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Teen deals with reaction, reality of his primary win

Now that Connor Kurtz, 17, has won primary for Boone school board, he braces for the job

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Now that he has survived the primary, maybe Connor Kurtz can take a moment to breathe.

The 17-year-old Douglassville resident easily prevailed on both the Democratic and Republican tickets Tuesday, beating out three other candidates cross-filed for a seat on the Daniel Boone School Board.

In November, Kurtz's name will appear on both party tickets in Region 1, which consists of Amity Township. Barring a successful write-in by another candidate, he will win the board seat.

Whether he felt any different or not, the Daniel Boone High School junior grabbed his books Wednesday morning and showed up for classes, seemingly unmoved by his overwhelming victory.



Fellow classmates greeted him like a conquering hero.

"Oh, they were very positive," Kurtz said after returning home for the day. "They were high-fiving me."

Reactions were mixed, however, from teachers he encountered.

"Some teachers congratulated me, and half of them didn't say anything," Kurtz said. "It's sad to say, but I kind of expected it."

"The congratulations were surprising; I expected a lot of ambivalence."

There was nothing lackluster about the media's interest in Kurtz, something he found out as the day progressed with newspapers, radio and television all wanting a comment or two.

By mid-afternoon, media requests received at the school were restricted to regional interests. But Connor realizes more news outlets from outside the area will reach out to him. It's not often that a high school student is a near shoo-in for the school board.

"I'll have to prepare myself a little bit for that," he said.

Kurtz also is preparing himself, he said, for the task ahead: representing the taxpayers and students of Daniel Boone. He's been spending time on the Web reviewing school board policies in Boone and other Berks County districts, looking for ways to bring fresh ideas to the board.

He also believes future colleagues on the board have good intentions and will welcome him once he takes his place.

"When you ruffle feathers like I've done, not everybody is going to be as enthusiastic of my joining the board as I would like," Kurtz said. "But I'm hoping we can work together for the next four years in harmony."

Kurtz added that he hopes taxpayers will hold him accountable as he has tried to do with the existing board.

"I think he's going to realize it's a hell of a responsibility," said Daniel Boone board member Walter P. Sheehan. "It's going to be a little bit different for him on the other side of the podium."

As far as the board goes, Sheehan said, any differences members have with Kurtz would be cast aside.

"The board will welcome him as it would anyone else," he said.

With the primary over, Kurtz said he might be able to relax a little and reflect.

"I hope I can slow down for at least a few days and catch my breath," he said.

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