

2026 SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

St. Tammany Federation of Teachers and School Employees • Local 3952

PURPOSE

The Federation uses this questionnaire, candidate interviews, public records, and other relevant information when considering endorsements. We value responses that are specific, candid, and grounded in the responsibilities of a School Board member. Candidates need not agree with the Federation on every issue but should explain the principles and evidence that would guide their decisions.

Candidate information

Candidate: Samantha Ronquille

District: School Board District 9

Campaign email: samantharonquille@gmail.com

Campaign phone: 985-317-9378

Campaign website: <https://www.facebook.com/share/1JHX3uiGE2/>

Submission and endorsement request

- ☒ I am seeking the endorsement of the St. Tammany Federation of Teachers and School Employees.
- ☐ I am not seeking the Federation's endorsement, but I am returning the questionnaire for member information.
- ☐ I am seeking consideration for an eligible political contribution.

Return by: Friday, August 28, 2026, at 11:45 p.m. To: union@stfed.org

Response guidance

Please keep each response to 200 words or fewer. Specific examples are encouraged. It is entirely appropriate to acknowledge that a question involves an area you would like to learn more about; if so, please explain how you would become informed and what principles would guide you in the meantime. The Federation may publish responses in full or in substantially complete form, with only formatting corrections.

Candidate certification

By typing my name below, I intend for my typed name to serve as my signature and certify that these responses reflect my own positions. I understand that the Federation may also consider my public record, candidate interview, and other relevant information.

Typed Signature: Samantha Ronquille Date: 8/28/2026

Background and priorities

1. Priorities and Preparation

Why are you seeking election to the St. Tammany Parish School Board? What are your three highest priorities, what experience or preparation do you bring, and how should voters judge whether you have been successful?

Response:

I am seeking election to the St. Tammany Parish School Board because I believe our students, teachers, faculty, and staff deserve a strong, engaged advocate who will listen to the concerns of parents and the community and work to ensure our schools continue to provide students with the opportunities they need to succeed. I want to bring my professional leadership experience, common-sense approach, and commitment to accountability and transparency to the School Board. My three highest priorities are student success, safe and supportive schools, and transparency and accountability. I want to ensure students have access to strong educational opportunities while maintaining a balanced approach to technology and classroom instruction. I also believe our schools must provide safe, well-maintained facilities and a positive environment for students and employees. Finally, taxpayers, parents, teachers, and the community deserve transparency in decision-making and accountability for how our schools and resources are managed. I bring nearly 28 years of professional experience in leadership, management, problem-solving, and decision-making. Throughout my career, I have managed teams, overseen complex insurance claims operations, worked through challenging issues, and been responsible for making informed decisions while balancing competing priorities. My experience has taught me the importance of listening, gathering facts, communicating clearly, and following through.

I bring experience working with people from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives, which I believe is essential for effective public service. Voters should judge my success by whether I listen to the community, follow through on my commitments, and help produce meaningful improvements for students and employees. Success should be measured by stronger educational opportunities, safe and well-maintained schools, responsible stewardship of taxpayer resources, transparent decision-making, and whether parents, teachers, and staff feel that their voices are being heard. Most importantly, I want voters to be able to look back at my service and say that I worked for the students and the community not for myself.

2. Record or Readiness

NEW CANDIDATES: What have you done to learn about the St. Tammany Parish Public Schools? What have you learned that most influences your decision to run?

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INCUMBENTS: What are three important votes or actions from your current term? What promises have you kept, what work is still unfinished, and is there a decision you would make differently today?

Response:

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One of the most valuable ways I have gained insight has been by watching the school board meetings, talking to teachers, listening to St. Tammany moms and parents, including the many conversations and concerns they openly share on Facebook. These discussions have given me a better understanding of the questions families have about their children's education, classroom technology, curriculum, school safety, communication, and the overall direction of our school system. While social media is only one

source of information, I believe it is important to listen to what parents are saying and to understand the concerns behind those conversations.

What has influenced my decision to run most is hearing directly from the people who live, work, and raise their families in St. Tammany Parish. I have learned that there are many dedicated educators, employees, parents, and families who care deeply about our students and want our schools to succeed. I have also learned that people want their voices to be heard and want greater transparency and accountability in the decisions that affect their children and their schools.

Those conversations reinforced my belief that I can contribute through my experience in leadership, problem-solving, accountability, and managing complex issues. I am running because I believe the School Board should be accessible, willing to listen, willing to ask difficult questions, and focused first and foremost on doing what is best for our students and the people who serve them.

Governance and employee voice

3. Parliamentary Procedure

How familiar are you with Robert's Rules of Order and the use of fair and consistent rules during Board meetings? 4-Strong Knowledge

If elected, would you be willing to participate in training on Board governance and parliamentary procedure? Yes

4. Collective Bargaining

Do you support collective bargaining in St. Tammany Parish Public Schools? Yes

I believe teachers and school employees deserve to have their voices heard and to have a meaningful role in discussions that affect their working conditions, compensation, benefits, and professional responsibilities. I support employees having the ability to organize and advocate for their interests.

At the same time, I believe any process for addressing employee concerns should be transparent, respectful, and focused on what is best for both our employees and our students. As a School Board member, I would listen to all sides, consider the financial impact on the school system and taxpayers, and work toward solutions that are fair, responsible, and sustainable.

My priority would be to ensure that teachers and staff have a respected voice in decisions affecting them while maintaining our responsibility to provide the best possible educational environment for St. Tammany Parish students.

Compensation, finances, and working conditions

5. Employee Compensation

Do you believe compensation for certificated and support employees is competitive? No

Compensation should be regularly evaluated against comparable districts, the cost of living, and the financial resources available to the school system.

6. District Finances

Rate your knowledge of STPPS finances and budget. 3-Working Knowledge

Budgeting and financial management have also been an important part of my professional experience. I understand that managing a budget is not simply about spending money. It's about prioritizing needs, evaluating costs, looking at outcomes, and making sure resources are being used responsibly. As a School Board member, I would bring that same level of scrutiny and accountability to the management of taxpayer dollars.

7. Recruitment, Retention, and Working Conditions

What do you believe affects the district's ability to hire and keep good employees? (Examples might include workload, planning time, duties, class sizes or caseloads, administrative support, career growth, morale, and professional respect.)

Response:

I believe hiring and retaining good employees depends on more than compensation. Teachers and support staff need to feel valued, respected, supported, and able to do their jobs effectively. Workload, class sizes and caseloads, planning time, administrative support, additional duties, professional growth, and morale all play a role in burnout and retention.

After 28 years in my profession, I understand firsthand how heavy caseloads and workload can contribute to burnout. I believe employees need to know their concerns are heard and that their experience and contributions are respected.

As a School Board member, I would listen directly to teachers and support staff, identify the factors contributing to turnover, and support practical, financially responsible solutions that improve working conditions. If we want to retain the best employees for our students, we must show them through both compensation and action that they are valued.

Teaching, learning, and school climate

8. Professional Autonomy and Instructional Decisions

When a school uses a scripted curriculum, how much freedom should educators have to adjust the lesson, pace, or teaching methods to meet their students' needs?

Response:

A scripted curriculum can provide consistency and ensure students are taught the required standards, but educators must have reasonable professional freedom. Teachers went to school and trained to

teach; they should be trusted to use that education and experience to determine how best to reach their students.

A teacher needs to be able to teach. When educators are not allowed to adjust the pace, provide additional instruction, or use teaching methods that better meet their students' needs because they are required to strictly follow a script, their professional expertise is being underutilized. Every classroom and every student is different, and one approach will not work equally well for everyone.

I believe teachers should be able to maintain the core curriculum and learning objectives while having the flexibility to adjust lessons, pacing, and teaching methods when appropriate. We can have consistency and accountability without taking away a teacher's ability to actually teach. Our educators should be trusted as professionals and given the tools and flexibility they need to help their students succeed.

9. Safe and Supportive Schools

How should the district handle violence, threats, bullying, repeated behavior problems, and other behavior that makes it hard to learn or feel safe, while also protecting student rights and giving students the help they need?

Response:

Student and staff safety must be the priority. I believe schools should have clear, district-wide expectations for violence, threats, bullying, and disruptive behavior, with consequences that are fair, consistent, age-appropriate, and appropriate to the circumstances. Minor issues should be addressed early through teacher and parent involvement, while repeated or serious behavior, such as fighting, threats, bullying, or significant classroom disruption should result in stronger consequences, such as behavior plans, counseling, parent/administrator conferences, loss of privileges, or suspension when appropriate.

Parent involvement is an important part of addressing behavior. Without support and cooperation from parents, ongoing behavior problems can negatively affect not only the teacher but also the other students in the classroom who deserve a safe and productive learning environment. Students should receive support to address underlying issues and improve their behavior, but that support cannot come at the expense of the safety and education of others. Teachers and students deserve a safe, respectful, and orderly environment where everyone can learn.

10. Educational Opportunity and Student Success

What school programs and opportunities for students should the district improve or add? (Examples might include reading, math, job and career programs, advanced classes, libraries, special education, English language support, gifted programs, art, music, sports, clubs, and other activities.)

Response:

Art and music are especially important because they allow students to explore their creativity and express themselves in ways that academics may not. I have personally seen the value of art in helping children manage stress. I had an art studio in my backyard, and when my children came home stressed

from school, we would paint together. It gave them an opportunity to relax, express themselves, and reset. I believe creative activities can provide that same positive outlet for students at school. I also believe students need adequate time to recharge during the school day. Longer recess and reasonable lunch periods can give students a much-needed break, improve focus, and support their overall well-being. Teachers need breaks during the day to recharge and be effective, and students need that same opportunity. Education is about more than teaching a curriculum. We should give students opportunities to learn, create, socialize, explore their interests, and develop the skills they need to be successful both in school and in life.

11. Artificial Intelligence, Technology, and Screen Time

How should the district approach AI, technology, student devices, and screen time? (Consider topics such as instructional value, age-appropriate limits, academic integrity, AI literacy, student data privacy, cybersecurity, and the role of educators and parents before new technologies or requirements are adopted.)

Response:

I believe AI and technology have a place in education, but we have become too dependent on them. I believe we need to bring back more traditional learning methods, including paper-and-pencil work, handwriting, reading physical books, and face-to-face instruction. In my opinion, the heavy reliance on computers can limit students' ability to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, writing, and communication skills when technology does too much of the work for them.

Technology should be a tool to enhance learning, not replace teaching. AI should be used responsibly and with clear guidelines so students are learning rather than simply finding answers. Teachers should have the professional judgment to determine when technology is beneficial and when students need to put the devices away.

Students also need hands-on activities, art, music, physical activity, discussion, and opportunities to simply interact with one another. We need a healthier balance between technology and traditional education. Our goal should be to use technology when it improves learning while making sure students continue developing the fundamental skills they need to succeed.

Accountability

12. Accountability and Accessibility

If elected, how will you stay available to employees and the public, communicate with Federation representatives, and protect employees' right to speak up about workplace concerns? If you make a decision that is different from what you said during your campaign, how will you explain that decision to the public?

Response:

If elected, I will make myself available to employees, parents, and the community. I want people to know they can reach out to me, and I will listen to their concerns even by giving them access to my personal cell phone number. I will communicate with Federation representatives and work with them to understand the issues facing our teachers and support staff. Employees should be able to speak up about workplace concerns without fear of retaliation. Their voices matter, and they deserve to be heard.

and respected. That is something I have always lived by throughout my career. I believe no one should be afraid to speak up about a concern, and no one should be made to feel that their voice does not matter.

If I make a decision that is different from something I said during my campaign, I will explain why. I believe in being honest and transparent with the public. Sometimes new information or circumstances can change a decision, but I will never try to hide that. I will explain what changed, listen to the community, and be accountable for my decision. I am not going into this position thinking I will always have every answer. I am willing to listen, learn, and make the decision I believe is best for our students, teachers, staff, and community.
