

Board of Education Candidate Question Responses

DAVID ADAMCZYK

1. Why are you interested in running for the Board of Education?

I wish to continue my involvement with the students, staff and patrons of our community. There is a special bond within our school and community. I wish to continue in being a part of it, trying to do what is best for our children

2. Why do you feel you are qualified to serve as a Board Member on the BOE?

Being in education my entire adult life, six years as 5th/6th grade teacher and 29 years as a principal (8 in Nebraska and 21 in Pleasant Hill) and 15 years as a board member in Pleasant Hill has given me experience, knowledge, vision and determination to make our school district strong and progressive.

3. What do you think the Board of Education's roles are?

The first priority is to hire a strong superintendent that will lead our school district having a vision to meet the demands of the future of our students, teachers and community. The board's role is to set policies and procedures and to see that they are followed. Also, to listen to our patrons of concerns and new ideas.

4. What are the contributions you feel you can make as a Board Member?

With my background in education for the last 36 years I can offer my experience, passion to learn, my listening and problem solving skills and wisdom to carry on the great academic culture of our district.

5. What do you think the biggest challenges for our teachers are?

With teachers being responsible for individual classrooms or a larger group of students in a set subject one must motivate their students to learn and do their best. The school district needs to continue to provide resources and training to the teachers. Collaboration with each other is a must in trying to improve each other, doing what is best for our students.

6. What do you think the biggest challenges for our students are?

Our students are our future. The district needs to provide the best education to them, providing them with resources, to be creative, explore, problem solve and help/guide them to make decisions for their future. Our teachers need to be aware of the mental health of their students, too.

7. What do you think the biggest challenges for our parents are?

The challenges of parents is simple and complicated. Establishing a strong bond with the school/teacher is vital in each child's education. Communication between the parent and teacher is a must and important in their child's education.

8. What do you think is the biggest challenge for the BOE?

Being financially responsible to our patrons is always a challenge while trying to provide the best facilities to our students, teachers and community. Another big challenge for our district is the retention and recruitment of teachers, which has become a nation wide concern.

ATHENA BRATTIN

1. Why are you interested in running for the Board of Education?

I'm running for the Pleasant Hill R-III school board to be a voice for the voiceless. In this district, parents have been silenced and censored. They have been mocked and their concerns have been minimized. Parents deserve better! Over fifty percent of students in the district are not proficient in ELA, Math, and Science. Proficient means they understand the concepts being taught. Over half of students are deficient in core subjects and test scores continue to decline. Students deserve better! Teachers are being told what to teach, when to teach and how to teach. They have been reduced to test scores. It's no wonder they are leaving the profession they once loved in droves. Teachers deserve better!

2. Why do you feel you are qualified to serve as a Board Member on the BOE?

As a mother of 5 children with an age span from 21 years old down to 8 years old, I have seen the steady decline in our district. This first-hand knowledge as a parent and active member in the community has equipped me to serve on the board of education. I have a background in sales, community event planning, fundraising, grant writing, budget planning & execution, donor relations, marketing and leadership. I believe I possess the capability to bridge the gap between parents and the school district to restore their trust, by giving them a voice in their student's education. Together we can build a brighter future.

3. What do you think the Board of Education's roles are?

The purpose and the role of the Board of Education is to exercise general supervision over the schools of the district. The board is the legislative and policy-making authority for the district. The board has the duty to employ and hold accountable the superintendent. The superintendent works for the board of education and not the reverse. The board is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of policies, adoption of the annual budget, employing district personnel, establishing salaries, personnel policies and educational goals. The board also has the duty to keep district patrons informed and for keeping themselves informed about the needs and wishes of the "public". The public would be anyone with an interest in the school district, not reserved just to biological parents, as in the past when step-parents were refused opportunities to speak at board meetings.

4. What are the contributions you feel you can make as a Board Member?

As a board member, I feel I can bring transparency and accountability back to the district. Transparency builds trust. If elected, I will serve the people who elected me...not the institution. I will be accountable to the parents, teachers, taxpayers and voters who put their trust in me to be their voice. In addition, I bring a strong understanding of the Missouri State legislative process and can speak to how bills moving through the process will affect the district.

5. What do you think the biggest challenges for our teachers are?

Teachers are struggling more than ever to keep their passion for the job they once loved. They are struggling to be heard and are often reduced to a "test score" to gauge their performance. We need to take a serious look at the handcuffs DESE has placed on teachers. Based on data, Missouri teacher pay is embarrassingly ranked at #47. I love athletics, but shouldn't we be rewarding those tasked with the education of our students, our number one goal, first? Teachers, I see you, I hear you and I will fight for you!

6. What do you think the biggest challenges for our students are?

Over 51% of students in our district are not proficient in ELA, Math or Science as reported on DESE's website. Proficient means they understand the concepts they were taught. More than half of students are basic or deficient in core subjects. The biggest challenge our students face is not being proficient in core subjects, thus not truly being workforce ready. We need to remove politics from the classroom and get back to the basics.

7. What do you think the biggest challenges for our parents are?

The biggest challenge parents face is being able to trust the district and feel valued and heard. Parents are the number one authority in their child's life. Students excel when parents, teachers and the district work together on their behalf. Parents in this district have been publicly mocked by the current administration and board. They've been laughed at; their concerns have been minimized and they have been refused the opportunity to speak at board meetings. Parents should not be required to jump through hoops to get answers to questions or concerns. Parents deserve a voice and a transparent district.

8. What do you think is the biggest challenge for the BOE?

The biggest challenge our BOE faces is the inability to look inwardly and admit when processes aren't working and redirect course. The board will need to work hard to regain the trust of those who elected them.

RYAN CHARLES

1. *Why are you interested in running for the Board of Education?*

As a Navy veteran, software engineer, and father of three with one on the way, I am interested in running for the board of education because I believe I can bring unique skills and experiences to the table. Firstly, my time in the Navy taught me the importance of discipline, teamwork, and leadership. These qualities are essential not only in the military but also in education. I believe that my experience in the Navy can help me work effectively with other board members and school officials to make decisions that benefit all students. Secondly, as a software engineer, I have developed problem-solving and critical-thinking skills that are highly valuable in the field of education. I believe that I can bring an analytical approach to assessing educational policies and programs to ensure that they are effective and beneficial for students. Thirdly, as a father of three with one on the way, I am deeply invested in the education of our children. I understand the challenges and concerns that parents face when it comes to their children's education, and I am committed to ensuring that all students have access to high-quality educational opportunities that prepare them for success in the future. Overall, I am interested in running for the board of education because I believe that I can make a positive impact on the education of our children, and I am committed to working collaboratively with other board members, educators, and parents to achieve this goal.

2. *Why do you feel you are qualified to serve as a Board Member on the BOE?*

Leadership skills: As a Navy veteran, I have developed strong leadership skills that can be applied to my role on the board of education. I can lead and collaborate effectively with other board members, educators, and stakeholders to make decisions that positively impact students.

Problem-solving skills: As a software engineer, I have experience in problem-solving and critical thinking. These skills are valuable in addressing challenges and finding innovative solutions to improve the education system in our community.

Understanding of discipline: My experience in the Navy taught me the importance of discipline and structure. This can be applied to the education system, where discipline and structure are crucial for creating a positive learning environment for students.

Parent perspective: As a father, I have firsthand experience with the education system and understand the challenges and concerns that parents face all the time. This perspective is crucial in making decisions that are in the best interest of students and their families. **Commitment to service:** My background as a Navy veteran and experience as a software engineer demonstrate my commitment to service and my willingness to take on challenges to benefit others. Serving on the board of education is a way for me to give back to this community and make a better and more positive impact on the lives of students than has been before.

3. *What do you think the Board of Education's roles are?*

The Board of Education is responsible for setting the direction of the education system in their jurisdiction and ensuring that the needs of students, teachers, and the community are being met. They have a critical role in shaping the future of education and preparing students for success in the world beyond the classroom.

4. *What are the contributions you feel you can make as a Board Member?*

My combination of skills, experiences, and perspectives can bring a unique perspective to the board of education and contribute to improving the education system in your community. I can bring my leadership, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills to the table to make informed decisions that benefit students and their families the right way.

5. *What do you think the biggest challenges for our teachers are?*

Workload and burnout: Teachers often must juggle many responsibilities, including lesson planning, grading, managing classrooms, and meeting with parents. This workload can lead to burnout, which can negatively impact teacher morale and student outcomes. **Classroom management:** Maintaining classroom order and managing student behavior can be a challenge, particularly in larger classes or with students who have special needs or behavioral issues.

Technology integration: With the increasing use of technology in the classroom, teachers need to be proficient in using technology and integrating it into their lessons effectively. This can be a challenge, particularly for older or less tech-savvy teachers.

Adequate resources: Teachers need adequate resources, including materials, supplies, and technology, to provide high-quality education to their students.

6. *What do you think the biggest challenges for our students are?*

Mental health and well-being: Many students today are struggling with mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress. These issues can impact academic performance and overall well-being and addressing them requires a holistic approach that includes support from school counselors, teachers, and most importantly parents.

Bullying and safety: Students may face bullying and safety concerns, both in-person and online. Schools must provide a safe and supportive environment for all students and take appropriate measures to address bullying and ensure student safety.

Technology use: While technology can be a powerful tool for learning, it can also be a distraction and lead to cyberbullying and other negative online behaviors. Helping students use technology responsibly and safely is an important challenge for educators.

College and career readiness: As students prepare to graduate high school, they face the challenge of navigating the complex college application process or entering the workforce. Ensuring that students are prepared for success in college and careers is a critical challenge for educators.

RYAN CHARLES (CONTINUED)

7. What do you think the biggest challenges for our parents are?

Communication: There is a disconnect between parents and staff that needs to be resolved to provide the best possible environment for our children.

Academic performance: Parents may be concerned about their child's academic performance, particularly if they are struggling with a specific subject or are falling behind their peers.

Social and emotional development: Parents may also be concerned about their child's social and emotional development, particularly if they are experiencing bullying, anxiety, or other challenges that can impact their overall well-being.

8. What do you think is the biggest challenge for the BOE?

Managing resources effectively: The Board of Education is responsible for managing resources effectively, including funding, facilities, and personnel. This requires making strategic decisions about how to allocate resources to best support student learning and well-being.

Responding to changing educational needs: The Board of Education must be able to adapt to changing educational needs and trends, including changes in technology, curriculum, and teaching methods.

Building strong relationships with stakeholders: The Board of Education must build strong relationships with parents, educators, and community members, to ensure that everyone is working together to support student learning and success.

LORI LANCASTER REDWINE

1. Why are you interested in running for the Board of Education?

The youth are our future and I feel this is a way I can be impactful.

2. Why do you feel you are qualified to serve as a Board Member on the BOE?

Being objective, maintain a current knowledge of educational events, and have previously served on the Board of Education helping it evolve into a more transparent forum.

3. What do you think the Board of Education's roles are?

Making policy, holding administration accountable for actions, and listening to it's constituency.

4. What are the contributions you feel you can make as a Board Member?

Being informed, help with choices/decisions to make our students and educators successful.

5. What do you think the biggest challenges for our teachers are?

State changing curriculum objectives frequently and closer districts having higher pay scales, making retention a challenge.

6. What do you think the biggest challenges for our students are?

Recently, overcoming the social, educational, and domestic aftermath of the COVID pandemic

7. What do you think the biggest challenges for our parents are?

New educational tools and curriculum, it differs from the "old way". The new way provides alternative ways of thinking and teaching

8. What do you think is the biggest challenge for the BOE?

Overcoming assumptions

LISA VESCOVI

1. *Why are you interested in running for the Board of Education?*

I have been passionate about public education for over 20 years. I earned a bachelor's degree in education, taught in the Blue Springs School District and in the Pleasant Hill School District before opening the daycare, Kidz Inc. in 2009, and I have three children and will have two grandchildren in the school district. After observing my husband's 8 years of service, I became very interested in the important work our Board of Education engages in. After serving for a year, I am still very committed to the work of improving our school district to ensure our district provides a high-quality education to all students.

2. *Why do you feel you are qualified to serve as a Board Member on the BOE?*

My background in education and the experiences I have had with children and educators for over 20 years makes me qualified to serve as a school board member. I also believe my involvement in the community has allowed me to be connected to the members of our community and helps me understand what the constituents want in a school board member.

3. *What do you think the Board of Education's roles are?*

The members of the Board of Education are voted in to oversee the work of the Superintendent, monitor the district budget, and be a voice for the community members of which they serve.

4. *What are the contributions you feel you can make as a Board Member?*

I believe I can bring experience to the table given my education and professional experience. Working with children and the adults who work with our children gives a perspective into what it takes to make sound decisions in a school district. I believe I have a firm grasp on where we are as a district and the areas in which we need to focus on improving. The Pleasant Hill School District has made important changes over the last 9 years, and I want to be part of the journey to continue making sound decisions that will continue to push us forward.

5. *What do you think the biggest challenges for our teachers are?*

Being an educator has always been challenging. The demands and expectations placed on our teachers have continued to increase over the years. However, our educators have been tasked with even more challenges as they continue to meet high expectations on the back of the pandemic. Learning loss has made an impact on classrooms and how our teachers approach instruction. I believe we will be working to overcome this burden for some time and our teachers will need all of the support we can give them

6. *What do you think the biggest challenges for our students are?*

Our students are also struggling with the residual effects of the pandemic from the last two years. Mental health, social skills, and the stamina for school have become major issues for our children. We will need to continue to be cognizant of these issues and provide as much support and resources to our students as possible.

7. *What do you think the biggest challenges for our parents are?*

Parents continue the uphill climb of supporting their students at home. Parents have had to shoulder more academic responsibility at home and are faced with providing more support to students who may be struggling academically, emotionally, or behaviorally. We need to continue to build partnerships between our parents and the school district in order to provide optimal support to our students and families.

8. *What do you think is the biggest challenge for the BOE?*

I believe the biggest challenge for our BOE lies in the responsibility to know the changes in legislation during a time when education has been forced to constantly make changes in how they operate.