would be a good Lexington District One board member?

I've been attending board meetings for a couple of years and I'm familiar with how the board operates. I realize that what takes place in the board room filters all the way down to employees, parents and students. Teachers and staff are doing a great job and they are doing it with limited resources and support. I'm not a career politician and I'm not part of the good ol' boys in Lexington County. I'm here because I believe teachers and staff deserve to have a responsive school board that comes to the table with ALL of the stakeholders. Currently, our board agrees with whatever is brought before them. We need to ensure that our taxpayer money is well-spent and our children are well-served. I have an intense desire to bring transparency to this board and I will be an independent voice. At this point in my life I have plenty of time to dedicate to this position. My children are older and my job as a freelance court reporter is flexible.

Q11 Please list previous community involvement.

I have helped with duty-free lunch, chaperoned field trips and volunteered as a Rolling Reader, visiting classrooms to read to students. As a bus driver, I served on the Bus Driver Advisory Council and I was recognized for implementing a reading program on the bus that encouraged literacy and decreased discipline referrals. I was awarded the Humanitarian Award by the SC Association of Pupil Transportation for having a positive and dramatic impact on the pupil transportation system and my community. I received the award for my efforts to raise awareness about the need for stop-arm cameras on school buse to record when someone illegally passes a school bus. I met with Governor Nikki Haley regarding the issue and spoke before Senate subcommittee hearings.

Q12 What is the single most important issue facing public education today?

I don't know that there is a single issue. I feel that schools can become easily distracted by the latest and greatest gimmick that comes along and we forget the basic goals of our schools. I want to ensure that we have as much of our tax dollars and the highest quality teachers in the classroom as possible. We need to stop innovating and start educating. In no profession do you want to have an endless amount of meetings, nor do you constantly want to have the goal posts moved. It is time to let the educators lead the way. Only by empowering the voices that are most knowledgeable about the issues will we gain insight into the problems facing public education.
