

Put quality public servant on state school board: Hagan



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For the sake of continued investment in and dedication to public education, we recommend the selection of Robert F. Hagan in the race for the 8th District member for the Ohio Board of Education.

The seat on the board is open, and Hagan, a former state senator and term-limited member of the Ohio House, is a strong advocate for public education.

Seven of 11 elected seats on the Board of Education are up for grabs this year. The 19-member board also includes eight appointees, selected by Ohio Gov. John Kasich. The board creates policy and makes recommendations for K-12 education in Ohio.

Democrat Debbie Cain, who is also term-limited, currently holds the board seat for the 13-county District 8 that runs along Ohio's eastern border from Mahoning County south to Meigs County, and Canton south to Pomeroy.

Though school board elections are non-partisan, Hagan has joined others in making a push this year against an education board that has become notably conservative in recent years.

Democrats Kathleen Purdy of Alliance and Ida Ross Freeman of Canton are also running for the seat. Purdy and Freeman both bring qualified education backgrounds and good ideas to the table.

But with the current state Board of Education pushing public dollars toward underperforming, for-profit charter schools, and with many current members voicing support for teaching creationism in public classrooms, we believe Hagan is best equipped to fight back.

In 2012, [\\$774 million was deducted](#) from traditional public schools to fund charters, with 84.4 percent of students going from a better-performing public school to a poorer-performing charter school, according to a report from Innovation Ohio.

Meanwhile, in July it was announced that [19 charter schools would be investigated](#) for years of misconduct, including allegations of test-cheating, attendance tampering and other misdeeds. At least 20 taxpayer-subsidized charter schools in Ohio [teach creationism](#).

As the growth and favoring of charter schools in Ohio continues under the current board, social conservatism also has become more apparent.

Current District 7 board member [Sarah Fowler](#), for instance, has advocated restrictions on LGBT groups in public schools, and accused public schools of having "Marxist" and "gay rights" agendas. At least three other current candidates for school board have expressed similar views, with one, Zac Haines in District 4, endorsed by outgoing board president Debe Terhar.

"They swing right and lean more toward charter schools than most states, and some of them need to be taught to read a science book," Hagan was quoted as saying recently about the Board of Education in the *Columbus Dispatch*.

With Hagan's 27-year legislative experience, strong advocacy for public education, equal rights, and separation of church and state, we believe he will bring a powerful voice in support of public schools, children and teachers currently in great need on the state Board of Education.

We strongly recommend Robert F. Hagan for District 8 Ohio school board member.

Original Article:

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