

candidate for:
BOARD of
EDUCATION
FOR 2-YEAR VACANCY



MICHAEL-JOSEPH
MERCANTI-ANTHONY

Party: Republican

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Q: Please provide a brief biography of yourself for the voters.

A: I ran for the Board four years ago because I thought I could help. Having now served a full term, I see the opportunity to continue to help over the next two years. As a veteran educator with 27 years of experience, I believe I possess a unique skill set that can help maintain the positive improvement our schools have seen since COVID.

Q: What are two of your favorite things about Greenwich?

A: Our schools are our most vital resource. Since COVID, we have seen impressive gains in academic growth across the district. However, an east-west achievement gap still plagues performance scores. As a Board, we need to continue to focus on closing the gap between academic performances on the western side of town, particularly in our Title I schools. In addition, middle school scores across the district continue to lag and have not shown the improvement elementary and high school scores have seen. We can be better at using data to target student-level interventions in the middle and HS.

Q: What professional, volunteer, or public service accomplishment in the last 12 months are you most proud of and why?

A: There have been a number of accomplishments I am most proud of. 1. For the first time, our five-year Strategic Plan is grounded in measurable annual benchmarks. This has allowed the district to chart our academic growth and make regularly adjustments which benefit students. 2. Two years ago, the district hosted ResearchEd Greenwich, an education conference at GHS which brought international researchers and thought-leaders on the Science of Learning to Greenwich. It was a remarkable event signifying our remarkable district. 3. Capital projects are underway at Julian Curtis, Riverside, Old Greenwich, and the new CMS, while the high school has a new entrance and stadium. The criticism that we don't get anything built in town is false.

Q: What are one or two pressing challenges of the upcoming term and how would you approach them?

A: The current Board has chosen not to be a leader in the national push against cell phones in schools. The research on this issue is clear — phones should have no place in school. They are quite literally rewriting our students' brains, based on purposely addictive technology. The board must reconsider its reluctance to act on this matter. Meanwhile, we are wasting our investment in Cardinal Stadium. Due to an old legal decision worth fighting, we are limited to a handful of night games a year. This is a horrible detriment to our many championship sports teams, who should be regularly playing night games throughout the year for the benefit and enjoyment of all -- just like literally every other high school in the country.

Q: How do you plan to serve your constituents who didn't support you in decisions that affect our town and their lives?

A: Given the nature of our Board, I have found the most effective way to move any ball forward is through constant dialogue and data.

Q: In April, the Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET) voted to reduce the Greenwich Public Schools budget by approximately \$4 million. This reduction allowed GPS to increase its budget year over year by 3% (vs 5%). [Minutes of the FY 2025-2026 Budget Decision Day Three (3) Meeting of the BET held April 4, 2025]. What is your position on this decision?

A: I was highly disappointed that we could not get a compromise through in time that would have kept the high school start time unchanged. All political actors in town need to be cognizant that their decisions create real impacts on families that cannot always be easily remediated. The time to work on the budget is now, not in the spring when deadlines loom. Next year's budget will again face constraints, particularly in light of the anticipated new teacher contract. The more we can tone down the rhetoric and have honest conversations about where money needs to be spent, the better.