

Professional Biography

Brooke Wentz

Brooke Wentz has been in the classroom for over ten years. Before becoming a teacher, she discovered her passion for educating young people as a paraprofessional for Woodbury Public Schools in southern New Jersey. She formally began her teaching practice as a “career changer” and as a new mother. During this time, she decided to take advantage of the Alternative Routes to Certification (ARTC) course (for adults who already possessed a degree in a different discipline) at the University of Delaware in 2012, taking courses online, at night, and on weekends while working as a first-year teacher at a high school in New Castle, Delaware. Proficient in reading, writing, and speaking Spanish, Brooke began teaching at Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, a bilingual charter school in Newark, Delaware from 2013-2016. As a resident of Cecil County Maryland since 2008, Brooke decided to join Cecil County Public Schools in 2016 when a position at the local public school (Cherry Hill Middle School) opened. Since 2016, Brooke has worked diligently to help educate and positively impact students in her own community. Brooke is passionate about teaching her students 21st Century skills such as determining the credibility of sources, participating in civil discourse, presenting, and argumentative writing. Brooke currently serves as the lead teacher of the Social Studies department at her school and is currently working towards the completion of the Maryland Administrator Certificate I program at McDaniel College.

Prior to becoming an educator, Brooke earned her Bachelor’s degree in History/Political Science and Journalism from Rutgers University in 2003. She then moved to Miami and worked as an International Credentials Analyst from 2004-2006. Upon returning to the northeast, she earned her Master’s degree in Political Science (International Relations) from New York University in 2008 and continued her work in the field of international education at the International Consultants of Delaware in Philadelphia. Brooke and her husband Bill have resided in Cecil County, Maryland since 2008 and have three children who attend Cecil County Public Schools. She enjoys spending time with her family, a new found love of camping/hiking, learning new languages, and continues to be both an active teacher and parent in the community in which she lives.

Brooke A. Wentz

OBJECTIVE

To establish candidacy for the 2022 Maryland State Board of Education as a Teacher Member

EDUCATION

- **New York University**, New York, New York
Master of Arts, Political Science/International Relations; September 2008
- **Rutgers University**, New Brunswick, New Jersey
Bachelor of Arts, Journalism & Media Studies and History/Political Science; May 2003
- **University of Delaware**, Newark, Delaware
Alternative Routes to Certification (ARTC) Education program/additional coursework; May 2014

CERTIFICATIONS

- **Maryland Advanced Professional Certificate**
Social Studies (Grades 4-12) and English (Grades 7-12)
- **McDaniel College**, Westminster, Maryland
Completion of coursework towards the Maryland Administrator I Certificate Program
(Expected, 2023)

EXPERIENCE

- **Social Studies Teacher** (2016-Present)
Cecil County Public Schools, Cecil County, Maryland
- **Social Studies and English/Language Arts Teacher** (2013-2016)
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, Newark, Delaware
- **English Teacher** (2012-2013)
Pencader Charter High School, New Castle, Delaware
- **Instructional Assistant** (2006-2008)
Woodbury Junior/Senior High School, Woodbury, New Jersey

LEADERSHIP/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Lead Teacher, Social Studies Department, Cherry Hill Middle School
- Student Council Advisor, Cherry Hill Middle School
- AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) Site Team Member at Cherry Hill Middle School
- Member of School Improvement Team (SIT) at Cherry Hill Middle School

- Active participant in curriculum writing for Cecil County Public Schools
- Member of PTSO at Cherry Hill Middle School
- Member of PTO at Leeds Elementary School
- Member of Superintendent's Teaching and Learning Council (2019-2020)

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

- **International Educational Credentials Analyst**, International Consultants of Delaware Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 2008 - August 2010
- **International Education Consultant**, Josef Silny & Associates, Inc. Miami, Florida, July 2004 - August 2006
- **Internship**, New York City Office of the Mayor, Commission for the United Nations, Consular Corps and Protocol, New York, New York (Spring 2004)
- **Internship**, Ellis Island Immigration Museum and Library, New York, New York (Spring 2003)

RELEVANT SKILLS

- Proficient in speaking, reading and writing Spanish

Personal Statement

Brooke Wentz

I would like to take the opportunity to establish candidacy for the Maryland State Board of Education as a Teacher Member. I am eagerly looking forward to the prospect of taking on this influential role in the education of students across the state of Maryland.

As a public educator for over ten years, and a parent of three children attending Maryland public schools, I have both professional and personal experience with the issues facing our education system. As “front line workers,” educators continually witness the many changes occurring within our education system. Most educators would agree that a decrease in parental involvement has severely impacted our students, both academically and socially. As a result, schools have had to compensate by taking on a more significant role in students’ lives. As a candidate for the teacher member of the board, I would work tirelessly to promote greater parental involvement in our schools. Partnering with parents, we can work to restore and strengthen the connection between schools and the communities in which they serve.

In addition, teachers can attest first-hand to the pandemic’s effect on Maryland’s students. From virtual learning to the transition back to in-person learning, the tumultuous changes have revealed an even deeper schism in our education system. Students facing poverty or trauma are more likely to have chronic absenteeism, lower achievement, and disciplinary issues within a school setting. The student mental health crisis has now been propelled to the forefront of the laundry list of issues facing our children and is greatly affects the quality of instruction that schools are able to provide. As a result, teacher morale is at an all-time low, and teacher retention has become a challenge. As a member of the board, I will make partnering with families and community members a priority to facilitate more positive and purposeful social interactions for our students in the form of extracurricular and other activities. By increasing student socialization in other areas, we can reduce the weight of this very daunting issue facing our teachers. I believe that including parents in the conversation about mental health and socialization is the missing “puzzle piece” to the dilemma we are facing in our schools today. Furthermore, I am passionate about fostering high standards of academic achievement and providing the support necessary so that every student can reach their full potential.

Decisions made by the Maryland State Board of Education have a profound impact on diverse educational facilities across the state. As a candidate for the teacher member position of the state board, I am committed to serving in the best interest of our children. It would be an honor to serve and bring my passion and enthusiasm toward these educational issues to the forefront of a statewide conversation as the next Teacher Member of the Maryland State Board of Education.



CECIL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DIVISION OF EDUCATION SERVICES
SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP CENTER
201 BOOTH STREET • ELKTON, MD 21921

phone: 410.996.5401 ext.50214 • fax: 410.996.5454 • www.ccps.org

Jeffrey A. Lawson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

William H. Malesh
President, Board of Education

January 19, 2022

To whom it may concern,

It is with pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Mrs. Brooke Wentz as an applicant to serve as a Teacher Member on the Maryland State Board of Education. As the Instructional Coordinator for Social Studies, I have worked with and observed Mrs. Wentz in her role as a middle school social studies teacher since 2016. During this time I have seen the traits and actions that would allow her to be a valued member of the Maryland State Board of Education.

As a middle school social studies teacher, Mrs. Wentz has taught United States History and World Geography. It is through these courses that she has been able to exhibit her passion for teaching about the past and the present. Her lessons help students to find perspective and understanding in what is taught, engage in productive dialogue around contentious topics, analyze sources to find truth and greater meaning in the texts they read, and generate fact based arguments to support claims. In her classroom the skills necessary to be productive citizens are emphasized. As a result of these observations I am confident that Mrs. Wentz would bring the same attributes to the Maryland State Board of Education. She could be counted on to learn the things she doesn't know, sift through various perspectives to find truth or a best path forward, and lay out her thoughts in a concisely thought out manner. She expects this of her students, and she expects the same things of herself.

As a social studies Lead Teacher and curriculum writer Mrs. Wentz has demonstrated leadership and collaboration. She has been willing to take the lead to help others learn and move in the right directions. She has been willing to collaborate and weigh various perspectives to help the collective group make good decisions with the best interest of students in mind. I am confident that she would bring the same willingness to collaborate and lead which is so important for a Board of Education Member.

These are just a few of the reasons why I recommend Mrs. Brooke Wentz as an applicant to serve as a Teacher Member on the Maryland State Board of Education. Please feel free to reach out to me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

James D. Zimmer, Jr.
Instructional Coordinator for Social Studies

January 27, 2022

Amy Mazurkiewicz , M.Ed
Cecil County Public School Teacher
Bohemia Manor Middle School
2755 Augustine Herman Hwy
Chesapeake City, MD 21915
[REDACTED]

Dear Maryland State Board of Education,

I am more than pleased to have the opportunity to recommend Brooke Wentz for the role of the member seat on the State Board of Education. I was honored to work alongside Brooke for a year at Bohemia Manor Middle School. Brooke was always an outstanding asset to our team, and I have always been impressed by her professionalism and admirable personal qualities.

As a Social Studies and Science teacher, Brooke demonstrated her time management, organization, communication and content delivery skills highly effectively. In particular, during our hybrid year of teaching, she delivered impeccable ability to problem solve and manage new multilevel skills both virtually as well as within the classroom as well as taking on a new subject area of science.

In addition to Brooke's impressive portfolio of professional accomplishments, she has one of the best personalities I have had the pleasure of working with. She is a dependable, trustworthy, loyal and honest individual.

I wholeheartedly recommend Brooke for this position. I am confident that she will become an invaluable addition to this position. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding her character or past work.

Sincerely,

Amy Mazurkiewicz, M.Ed

January 20, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Brooke Wentz as Teacher Member for the Maryland State Board of Education. I have known Brooke personally for over seven years, and as a teacher for over five years. Ms. Wentz taught both of my daughters at Cherry Hill Middle School.

During my oldest daughter's 8th grade year, she was part of a "tri class" schedule, which included Ms. Wentz's history class. My daughter would regularly come home enthusiastic about the new things she had learned in Brooke's class, however, my daughter found herself overwhelmed by the workload. Ms. Wentz embraced the challenges she and the students faced with the shortened class time and the expectations to keep up with other classes. She encouraged my daughter to persevere and rise to the challenge. Even today, as a graduating senior with impressive academic credentials, my daughter employs the skills and the attitude that she learned during her year with Ms. Wentz.

My youngest daughter entered eighth grade experiencing some difficulties in school. Brooke made learning fun and exciting for a child who wrestled with the dichotomy of comprehension and expression. Brooke took the time to help her understand the assignments, work through the roadblocks, and build confidence through encouragement. Brooke's commitment to teaching each student and her compassion for the needs of every student, played a significant part in my daughter's ability to overcome her obstacles. She is currently in 10th grade, enrolled in honors courses, and has earned honor roll or distinguished honor roll every marking period since the eighth grade.

I was fortunate to observe Brooke interact with students on several occasions. During a field trip to Washington, DC, the students were broken up into small, chaperoned groups and given a worksheet to complete while on the trip. The assignment was very creative the students were excited to apply classroom lessons outside of the school.

During an 8th grade graduation picnic, I watched as many of the students spoke with Ms. Wentz about their high school assignments and what the future held for each of them. It was clear that the students trust Brooke's counsel and value her advice. The enthusiasm with which each child shared the prospect of his or her future reminded me of the fervor with which she taught each and every one of them.

Brooke and I have had several conversations about the daily educational challenges - and frustrations - that I as a parent, and she as an educator, have faced throughout the COVID pandemic. Her first-hand knowledge of the school system, and her eagerness to improve the educational experience of current and future students would surely be an asset to the Board.

Brooke Wentz has the student body's best interests at heart, and I highly recommend her to serve as a Teacher Member on the MSBE. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Rachel B. Davis

