

## First Coast News

# Six candidates vying to become Duval Schools next superintendent

Scott Schneider is the district's current chief of schools. Five other applicants with educational leadership backgrounds sent resumes from across the United States.

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Published: 3:14 PM EDT October 10, 2023

Updated: 9:50 PM EDT October 10, 2023

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Six candidates have applied to be Duval County Public Schools' next [superintendent](#).

Scott Schneider is Duval County Schools' current chief of schools. He's served in the position since 2021, and in his first year, "moved all 21 state turnaround schools to a "C" grade or higher" according to his resume.

Prior to that, he was the principal at Riverside High School, which was then known as Robert E. Lee High School, until 2019 when he became the district's Region Superintendent of High and Alternative Schools.

He earned bachelor and master's degrees from the University of North Florida and was trained at the [Council of Great City Schools Casserly Aspiring Superintendent Institute](#).

Schneider got a shining recommendation letter from the Florida Department of Education's Executive Director of the Bureau of School Improvement Dustin Sims, who commended Schneider's work at Duval County Public Schools, saying he knows "how to lead, motivate, and inspire others to be their best."

He was also recently a finalist for Brevard County Schools superintendent, but his critics say his work when he was still a Duval school principal shows a lack of tolerance and sensitivity for diverse groups.

His application includes a shining recommendation from the Florida Department of Education's Bureau of School Improvement. The agency's director said he moved ten Duval schools with grades of D or F out of turnaround status in his first year as chief.

Several spoke on his behalf at a school board meeting Monday night.

"There's no one more fitting for this role than Scott," one man said during public comment. Another woman said his experience speaks for itself.

"There are so many of us that are excited about the opportunity to possibly have him considered," she said.

But at a rally just before the meeting, two longtime Jacksonville civil rights activists criticized Schneider, who served as the principal of what was then known as Robert E. Lee High School until 2019.

During that time, teacher Amy Donofrio created the anti violence group called EVAC, whose teen leaders were invited to present at Harvard University and meet President Barack Obama.

According to Donofrio that program was cancelled under Schneider, a claim he denied. Wells Todd from Take 'Em Down Jax said he should've supported her.

"Scott Schneider did not come to her aid," Todd said. "He did not support her in any way, and we do not see this person as somebody who understands diversity at all."

Schneider declined to interview at this time out of "respect for the board's process." He said he hopes he can sit down with *First Coast News* if he's selected as a finalist but denied the allegations.

Dr. Clifford Burns has served as the Superintendent of Schools at Andover Regional School District (K-8th) in New Jersey since July 2021. He obtained a Doctorate of Education and Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Seton Hall University.

Burns began teaching in New York City in 2003. During his 20 years as an educator, he's been a teacher, assistant principal and principal at various elementary and middle schools across the country.

Dr. Garrick Askew has been the Assistant Superintendent of Operations at Clarke County School District in Athens, GA since March 2022. He attended the University of Georgia, obtaining a doctorate in educational leadership in 2004.

Askew's education career spans over two decades. He's served as a teacher, assistant principal and principal in Georgia for the majority of that time. Paulding County Schools' interim superintendent sent the school board a letter of recommendation on his behalf. Clark Maggart said Askew has the "skill, ability, and experience to serve in most any capacity that requires leadership, recruitment, and/or facilities management."

Adam Taylor is a consultant at Darryl Richardson, LLC, where he provides "research-based expertise and exceptional practice consultations that focus on supporting equitable systemic change, leadership practices that utilize student and school data to support the equitable distribution of resources to ensure all students are college and career ready."

He's served as superintendent at Rutland City Public Schools for two years, and before that, was the executive director and regional superintendent at West Contra Costa Unified School District. Taylor has a Master of Arts in Education from Patten University in California.

Dr. Corwin Robinson is a retired U.S. Army Colonel and former Program Administrator at St. Tammany Parish School System. He has served in various roles including assistant principal and superintendent. On his LinkedIn page, Robinson said his career objective is "to lead a

school district as superintendent or work in higher education administration."

He earned a doctorate from Walden University and attended schools in Nashville, TN and Louisiana prior to that. Robinson is currently the Turn Around Principal at La Grange High School in Louisiana and served as Lake County Schools' superintendent for two years in Tennessee.

Dr. Annie Cruez-Samuels is the Dean of Academic Affairs at Keiser University in Daytona Beach. Under that umbrella, she's been an online professor, student advisor and faculty member for the School of Business. Cruez-Samuels earned a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Keiser University in 2017.

She also has degrees from Indiana State University and the University of Phoenix. Cruez-Samuels said she's a "visionary leader" who has worked to improve student assessment and retention over the years.