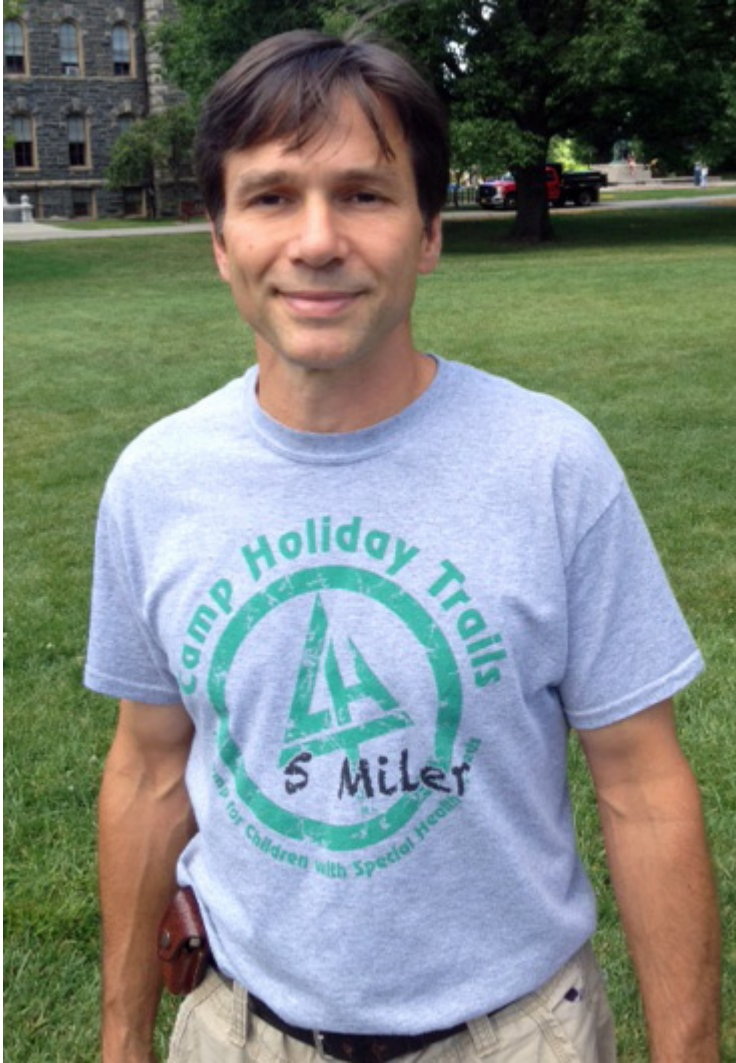


Field finalized for Samuel Miller seat on School Board
written by Newspark Team | August 21, 2015



Michael J. Basile, 49, former president of the Jefferson Area Tea Party, has announced his candidacy for the Samuel Miller District seat on the Albemarle County School Board.

Basile's entry into the race makes him one of four candidates vying for the post to be decided in a special election Nov. 3.

"I want to make sure the teachers have what they need in order to provide the best education for the students," Basile said. "Making sure they have the support from the administration, [as well as] supplies, resources and training available for the classroom."

Areas in which Albemarle County Public Schools could improve include curriculum and budget requests, Basile said.

Basile said he'd like to see more curriculum aimed at teaching students the importance of how owning property can lead to building personal wealth.

"I want to develop curriculum designed to help students of all grades understand where wealth comes from so they can support themselves through life," he said.

“We really need to start teaching our young kids how to do that so that they can get a good job,” he added, “but then with the money they earn from that good job, they can begin to start accumulating wealth, even if they have a small amount of excess income.”

With respect to the division’s spending plan, Basile said many Albemarle families are hurt by tax increases that are used to fund both local government and the schools.

“There are plenty of families in our community who can afford to spend a lot more than we’re spending on schools, but on the other side there are so many of our families who cannot afford to spend more,” he said.

In addition, Basile said he hopes the innovative teaching practices Albemarle wants its teachers to employ are developed organically by teachers, rather than administrators.

The candidates are hoping to fill the seat of Eric Strucko, who resigned from the School Board in April to take a job with Pennsylvania State University. Strucko’s term ends Dec. 31, 2017.

In June, the School Board appointed Jon Stokes, who represented the district from 2006 to 2009, to fill the seat on an interim basis. Of the six candidates who applied for the appointment, only Stokes said he was not interested in running for the seat in November.

The three other candidates in the November special election are Graham Paige, Brian Vanyo and Patrick Barnett.

Paige, 69, who taught science in Albemarle County for 24 years and serves on the division’s Long Range Planning Advisory Committee, has said he would like to see greater parity across the division’s school buildings and curriculum.

Vanyo, 39, an intelligence officer with the Defense Intelligence Agency who has children at Burley Middle School and Cale Elementary, has said his top priority would be to provide the highest quality of education at the lowest cost to taxpayers.

Barnett, 48, a retired U.S. Army colonel with children at Red Hill Elementary, also advocates for parity across schools when it comes to educational opportunities. Additionally, Barnett has emphasized the importance of engaging and working with the Board of Supervisors to address the school division’s needs.

A candidate forum for this race, hosted by Charlottesville Tomorrow and The Daily Progress, will take place at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 6 at Murray Elementary School on Morgantown Road in Ivy.

NOTE: Article updated to reflect Mr. Basile is the former president of the Jefferson Area Tea Party.