

# Election of the 35th Student Member of the Board of Education

## MCR Special Elections Committee 2012 Voters Guide



Election Day  
April 25, 2012



### John Mannes

*Candidate Profile*  
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**Remember to like John For SMOB on Facebook and subscribe to our tweets to follow our campaign**

Montgomery County Public Schools, a complex honeycomb of administrators, students, parents, teachers and political leaders, we are the largest and most progressive district in

the State of Maryland. As a result, we are also one of the hardest counties to govern. All of our county's stakeholder groups expect their needs to be met with as little sacrifice as possible. As students, we are fortunate to have an advocate that can cut through the bureaucracy to make real and tangible changes. In just under a decade, we as students have rallied together and killed the curfew bill, brought cell phones to school lunches, and convinced our county to give us the day off on Inauguration Day.

Two things you have probably heard every year in SMOB elections are "the budget" and "communication". The biggest misconception among not only students but SMOB candidates is their actual power. The student member sits as 1 of 8 on a Board that votes on issues from appealed expulsions to teacher's salaries and all the way back to program funding. The SMOB, as it currently stands, fails to have a vote on the budget. This is why year after year you never see "change". This however, is not to say the SMOB is not powerful. We just have to work for it. What makes a good SMOB is a student who can go beyond his/her power on the board and interact with the other governmental organizations that directly impact us here in Montgomery County. The point of view that I bring is one that encompasses all departments of government & the political systems that run our communities. I understand where money comes from. I have extensive lobbying experience with County Council Members, both state and county Board of Education Members, and the Senators and Delegates in Annapolis. I hope to use this kind of action oriented background experience to insight real advancements in what a SMOB is capable of doing. I won't make any promises but I will get every item listed on my platform and any issue brought to me by a student heard and given its full chance to be changed. It just takes a little work.

#### I Support:

- Cell phone use during lunch for middle schoolers
- Closing the achievement gap
- Green initiatives
- Reform to the Capital Improvement & school modernization process
- Exterior bus cameras to catch cars that drive past school buses
- Improved school lunches
- Standardized parking fees
- Better reporting practices for incidence of bullying
- SMOB voting rights
- Simplification of the Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook
- Science Technology Engineering & Math (STEM) education
- Race to the Top
- Magnet, IB, & Edison programs
- Curriculum 2.0
- Teacher evaluations with student input
- Outdoor Education funding
- Funding for School Resource Officers and other safety employees
- An increased cost of living adjustment (COLA) for teachers salaries
- Funding for staff development & resource teachers
- Magnet busing

#### I Oppose

- The proposed Curfew Bill & Loitering Bill
- The LC policy & Attendance intervention in coordination with threatened credit loss
- Maintenance of Effort policy that causes Montgomery County to lose State aid
- Financial Literacy and other newly proposed graduation requirements
- No Child Left Behind that restricts teachers ability to teach
- Increased class sizes

#### Leadership & Experience

**Montgomery County Region (MCR)-SGA (HS County SGA)**—Chief of Staff (11) Deputy Special Elections Administrator (10) Montgomery County Junior Councils (MCJC) Middle School Council Liaison

**Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC) (State SGA)**—Montgomery County Delegate for the annual Ocean City Convention, Workshop Trainer at Legislative Session, High School/ Middle School Fall Conference, Delegate to Maryland State Department of Education Conference (MSDE)

**National Youth Association (NYA)**—Maryland State Director, Maryland State Services Director, attended Inaugural gala with Congressman Chris Van Hollen, testified against the Curfew Bill and lobbied for the Dream Act, led canvasses and registered youth across the state to vote, interviewed by various media outlets about youth rights

**Maryland Youth Advisory Council (MYAC)**—Legislative Chair, planned forum in Annapolis for Governor Martin O' Malley and Comptroller Peter Franchot to discuss Financial Literacy. Advocated for Financial Literacy Day

**Student Member of the Board of Education's Council (SMOB Council)**—Deputy Director of Lobbying, testified to the Montgomery County Delegation of the Maryland House of Delegates in support of SMOB Voting Rights, lobbied Annapolis State Senators & Delegates on various youth related bills, involved in HYA Associates selection of the new Superintendent

**Non-Profit & Charity Work**—Raised money for the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network, Served as a volunteer election aid for both the Obama election and midterm election

#### *Understanding how the Board of Education functions, what are your top three realistic goals for your term if you are elected?*

I have three main goals: getting SMOB voting rights, simplifying the Student Rights & Responsibilities handbook, and increasing communication between the various students groups that exist in the county. Getting SMOB voting rights would mean getting true student representation in budget decisions. Simplifying the Student Rights & Responsibilities handbook would make its contents more accessible for students. Finally, I am excited to propose creating a coalition of student leaders from groups that are already encouraging positive change in their communities thus forming a network in which the SMOB and other students can communicate in order to represent more of the county.

#### *Every year, Montgomery County Public Schools is forced to make more and more budget cuts, what programs do you feel are the most important to students and how will you advocate for these programs?*

I support funding for green initiatives, school modernization, and STEM programs as well as the Magnet, IB, and Edison programs. In addition, I believe we must reserve funding for Curriculum 2.0, school resource officers, staff development, our arts programs, and Outdoor Education. I realize most things on my platform require capital but much of it can be done by simply reorganizing the budget. The connectivity of the SMOB is a testament to the growing youth voice, and I would consider it a responsibility to consult my constituents whenever making a complex budget decision.

The candidates' profiles have been prepared by the candidates and do not necessarily represent the views of the Special Elections Committee (SEC). The Montgomery County Region of the Maryland Association of Student Councils (MCR), or Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The SEC cannot assure the accuracy of the statements contained in this document. Published by the SEC of MCR in cooperation with MCPS.