

MARK JERRELL, 48, is running for County Commission in District 4 who has been involved in a number of social service organizations including the National Association of Black School Educators and the Black Political Caucus.

ON SCHOOL CHOICE:

Jerrell supports efforts to provide all Mecklenburg children a quality education regardless of their zip code and to eliminate the re-segregation that has taken place in the district.

ON MEASURES TO INCREASE SCHOOL SAFETY:

Jerrell is in favor of wanding all visitors to school campuses and adding support personnel such as psychologists, resource officers, counsellors and nurses.

ON MEASURES TO ADDRESS STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES:

Jerrell says the county budget must include funding for additional support personnel to meet students' unaddressed psychological issues.

ON POPULATION GROWTH ISSUES:

Jerrell cites a lack of affordable housing and inequitable schools and well as pockets of poverty as the population growth issues the county is facing.

ON ADDRESSING POPULATION GROWTH ISSUES:

Jerrell believes the county should strengthen the Mecklenburg infrastructure and develop the greenway.

ON PANTHER STADIUM FUNDING:

Jerrell says he considers the funding of a new Panther stadium as a low priority issue.

ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING:

Jerrell says that the county should partner with other public and private entities to address the issue of affordable housing and offer incentives to developers of affordable housing.

ON 287(G):

Jerrell is in favor of a county resolution calling on the Sheriff's department to discontinue its participation in the 287(g) program.

ON OTHER ISSUES:

Jerrell lists a number of issues regarding poverty and economic inequality as well and quality education, homelessness and HIV as issues the county board should address.

1. **Name:** Mark Jerrell
2. **Age:** 48
3. **District:** Board of County Commissioners District 4
4. **Party Affiliation:** Democrat

5. Political background or other civic engagement endeavors

I am a community leader, proud veteran, advocate for political and social causes and committed to breaking down barriers for our most vulnerable citizens. I continue to be dedicated to public service and add value to the community through advocacy,

education and service. I am actively involved in the National Association of Black School Educators and the Black Political Caucus, where I have served as Chair of the Get Out The Vote (GOTV) and Legislative Committees. A significant accomplishment was the development of the first legislative scorecard designed to ensure accountability among local elected officials. Prior to running for elected office, I worked as the campaign manager and consultant for a myriad of elected officials to include, Judicial, City Council, County Commission and Congressional candidates.

I have been a vocal proponent of supporting our efforts related to education, including increasing teacher pay and providing additional support functions to ensure the “complete” needs of our students and families are met. I have hosted multiple community forums related to education, where I was able to secure participation from educators, community leaders, elected officials and the former CMS Superintendent, Ann Clark. I also continue to be actively engaged in voter education efforts as a featured speaker at churches and organizations throughout the community and host of a podcast which provides commentary on community issues.

6. What are your qualifications for this office?

My professional experience coupled with my education have provided me with a broad level of experience and expertise that have thoroughly prepared me for the challenges of the role of County Commissioner. I possess an ability to bridge the gap between identifying issues and implementing solutions, as well as, an ability to connect community priorities with policy. I have extensive experience working in complex organizations, where my primary role is to identify issues, bring people together and apply an effective solution in an effort to implement change. The areas outlined above have allowed me to utilize my skills to achieve successful outcomes and I will bring the same drive and focus to elected office.

7. Do you support the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School choice plan and other options such as charter schools and magnet schools?

I support measures that are designed to level the playing field and provide a quality education for all children, irrespective of their zip code. I also support all measures designed to eradicate segregation efforts in our community. Our community, once the national model for desegregation efforts, is currently the most segregated school system in the State of North Carolina. We know that segregated schools exacerbate pockets of poverty and the schools located within those areas find themselves with diminished access to quality resources.

8. What measures do you support to increase school safety?

The role of the county is to address community priorities, provide support and ensure resources are available, particularly as it relates to education, which includes providing a safe environment. The safety of our children and educators must be a top priority and it is imperative that we take proactive measures to ensure we are adequately addressing school safety. We must be committed to ensuring that these priorities are reflected in our budget. I believe we must look at the issue comprehensively. I support the effort initiated by CMPD, which is to “wand” all campus visitors, but I believe we must go further in our safety initiative. Additional safety measures would include (but not limited to), the review all safety/emergency plans, adding resources as it relates to support functions such as, psychologists, resource officers, nurses and counselors. If we do not proactively address

issues and provide the resources needed, we will inevitably encounter a tragic situation that is plaguing other communities across the country.

9. What measures can Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools take to address student mental health issues?

We must provide the necessary funding to CMS to ensure a well-rounded educational experience for our students. It is imperative that we are adequately equipped to address the educational, physical and psychological needs for our students and families. Our budget must reflect the need for additional support from psychologists, therapists, nurses and other staff that can be available to provide wrap around services to ensure the best academic experience possible. Many students experience unaddressed mental health crisis which left unaddressed, can lead to tragic circumstances. We must provide outlets of support for our students and families, as well as, proactively address and take preventative measures to avoid tragedies which are often the result of unaddressed mental health issues.

10. What problems do you believe that Charlotte/Mecklenburg population growth creates?

The major problems created and exacerbated by our population growth is the lack of affordable housing, equitable schools and an increase in pockets of poverty. Our population growth also adversely impacts our most vulnerable citizens and leaves them more disconnected from the community at large.

11. How can the county address those growth problems?

The County must address our growth problems by creating a strong infrastructure with the goal of interconnectivity, which can be attained via greenway systems, which also provides a tremendous financial return to our community, as well as, an increase in quality of life for all residents.

12. Do you support the use of County funds to build a domed stadium to guarantee that the Carolina Panthers remain in Charlotte?

The use of County funds for a domed stadium would be extremely low on my priority list. We must be committed to addressing our critical community issues which are affordable housing, lack of quality education and decreasing the institutional structures and barriers that create inequities. I support funding education, increasing teacher pay, providing additional nurses, psychologists and support for teachers. I also support housing and other incentives for our educators in an effort to attract and retain the best talent. We must provide a world class education for our students. I also support efforts to break up pockets of poverty located in our community and provide support for our most vulnerable citizens. We should not want to live in a community where people living in poverty have virtually no chance of improving their quality of life.

13. What measures can the Board of Commissioners take to increase the stock of affordable housing in the County?

The County is the largest land owner in our community and must partner with public and private entities to specifically address the affordable housing crisis. We must provide incentives and potentially deep discounts for the sale of land for the specific use of affordable housing and infrastructure designed to increase connectivity throughout all parts of our community.

14. Are you in favor of a resolution calling on the Sheriff's Department to discontinue its enforcement of federal immigration law. (287(g))?

I fully support a resolution calling on the Sheriff's Department to discontinue its participation in the 287(g) program. I believe this program is legalized profiling and it has an adverse economic and social impact on our community. The withdrawal from the program will take a multi-faceted approach. First, we must have a clear understanding of our legal options by looking at the contract and determining all options. Second, we must have a thorough and independent review of the data in an effort to make a determination of the impact this program has had on the community. Finally, we must be transparent with the community and allow their voices to be heard. As an elected official, our job is to do what is best for the people and execute the will of the people. The data I have reviewed clearly demonstrates that this program is not beneficial for our community.

15. What other issues do you believe the Board of Commissioners should address?

The BOCC must address the following:
Economic Opportunity & Upward Mobility
Quality & Equitable Education
Lack of Support for Minority Owned Businesses
Lack of Affordable & Low Income Housing
Lack of Community Interconnectivity
Adverse Impact of Property Revaluation
Homelessness
HIV