



VOTE411.ORG VOTERS' GUIDE
SPRING PRIMARY 2021

Learn where candidates running for office in your community stand on the issues. Candidate responses were taken from the League of Women Voters' voter guide available on [VOTE411.org](https://www.vote411.org).

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Wisconsin Superintendent of Public Instruction

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction supervises the state's public schools. Voters elect the state superintendent of public instruction to serve a four-year term. There is no term limit.

Note: Spanish translations of the candidates' answers for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction office can be found on [Vote411.org](https://www.vote411.org).

Candidates (choose 1):

Sheila Briggs



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

Committee: Briggs for Kids 710 South Street Deforest, WI 53532

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Education: Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, University of Wisconsin-Madison --- Master Administrator Capstone Certificate, University of Wisconsin-Madison --- Master of Science in Educational Administration, Cardinal Stritch University ---- Bachelor of Science in Child and Family Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Questions:

Q: What in your professional and community background qualifies you for this office? How will your experience assist you in working with people from diverse backgrounds?

Sheila Briggs: I began my career as a kindergarten teacher and then a principal, working to move our third-grade readers from 58% to 100% proficient at a time when poverty tripled. At the Madison district office, I supported 32 school principals and helped close the district-wide racial achievement gap in reading. In 2011, Tony Evers asked me to join him at the DPI as an Assistant State Superintendent. My entire career has been about ensuring the success of all students – especially those who are underserved.

Q: How have you demonstrated nimbleness in responding to unforeseen crises in the past? How would you use this experience to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications?

Sheila Briggs: I've navigated all kinds of crises over the course of my career – from medical emergencies to last-minute staffing changes. At the DPI, I've shown strong leadership in the face of challenges like Act 10, the revolt against common core, and now COVID-19. In order to guide our schools through a crisis such as this, we must engage with key stakeholders and the Department of Health Services to keep our families safe. I've already developed relationships with both, and I'll be ready to lead on Day 1.

Q: How will you reduce racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes in PreK-12 education throughout Wisconsin?

Sheila Briggs: All of my priorities are rooted in equity, and I believe we need a leader with both experience and a desire to create real change at the DPI. It's going to take modifying our accountability

system, the way we assess students, and the way we teach skills like reading. It's going to require us to improve educator preparation and diversify our teacher pipeline. And of course, it's going to take some serious funding changes. But if we really want to make schools work for all kids, it'll be worth it.

Q: How will you ensure there is equitable public education funding, given the competition for funding in the next biennial budget cycle?

Sheila Briggs: We cannot ignore the impact that this pandemic will have on the next state budget. Tens of thousands of Wisconsinites are out of work, and the financial effects of COVID-19 will be felt for years. However, we cannot balance our budget problems on the backs of our kids and teachers. They need more resources to reopen safely, stronger mental health services, and better access to broadband. It'll be a tough job, but I'm ready to work closely with the legislature to ensure every school is supported.

Q: Using your influence and authority, how would you collaborate with other groups to set curriculum priorities? Please also describe your priorities and if they include civics education.

Sheila Briggs: One of my priorities at the DPI has been to ensure that all teachers have access to high-quality instructional materials that are aligned with our standards. To do that, I've had to collaborate with our CESAs, our five largest urban districts, and a number of professional organizations. These partnerships are critical – along with providing a well-rounded curriculum for all of our students that includes civics, the arts, world languages, and career and technical education.

Joe Fenrick



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

Committee: Friends of Joe Fenrick

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Twitter: twitter.com/fenrickforedu

Education: Master of Science in Education Curriculum Instruction UW-Oshkosh 2009 Bachelor of Science in Education Natural Science UW-Oshkosh 2006

Questions:

Q: What in your professional and community background qualifies you for this office? How will your experience assist you in working with people from diverse backgrounds?

Joe Fenrick: I am currently in my 15th year as a science teacher at Fond du Lac High School and a geology lecturer for UW-Oshkosh Fond du Lac Campus currently in my 8th year. I have a Master's Degree from UW-Oshkosh in Curriculum and Instruction. As a third term Fond du Lac County Board Supervisor, I advocate for children's mental, physical and emotional health. Being a champion for every child, I chair the Human and Social Service Committees. I'll be a voice for Wisconsin's families, children and educators.

Q: How have you demonstrated nimbleness in responding to unforeseen crises in the past? How would you use this experience to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications?

Joe Fenrick: Dedication, compassion and enthusiasm are teaching traits that I will bring from the classroom to the State Superintendent office. When making decisions I listen to the people involved and bring together the community to make an informed decision. As an elected official with experience in our schools I provided input on writing guidelines for opening our schools in Fond du Lac County. The guidelines focused on safety for everyone while providing an opportunity for learning.

Q: How will you reduce racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes in PreK-12 education throughout Wisconsin?

Joe Fenrick: Closing the achievement gap is one of the most important concepts that we can do in education. It's a long term problem that demands long term solutions. It means that we need to make changes in ourselves and within our schools. Not just over one day or a week or even a year, but for generations to come. It means that we set high standards for every child, in every school, and lift them up to reach their goals. We need to start closing the achievement gap early in a child's life.

Q: How will you ensure there is equitable public education funding, given the competition for funding in the next biennial budget cycle?

Joe Fenrick: Education budgets need to be predictable, transparent and fair. As State Superintendent I will look for ways to modernize our school funding formula to make sure it is equitable across the state. We need to ensure that all of our kids throughout Wisconsin have the resources, highly educated teachers, and modern facilities so that they can be successful. I look forward to receiving information, thoughts, and ideas from everyone involved to review the funding formula and devise a plan.

Q: Using your influence and authority, how would you collaborate with other groups to set curriculum priorities? Please also describe your priorities and if they include civics education.

Joe Fenrick: Teaching not testing! For too long we have seen the effects of high stakes tests and what they do to our children. We have seen schools reduce curriculums in favor of testing skills; I want to change that. Our schools need to expand and provide more in depth curriculum especially in civics and the fine arts. We need more hands on learning and employability skills being taught. Together with families, educators, and students I want education to be a model of ground floor up instead of top down.

Troy Gunderson



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

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Questions:

Q: What in your professional and community background qualifies you for this office? How will your experience assist you in working with people from diverse backgrounds?

Troy Gunderson: I am a fifth generation Wisconsinite and the product of an outstanding public education in Colfax. My wife, mother, and father-in-law all enjoyed successful careers as teachers in Wisconsin. Every opportunity I've had in my life comes from public education. That includes my 35 years in public education as a teacher, coach, principal, and superintendent. I'm running to ensure these opportunities are provided for generations to come regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, wealth, or zip code.

: How have you demonstrated nimbleness in responding to unforeseen crises in the past? How would you use this experience to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications?

Troy Gunderson: I was an administrator when Act 10 was passed - it was an inflection point. It presented a challenge to make sure we could support our teachers. We are now at another inflection point. The pandemic has laid bare our racial, social, and economic inequities. Public education is poised to lead in the process of confronting these issues. Every day in the classroom requires nimbleness; as a former classroom teacher I'll bring that nimbleness to guide our public schools through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q: How will you reduce racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes in PreK-12 education throughout Wisconsin?

Troy Gunderson: I envision the Department of Public Instruction exerting a larger role in breaking down the social construct of race and its impact in the classroom. We need a more culturally sensitive approach to teaching if we are truly dedicated to eliminating opportunity gaps in education. We need purposeful, positive recognition of cultural differences and authentic relationships with all families and communities. We have to commit to meeting students where they are - not where we think they "should be."

Q: How will you ensure there is equitable public education funding, given the competition for funding in the next biennial budget cycle?

Troy Gunderson: The ability to influence budgets and legislation is a critical part of serving as State Superintendent. Spending 25 years working in a politically conservative school district taught me the politics of policy, the importance of being willing to listen, and how to collaboratively set goals to advance an agenda. I will work with our policy team and CESA to establish an equitable legislative agenda- particularly for education funding. Equitable funding is key to produce future ready graduates.

Q: Using your influence and authority, how would you collaborate with other groups to set curriculum priorities? Please also describe your priorities and if they include civics education.

Troy Gunderson: I would invite groups to discuss curriculum issues ranging from STEM to technical education to civic engagement. My platform includes having teachers ready to teach which requires a high quality curriculum that is relevant to the communities they teach in. We need our public schools to produce future ready graduates - college, career, and citizenship ready.

Shandowlyon Shawn HendricksWilliams



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

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Education: Associate Degree in Human Services; Bachelor's Degree in Human Services; Master's Degree in Special Education; Ed. Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership; Doctorate Degree in Educational Leadership; Certificate of Leadership; Executive Certification in Diversity Coaching; Horace Mann-Abraham Lincoln Fellow; MetLife/Teachers Network Leadership Institute Fellow; National Education Association Fellow; New Leaders for New Schools Fellow; Herb Kohl Outstanding Teacher Award Fellow

Questions:

Q: What in your professional and community background qualifies you for this office? How will your experience assist you in working with people from diverse backgrounds?

Shandowlyon Shawn HendricksWilliams: An educator who has served children from K3 through higher education as a paraprofessional, teacher, administrator and adjunct faculty and as one who holds 5

licenses from DPI, Dr. Hendricks possesses the knowledge, skills and experience that more than qualifies her as the next State Superintendent. Dr. Hendricks was raised in rural Illinois and lives in urban Wisconsin. She established a non-profit based on identified community needs. She is the best candidate for diverse populations.

Q: How have you demonstrated nimbleness in responding to unforeseen crises in the past? How would you use this experience to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications?

Shandowlyon Shawn HendricksWilliams: Dr. Hendricks is the granddaughter of sharecroppers, born into circumstances requiring one to be nimble. After a divorce, she was cast into poverty as a single mother, an unforeseen crisis. Dr. Hendricks was not prepared for the challenges of raising a child with multiple severe disabilities. These challenges propelled her to pursue the field of education. She used her relentless drive, resilience, and life experience during her role as the Governor's Director to respond to the pandemic.

Q: How will you reduce racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes in PreK-12 education throughout Wisconsin?

Shandowlyon Shawn HendricksWilliams: Reducing racial disparities is a must for Dr. Hendricks, the first African American woman to run for Wisconsin State Superintendent. A large body of research supports the fact that all students, not just students of color, benefit from having a teacher of color. The high school drop out rate decreases if black students have just one teacher of color. When at DPI, I developed a statewide plan to diversify the teacher pipeline. Within my first 100 days, I am going to find my plan and implement it.

Q: How will you ensure there is equitable public education funding, given the competition for funding in the next biennial budget cycle?

Shandowlyon Shawn HendricksWilliams: Dr. Hendricks has a vision for education that all elected officials can "get behind" because by implementing her Student Bill of Rights, Wisconsin moves along the trajectory in all areas of industries. There is no one who can or will argue against ensuring that Wisconsin students receive a well rounded education. Leveraging support around her vision for education will provide the best means for getting "buy in" from our elected officials because we share a common vision for Wisconsin students.

Q: Using your influence and authority, how would you collaborate with other groups to set curriculum priorities? Please also describe your priorities and if they include civics education.

Shandowlyon Shawn HendricksWilliams: Dr. Hendricks' priorities are articulated in her Bill of Rights for Wisconsin Students. She will work with districts to set curriculum priorities related to ensuring that each student receives instruction in art, music, physical education, library media, computer science, health, world language, communications, financial literacy, economics, health, and civics. Civics is important due to her exposure to 4H as a rural child where she learned the importance of community and citizenship.

Deborah Kerr



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

Committee: Kerr for Wisconsin Kids

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Twitter: twitter.com/kerr4wikids

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/drdebkerr/>

Education: Bachelors of Arts & Science, Masters of Educational Leadership, and Doctorate of Educational Leadership

Questions:

Q: What in your professional and community background qualifies you for this office? How will your experience assist you in working with people from diverse backgrounds?

Deborah Kerr: I have dedicated the last forty years of my life to education. I am uniquely prepared and qualified to lead Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction in these unprecedented times. My passion for serving children in all education sectors (public, private, charter, parochial, and university adjunct faculty) has prepared me well. I have always worked in culturally diverse communities in my role as teacher, principal, and superintendent for the last twenty years.

Q: How have you demonstrated nimbleness in responding to unforeseen crises in the past? How would you use this experience to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications?

Deborah Kerr: I was a COVID-19 superintendent and believe we will celebrate a reawakening of support for education, including the Herculean educators, support teams, and school and community leaders who bravely served our kids and communities. The new year presents an opportunity for us to begin recovering from this pandemic, with the first step to return our children to in-person learning. I have proposed a statewide plan to return our students and staff to school safely. We are stronger together!

Q: How will you reduce racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes in PreK-12 education throughout Wisconsin?

Deborah Kerr: My vision is to create a world-class education system that is the highest performing in the country by implementing many of the same strategies that resulted in significant gap closing and student success in Brown Deer ensuring equity and access for all of Wisconsin's children. My plan begins

with ambitious goals to address and start closing achievement gaps within three years with a laser focus on reading and math, high-quality instruction, and significant support and resources for educators.

Q: How will you ensure there is equitable public education funding, given the competition for funding in the next biennial budget cycle?

Deborah Kerr: I believe there are creative ways to adjust the funding formula to stabilize all of Wisconsin's public K-12 schools. I would focus on increased reimbursement for children with disabilities. This funding priority state-wide would reduce the transfer of millions of dollars from regular education to special education enabling districts to allocate those funds to other areas of need. I am also committed to advocating for full broadband access, ELL students, and weighted factors based upon need.

Q: Using your influence and authority, how would you collaborate with other groups to set curriculum priorities? Please also describe your priorities and if they include civics education.

Deborah Kerr: Partnerships are essential in our work to create a world-class education system in Wisconsin. This will involve working with all state organizations and associations that support education in our state. We will build upon the existing frameworks established in our state standards for learning and utilize this opportunity in time to transform our educational system. I believe civics education is essential. Education is the heartbeat of our democracy, and being a well-informed citizen is our goal.

Steve Krull



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

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Website: <http://www.krullforschools.com>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/krullforschools>

Education: Associates - Community College of the Air Force; Bachelors - Wayland University; Masters - Cardinal Stritch University; Doctorate - University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Questions:

Q: What in your professional and community background qualifies you for this office? How will your experience assist you in working with people from diverse backgrounds?

Steve Krull: I attended diverse schools as a child and saw first hand how economic and racial/ethnic inequity affects our schools. I also served in the US Air Force and worked with people from around the

country and world. When I returned from the military, I taught exclusively in diverse schools within Milwaukee Public Schools. As a principal, we worked hard to expand an anti-racist and culturally/linguistically responsive culture and climate. We will bring our success and experiences to Madison.

Q: How have you demonstrated nimbleness in responding to unforeseen crises in the past? How would you use this experience to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications?

Steve Krull: I am very proud of the teachers and staff at Garland (the school for which I'm the principal) for their hard work, innovation, and flexibility during the COVID crisis. We successfully retooled and implemented a distance learning plan that best meets students needs in a virtual educational setting. I also helped other principals develop learning plans and participated in a review team focused on equitable instruction during virtual learning. We will continue to be innovative when solving issues.

Q: How will you reduce racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes in PreK-12 education throughout Wisconsin?

Steve Krull: In my view, we need a two pronged approach to reduce racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes. I will address the first approach in this question and the second in the next question about equitable funding. Garland is very diverse and we have done an amazing job of meeting the needs of each child. We use culturally responsive practices and individualize learning. Our work shows great success and we will extrapolate these principles into the Department of Public Instruction.

Q: How will you ensure there is equitable public education funding, given the competition for funding in the next biennial budget cycle?

Steve Krull: We have a system in Wisconsin that creates serious inequities between schools. Where some districts get around twice as much base money per student than other districts. This funding disparity impacts the services students receive and a schools ability to hire and retain qualified/quality teachers. To fix the system, I believe we need to establish and fund a basic standard of student care across Wisconsin. We can then provide additional funding to create an equitable education for our children.

Q: Using your influence and authority, how would you collaborate with other groups to set curriculum priorities? Please also describe your priorities and if they include civics education.

Steve Krull: Our plan is to not only redesign standards, but also work to ensure that Art, Music, Physical Education, Library, STEM, Civics, Voting, and Vocational Education are core courses in our schools. As someone who did not like school growing up, it was not math or reading classes that kept me from dropping out. Instead, I enjoyed US Government, US History, Gym, and Music. By hooking students in subjects they like, we can engage them in school overall. Leading to more opportunity for all children.

Jill Underly



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

Committee: Underly for Wisconsin

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Education: 2008-2012 Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis, University of Wisconsin – Madison. 2005-2008 MA in Educational Administration and licensure in Educational Administration. 2000-2004 MA in Secondary Education Curriculum and Instruction, Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis 1995-1999 BA in History and Sociology (double major), Indiana University, Bloomington.

Questions:

Q: What in your professional and community background qualifies you for this office? How will your experience assist you in working with people from diverse backgrounds?

Jill Underly: I am 100% unabashedly pro-public schools and against the privatization of education in Wisconsin and nationally. I am the only candidate currently leading a school district through this pandemic and I bring experiences across the entire landscape of public education: principal, teacher, union leader, DPI senior administrator, and at UW in student affairs with first-generation students. It takes a diverse set of voices around the table to advance ideas and facilitate change for the better.

Q: How have you demonstrated nimbleness in responding to unforeseen crises in the past? How would you use this experience to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications?

Jill Underly: I know the struggles of our kids, families, educators, staff, and my whole community. In our district we developed reopening plans and guidance last April. We put what we developed online to share with parents and other communities. We devised online recovery summer programs and designed virtual learning so that parents could have a choice in how to educate their kids. As we exit this pandemic, we need a full assessment of lessons learned across districts and share best practices broadly.

Q: How will you reduce racial disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes in PreK-12 education throughout Wisconsin?

Jill Underly: No matter the setting, I champion the learning and needs of our children of color, experiencing poverty, learning English or with different abilities. To advance an equity agenda, we need

to start early. I think that early childhood education for all is absolutely critical to eliminating racial disparities. My first action would be to work with the state legislature to fully fund full-day Kindergarten for 4-year-olds through school based classes and community approaches with childcare centers.

Q: How will you ensure there is equitable public education funding, given the competition for funding in the next biennial budget cycle?

Jill Underly: I will fight relentlessly against any cuts to public education in this budget cycle. I will always ask for fair funding for our schools, particularly for our highest poverty schools, higher aid for special education students, support for rural schools plagued by declining enrollment, and higher aid for English learners. We need to change our inequitable school funding system. Long term, I would make it a priority to get our system fixed so it does not disadvantage our highest poverty districts.

Q: Using your influence and authority, how would you collaborate with other groups to set curriculum priorities? Please also describe your priorities and if they include civics education.

Jill Underly: I would work with the school boards to make sure they have the training they need to accomplish this key task locally. I would work with our Institutions of Higher Education to ensure that knowledge in our subject areas is deep as well as broad. I would work with the Professional Standards Council to review teacher education programs for teaching civics education. Particularly after the attack on our Capitol on January 6th, we need to ensure that there is strong civics education.

Whitewater Unified School District School Board

The school board is the governing body of a School District. School board members are the only elected officials within an individual school district who have a say in the daily operations of the school district.

Candidates (choose 2)

Jakub Fadrowski

Party: NP

Biographical Info:

Campaign Mailing Address: W7857 Blue Heron Dr Whitewater, WI 53190

Campaign Phone: (608) 718-0731

Questions:

Q: Why do you feel motivated to run for a seat on the School Board?

Jakub Fadrowski: - no response -

Q: What do you think is the most important issue facing our School District and what are your ideas for addressing it?

Jakub Fadrowski: - no response -

Q: What are your top three spending priorities for the School District?

Jakub Fadrowski: - no response -

Q: What do you think is going well in how the School District is handling the challenges of the pandemic? What areas do you see need improvement?

Jakub Fadrowski: - no response –

Tom Ganser



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

Campaign Name: School Board - Whitewater Unified School District

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Education: B.A (Honors) - English - UW-Milwaukee; M.A. - English - Ohio State University; Ph.D. - Urban Education - UW-Milwaukee

Questions:

Q: Why do you feel motivated to run for a seat on the School Board?

Tom Ganser: A seat on the School Board offers me the opportunity to serve the Whitewater community where I have lived since 1990 and to draw upon my career experiences as a teacher and teacher educator. The power of quality schools to prepare students well for their personal, professional, and civic roles as informed citizens is immense -- and must never be underestimated. I am drawn to working side-by-side with the other School Board members to ensure quality schools are a Whitewater trademark. Note: I have limited my response to each question to 500 characters as specified in the "Invitation to Participate."

Q: What do you think is the most important issue facing our School District and what are your ideas for addressing it?

Tom Ganser: The ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic is the most critical issue facing our School District today. The District's response requires balancing many different and sometimes competing perspectives, including those of students, families, school district personnel, the community, and medical and mental health experts. The Board must continue to guide the District's response to the pandemic with systematic assessments and flexibility as the arc of the pandemic evolves over time.

Q: What are your top three spending priorities for the School District?

Tom Ganser: (1) Support students emotionally and academically during and following the pandemic, especially students whose academic growth, achievement, and social engagement have been negatively impacted during the pandemic. (2) Adjust the annual budget planning to reflect the impact of additional costs linked to the pandemic and the level of state funding provided to the district. (3) Support the funding of elements of virtual learning that may be paired effectively with traditional instruction.

Q: What do you think is going well in how the School District is handling the challenges of the pandemic? What areas do you see need improvement?

Tom Ganser: As a member of the School Board, I believe the District's approach to the pandemic challenge has balanced education with the safety of students and staff, recognizing that no approach can meet all needs equally. Ongoing efforts to monitor school operations during the pandemic and to make necessary modifications to promote the safety of students and staff, along with student academic growth and achievement, are essential, and must include input from students, their families, and District staff.

Larry Kachel



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

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Education: B.B.A., UW-Whitewater, Gen Business/Finance J.D., Marquette Univ. Law School

Questions:

Q: Why do you feel motivated to run for a seat on the School Board?

Larry Kachel: As a long-time supporter of the Whitewater Unified School District and a member of the district's Citizen's Financial Advisory Board since 2011, I am familiar with the many issues facing the school board. I have been an advocate for literacy in the Whitewater School District as a founding member and primary fundraiser for Whitewater Leads, Inc., the local literacy group that has brought over 10,000 books to pre-kindergarteners at no cost to families. I am concerned about the educational and emotional losses that children in the district have suffered due to the pandemic. I have a unique background in finance (in the financial services industry for over 30 years) and education (as a former college instructor), that can help solve the problems the district must deal with. It is extremely important to me that parents, students, teachers, staff and taxpayers ALL have a voice that is heard by the school board. We must always act in the best interest of the students.

Q: What do you think is the most important issue facing our School District and what are your ideas for addressing it?

Larry Kachel: The board needs to do everything it can to keep students in the classroom as much as possible. All precautions must continue to be taken (social distancing, small groups, masks, plexiglass partitions, etc.) to keep everyone safe in the schools and the community. The board needs to act quickly to approve a plan that will help the large number of students who have fallen behind their grade level

due to the uneven education they received this year. This will require some out-of-the-box thinking, since additional state or federal funds may not be available to address the "falling behind" issue. Compounding the problem, the district lost about 100 students this past year to open enrollment. Many of those students left because the district chose to go virtual and to not offer athletics. This represents an ANNUAL loss of about \$800,000 in state funding to the district. We need to immediately start working to get as many of those students and families back to our district.

Q: What are your top three spending priorities for the School District?

Larry Kachel: First, I feel we need to do whatever is reasonably necessary to keep students learning in the classroom. Spending decisions will need to be re-prioritized to give students the education their families and taxpayers fund. Second, additional state and federal aid will likely be limited. To the extent possible, the district should use its already-approved increases in future operational funds for costs associated with keeping students in school and bringing them back up to grade level. Lastly, the district will need to come up with a marketing plan to retain our current students and to bring back the nearly 100 students who left the district this school year. Making up for the \$800,000 loss in aid because those students left leaves the district with a huge financial hole to fill.

The Whitewater school district has a lot to offer -- academics, arts, athletics -- that need to be promoted now more than ever.

Q: What do you think is going well in how the School District is handling the challenges of the pandemic? What areas do you see need improvement?

Larry Kachel: The district did the right thing when last fall, families were surveyed and allowed to choose between in-person or virtual learning. Some teachers with health concerns were given the option to teach virtually. The Middle School was able to make it through the first semester without a single shutdown day.

However, over 70% of parents surveyed wanted their kids to start the school year in-person or in a hybrid format. Their voices were not heard when the school board voted to go 100% virtual learning to start the school year. This caused a lot of undue hardship for families (working single/two-working parents) and resulted in many families enrolling their children in nearby districts. In addition, families with no or weak internet service were at a huge disadvantage. Several area school districts largely remained open and did not incur notably higher COVID outbreaks. Our elected officials need to listen to the families and taxpayers that they have been elected to serve.

Andrea M. Svec



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

Campaign Name: School Board - Whitewater Unified School District
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Campaign Facebook: <http://facebook.com/andreasvec>
Education: B.A. - English. Northern Illinois University

Questions:

Q: Why do you feel motivated to run for a seat on the School Board?

Andrea M. Svec: I care about this community and am a firm believer that a strong school is indicative of a community's health. Kids who are challenged to grow and enjoy school are kids that become productive citizens. Schools that are strong in the 3 As – Academics, Arts and Athletics are at the top of new residents' lists when choosing a place to live. Strong schools bring in more taxpayers and dollars for the school and community.

For growth to occur, there must be room for an exchange of ideas and a willingness to adapt and change. I have been in the workforce for 27 years and have had an opportunity to work in a variety of roles. The most important thing I have learned is how to work with others – to listen to and be open to new ideas. When working with many people, there will always be conflicting viewpoints. The goal is to come up with solutions that work for as many people as possible.

I believe Whitewater is ready for a change.

Q: What do you think is the most important issue facing our School District and what are your ideas for addressing it?

Andrea M. Svec: It is critical that all students are prepared for future success. An area of opportunity that I see for Whitewater is the lack of a concerted effort to leverage educational and vocational partnerships with the university, local area colleges such as MATC and Gateway Tech, and trade unions. We need more work-study opportunities for serious students who want to go into the trades. Vocational education is as important as college education for many people. We must work with area partners both in education and in the community to help kids learn trades much sooner to give them greater future earning potential.

We are fortunate to have a university in our town. In addition to summer camps, students should be exposed to more educational opportunities at UWW. We should be promoting all preparatory coursework and training for students who are choosing to go on to college.

We should endeavor to ensure that every student that wants to be successful, can be successful.

Q: What are your top three spending priorities for the School District?

Andrea M. Svec: Academics, athletics, and infrastructure are my top spending priorities. These are the main concerns and priorities potential residents have when choosing a school and community. When we increase the taxpayer base by attracting new residents, there is more revenue for the overall school and the community.

Q: What do you think is going well in how the School District is handling the challenges of the pandemic? What areas do you see need improvement?

Andrea M. Svec: The administration has been excellent at communication throughout COVID. Many teachers have put forth great effort to stay in touch with their students and ensure the learning environment is as productive as possible, despite the ever-changing delivery methods.

Our greatest opportunity for improvement is to keep kids in school full time. There are many studies, discussions and findings about the negative impact of online student learning. Some of the major concerns are social isolation, increased drug/alcohol use, depression/anxiety and suicide. In person

learning makes student/teacher questions, answers and feedback immediate and promotes accountability.

As a community we should strive to keep our schools open safely for all who choose in-person education. There are surrounding schools both big and small that have safely kept their doors open and their students safe. We have lost many students to surrounding districts because families demand face to face learning.

Maryann Zimmerman



Party: NP

Biographical Info:

Campaign Name: Maryann Zimmerman for Whitewater Unified School District Board

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Education: B.S in Healthcare Administration (2005) B.S in Business (2005) University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Graduate of Nicolet High School (2001)

Questions:

Q: Why do you feel motivated to run for a seat on the School Board?

Maryann Zimmerman: A position on a school board is a position of service. Although it is an elected position, it is not one that will make you popular, rich or powerful. Those who run do it to serve their community and the future generations. My family moved to this Whitewater because of this districts commitment to inclusion of children with special needs. The staff of this district has served my family by doing wonders with my children. It is my time to give back to the district and to the community I love. As a member of the PTO at the Middle School and Lakeview over the years, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with other parents, building principals and staff to better our schools. I am now ready to serve the district as a whole- not just the schools my own children attend. I am confident my work in leadership and my experience in advocacy will benefit and complement the strengths of fellow boards members.

Q: What do you think is the most important issue facing our School District and what are your ideas for addressing it?

Maryann Zimmerman: The most important issue facing the district is building excellence. Excellence in academics, excellence in the arts and excellence in academics. District report cards show a decline in

test scores and enrollment. Over the past several years, the district has been able to recruit amazing staff and leadership. That is a strong start but we need to invest in these three areas and empower our community to work together to make the Whitewater Unified School District THE sought after district in the area.

Q: What are your top three spending priorities for the School District?

Maryann Zimmerman: 1. Empowering our staff: What do they need? If they are in need of items in their schools that will help us excel in academics, arts or athletics then we should make sure we are making investments into items that they need.

2. Investing in our Staff: We have amazing staff. We should make sure that pay and benefits is always competitive so we are retaining the best.

3. Investing into infrastructure: Are our schools inviting and places where a child can learn? Are there ways we can improve our infrastructure that will make moving to Whitewater more enticing to prospective families.

With any spending-it needs to be done smartly. Are we investing in goals that are measurable and have a clear ROI for the district? Are we enriching our community when we invest in our schools?-Can we commit to using only local contractors and tradesmen so the taxpayer money stays in this community?

Q: What do you think is going well in how the School District is handling the challenges of the pandemic? What areas do you see need improvement?

Maryann Zimmerman: The current model of in-person and virtual options is great for families. It allows those who would like to remain virtual to continue to see the familiar faces of their teachers. This is a great option for all. Some areas of improvement is the need for listening cloely to parents. 78% of parents surveyed before the start of the year wanted their children in school. I think many families felt betrayed when the option to attend in person was no longer a choice they were able to utilize.