

With the 2008 presidential primaries heating up, many are still left wondering whom to vote for. Following a poll of Guilford students, several issues came up that were deemed crucial to deciding on a candidate.

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See where each candidate stands, and decide before North Carolina's primaries on May 6.

IRAQ WAR

HEALTHCARE

EDUCATION



Hillary Clinton plans, on her first day in office, to assemble a meeting of the Joint Chiefs, Secretary of Defense, and national security advisers to create a viable withdrawal plan within 60 days.

Her plan would provide universal healthcare, while giving people with insurance more choices in their healthcare plans. Working families would get a tax credit and insurance premiums would be based on a percentage of income.

Would end No Child Left Behind. She plans to cut the minority K-12 dropout rate by 50 percent. Proposes a \$3,500 college tax credit and would give \$500 million to community colleges across the nation.



John Edwards Advocates withdrawal from Iraq in nine to 10 months and clarifying the illegality of the war. Edwards is against the surge and would immediately withdraw 40,000-50,000 troops. Edwards also calls for direct talks with Iran and Syria and other neighbors as well as for a regional peace conference.

Has a structured plan for universal healthcare. Would create tax credits for working families, would expand government programs, and reform insurance laws. He would force businesses to provide healthcare for their workers or contribute to the national healthcare plan.

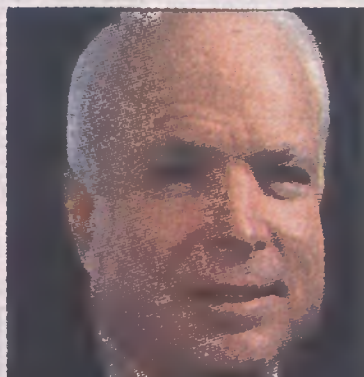
Would "radically overhaul" the No Child Left Behind Act and would increase salary for teachers in high-poverty schools by up to \$15,000. "College for Everyone" initiative would provide tuition assistance and money for books in public universities in exchange for students working part-time.



Barack Obama would immediately begin withdrawal of troops beginning with one to two brigades per month. All troops would be out within 16 months, except for those guarding the American embassy. He also advocates regional diplomacy, including talks with Iran and Syria.

Would provide healthcare for many through use of subsidies for low-income families who don't qualify for Medicaid or SCHIP. He calls for mandatory coverage of children and force employers who don't provide healthcare to contribute a percentage to the national healthcare plan.

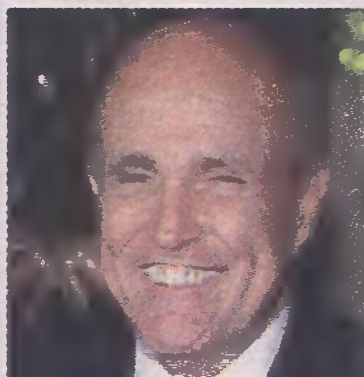
Would reform and fully fund No Child Left Behind. Advocates a form of merit pay for high-performance teachers. Proposes a \$4,000 tax credit for college.



John McCain is an ardent and consistent supporter of the war and a poster-boy for the "stay the course" mentality. Supports and praises the troop surge, is against withdrawal, and is in favor of doing whatever it takes to win the war. This includes sending more soldiers to Iraq, if needed.

Opposes universal healthcare. Proposes creating more awareness of current government programs, such as SCHIP and Medicaid, and would give tax credits to low-income Americans. Advocates medical malpractice reform as an effective way to keep costs down.

Calls state of preparation for American children's integration into the global economy "deplorable" and advocates school choice. Supports basic tenets of NCLB, and encourages high-performing schools to compete for the best teachers. McCain advocates merit pay for public school teachers.



Rudy Giuliani is in favor of the surge and supports a continued military presence in Iraq. Giuliani calls a timetable for withdrawal a huge mistake that would lead to further destabilization in the region. He favors staying the course and completing the job.

Equates universal healthcare with socialized medicine. Calls for market-based reductions to costs and will give tax credits to low-income Americans. He would also create more health savings accounts.

Wants to establish a federal school voucher program and expand charter schools to give parents more choice. He looks at school choice as a way to guarantee better education.



Mike Huckabee supports the troop surge, calling it "the military means to achieve the political end of sectarian resolution," and is against Congress' efforts to put a cap on American troops in Iraq. Calls Iraq a "battle in our generational, ideological war on terror." Argues withdrawal could lead to more conflict.

Opposes universal healthcare, and a federally managed healthcare system, but would encourage the private sector to come up with a plan that would lower costs while providing quality healthcare. Advocates fighting medical malpractice suits to keep healthcare prices down.

Admires NCLB but advocates more room for states to set their own benchmark. Huckabee is a strong supporter of arts and music programs, referring to them as "Weapons of Mass Instruction," and would continue funding these programs in public schools.



Mitt Romney opposes setting a timetable for withdrawal. He supports rapidly deploying more troops into Baghdad and Anbar Province while making it clear to the Iraqi government that the U.S. will eventually pull out.

Against universal healthcare, advocates decreasing costs by deregulating state markets. While Massachusetts governor, however, he signed a universal healthcare law that required all residents to have coverage.

Advocates school choice, such as charter schools and home schools. He would create a home school tax credit, will improve NCLB by looking at individual student progress as opposed to the school, and advocates merit pay for higher performing teachers.