

## 2024 Polk County School Board Candidates for Seat 2

Questions were given to all candidates on May 18, 2024. All candidates were asked to respond no later than June 1, 2024. This document was produced June 14, 2024.

### 1. What is your background?

#### Travis Keyes



First and most important and am a born again Christian. I was born and raised in Polk County (Haines City / Winter Haven). I have worked for local small businesses for most of my professional carrier and for SouthState Bank for the last six (6) years. I am married with two (2) children currently enrolled in Polk County Public Schools. My involvement in the community is ample as shown on my palm card (see attached).

#### Marcus Wright Jr.



The son of a School Teacher and Entrepreneur, I was born in Winter Haven and raised in Haines City, Florida. Raised to the Values of Faith, Family, and Service which is still engraved in me today. I have spent my entire life in Polk County, only leaving to attend college before returning. Currently, I am an employee at United Way of Central Florida.

## 2. Why are you running for this position now?

**Travis Keyes**



I'm running for Polk County School Board, District 2 because I want all children to have the same opportunities for success across the entire county. I see what my daughters are exposed to and want to make sure they, as well as all students, are getting the best education possible. Let's get back to the basics (reading, writing, and math)!

**Marcus Wright Jr.**



My "Why" is simple: as a resident of this district, I am committed to serving as a voice for our students, staff, and families, ensuring they have the resources needed to thrive amid our rapidly growing population. Together, we can build a stronger, more supportive educational community.

### 3. Why should citizens vote for you specifically instead of your opponent?

**Travis Keyes**



Experience, experience, experience. I've been involved with Polk County Public Schools at the leadership level. I'm engaged in the community with the students and stakeholders and know the concerns. Also, I am a parent and have children who attend Polk County Public Schools.

**Marcus Wright Jr.**



Citizens should vote for me because I am dedicated to serving our community and ensuring accessibility for all. As part of Generation Z, I bring a unique understanding of the diverse needs of our students. I have built a platform designed for all stakeholders to thrive, fostering an inclusive and supportive educational environment.

**4. What do you believe are the most important challenges or priorities regarding public education that families and the Polk County School Board are currently facing?**

**Travis Keyes**



Equal opportunity for access to quality education, which includes proper curriculum and school safety. Overcrowding of schools due to rapid residential development.

**Marcus Wright Jr.**



The most important challenges facing public education in Polk County include improving graduation rates, boosting staff and faculty morale, and enhancing district grading. Ensuring students successfully complete their education is vital for their future opportunities. Additionally, supporting and motivating our educators, alongside striving for higher district performance grades, are essential for creating a thriving educational environment.

**5. There is an amendment scheduled to be on the November 2024 Florida ballot that would change school board elections from nonpartisan to partisan beginning in 2026. What are your opinions regarding this and term limits for School Board members?**

**Travis Keyes**



I'm personally in favor of both.

**Marcus Wright Jr.**



I believe that party affiliation doesn't belong on school board seats, as education should remain a nonpartisan issue. Additionally, I support term limits for school board members, with a maximum of three 4-year terms to ensure fresh perspectives and accountability.

**6. What strategies or recommendations do you have for how the Polk County School Board and the Lake Wales Charter School system could work together more effectively to ensure all families and facilities in Lake Wales are better supported?**

**Travis Keyes**



I am advocate for school choice. I believe choice creates competition and forces lower performing schools to improve. The Polk County School Board should view the Lake Wales Charter School system as an ally. Open communication between the administrations is necessary for the success of both.

**Marcus Wright Jr.**



I recommend establishing an annual joint board meeting between the Polk County School Board and the Lake Wales Charter School system. This meeting would allow both boards to discuss shared concerns and collaborate on solutions while also providing a platform to hear and address the needs of the community effectively.



**7. Where can people go to get more information about you and/or your campaign?**

**Travis Keyes**



website: [School Board Member Polk County, FL | Home | Travis Keyes Campaign \(keyes4schools.com\)](https://www.keyes4schools.com)

facebook: [Travis Keyes for Polk County School Board Dist. 2](#)

**Marcus Wright Jr.**



For more information about me and my campaign, please visit my Facebook page under [Marcus Wright Jr. for Polk County School District 2](#). You can also reach out through my website at [Wrightchoice4all@gmail.com](mailto:Wrightchoice4all@gmail.com).