

Carl B. Hyman  
Senior High School

**D.J.**

**FOR DELEGATE**

**POLICY AGENDA *for*  
EDUCATION**



Education is one of the most important factors that leads to upward mobility and opportunity for families across Virginia. There are no Republican schools or Democrat schools; there are only schools. To help the next generation compete on a global stage, every child in Virginia deserves to have access to a high-quality education, regardless of his or her family income or zip code.

The stewardship of citizen taxes must be one of the top priorities for our state leaders; education funding and policy implementation are no different. Virginia must ensure that taxpayer money is spent directly in the classroom and paying our hardworking teachers, and less on bureaucracy and waste.

## **D.J. Jordan**



1

### **Reduce Testing**

Teachers and students experience great pressure from testing requirements imposed on them from the federal and state levels. Testing and assessments allow teachers to track student progress and response to interventions, but the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests have become a burdensome way to measure our children's growth. In many cases, class time becomes focused on preparing for a test, rather than creatively educating students and tailoring learning strategies to the student. Virginia should reduce the number of tests given to students in a way that is developmentally appropriate.

2

### **Increase Financial Literacy**

Virginia should increase requirements for economics, entrepreneurship, and personal finance education to begin in middle school. Increased financial literacy education in our state should lead to better financial decisions and wealth management for citizens, which improves the economic stability of our local communities. Only [two in five American adults have a budget](#) and keep track of how much they spend on such things as food, housing and entertainment. Americans have over \$1 trillion collectively in credit card debt, and [Virginia ranks eighth](#) in the nation. Virginia has been at the forefront of designing an Economics and Personal Finance curriculum at the high school level; our state should continue innovating by expanding entrepreneurship and financial literacy curriculum for our students beginning in middle school.

# 3

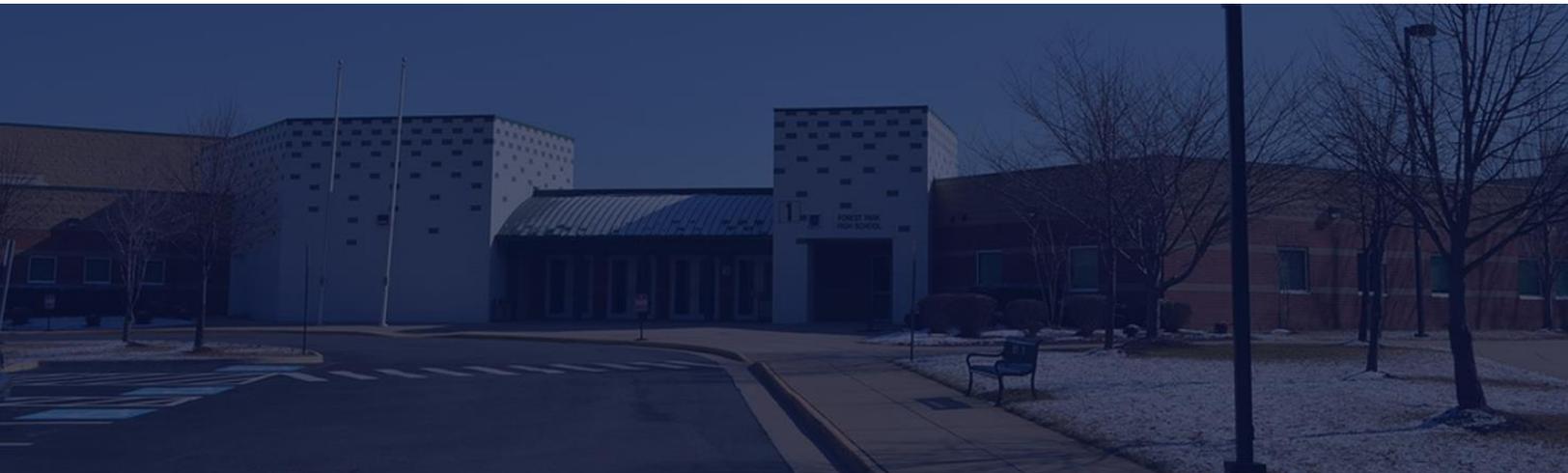
## **Raise Teacher Pay**

Teachers and administrators should be compensated adequately in order to live in the community they are serving. Organizations are only as good as their leaders; in every school, teachers and administrators are leaders who mold young minds every day. We should prioritize the retention of skilled teachers and work to raise Virginia's teacher pay to the national average; the Commonwealth currently [ranks 32nd](#) in the United States.

# 4

## **Strengthen School Safety**

Our schools should be one of the safest facilities in our community. The General Assembly should assist localities with funding support for schools that don't have adequate safety resource officers or facility safety measures. Virginia should also ensure that older school facilities are updated, and construction of new schools should follow facility safety standards in order to address vulnerabilities for violent events or emergencies.



## 5

**Parental Involvement and Rights**

Studies indicate that the most accurate predictor of academic achievement is parental involvement and the encouragement of learning at home. Virginia should encourage and offer training for localities to increase family engagement and active participation in schools. Virginia should also respect parental rights by protecting parental opt-out options for sensitive social lessons, such as sexual or violent content. Our public school systems should also respect family access to educational options, such as homeschooling and private school, while honoring the diverse faith and cultural traditions of our community by protecting religious exemptions and accommodations.

## 6

**College Affordability**

Virginia's public colleges and universities are widely known for its quality and value. The Commonwealth should work to continue to freeze college tuition for state schools, as the General Assembly worked to accomplish this year. Over the last three decades, the cost of public universities nationwide [has increased](#) at nearly three times the rate of inflation. Virginia should require greater transparency for state college budgets, so that taxpayers and families know tuition and fee-setting processes at colleges and know what they're paying for. Virginia should provide incentives for colleges and universities that meet certain performance standards, including access, affordability, and student success.

The Commonwealth should also ensure that Virginia's community colleges and Historically Black Colleges and Universities have the support they need from the state legislature, as they work well with low-income academically challenged students.

Lastly, Virginia should provide funding for higher education dual enrollment for public high school students who take classes at a local college, so they can earn college credit while in grade school.

7

### **Support Special Education and Mental Health**

Early detection is vitally important for the success of students with special needs or mental health challenges. Many public school counselor caseloads are very high. Virginia should fund and ensure that school counselors and administration staff are able to fully support disability accommodations, mental health identification and care, special education, and supplementary services.

8

### **Flexibility for Military Families**

Virginia has one of the largest populations in America for active-duty military and veteran families. Our state education system should create best practices and recommendations for local public school systems to support and provide more flexibility and support for military families, many of whom change duty stations often. Our schools should be mindful of enrollment and participation decisions in fine arts, clubs, and athletics programs that are made in the summer or previous school year, before many military families move into the area.



9

**Protect Vocational and Trades Education**

Not every youth is college-bound, therefore, Virginia should protect, enhance and expand vocational opportunities in high school and community college for students to have access to career opportunities. Our schools should proactively promote this life path at the same level of enthusiasm as we do for the college path.

10

**Support for Rural Transportation**

Many students in rural counties in Virginia would like to participate in afterschool activities (clubs, sports, etc.), but they cannot because of transportation challenges. There are numerous rural localities throughout the Commonwealth that would like to support students by providing transportation but do not have the funding. For rural localities with flat or declining tax revenue, the General Assembly should provide grants for transportation support for student after-school extracurricular activities.