

Non-Partisan
**Douglas County Voters' Guide
Nebraska General Election**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER OMAHA

General Election Date: November 8, 2022

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This issue of the Voters' Guide is dedicated to the memory of Annette Conser, 1935 – 2022

We gratefully acknowledge Annette Conser and her many contributions to the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha and the community. As an active member for 25 years, Annette was involved in many ways. As a Voter's Guide Director, she tirelessly worked to inform voters each election season. Annette recognized that the League of Women Voters is a vital contributor to the health of our local community, our nation, and our democracy. Her legacy continues.

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The following is a list of all races that appear throughout Douglas County. Please note that not all races will appear on your specific ballot.

Responses were limited to a specific number of characters and were truncated thereafter. All submissions are reproduced as submitted, with no corrections to spelling, grammar or punctuation.

If a candidate did not respond by the deadline for print publication, "No response received" is printed. All candidate responses, including those received after the print deadline, are available at VOTE411.org.

FEDERAL TICKET

U.S. House of Representatives Nebraska District 2

Don Bacon (R): Education: *Bachelors of Political Science, Northern Illinois University; Masters Degrees from the University of Phoenix and the National War College; distinguished graduate of the Air Command and Staff College, Navigator-Electronic Warfare School; Offices held: January 2017 to Present; Military Experience: Retired Brigadier General, United States Air Force; Volunteer Experience: Youth for Christ; Salvation Army's Kroc Center*
Website: <http://www.donjbacon.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DonJBacon>
Twitter: @donjbacon

Tony Vargas (D): Education: *Bachelors of Arts, University of New York - Rochester; Masters of Education, Pace University; Current Office held: Nebraska Legislature, District 7 (January 2017 - Present); Member, Appropriations Committee; Chair, Legislature's Planning Committee; Vice Chair, Executive Board of the Legislative Council; Past Office held: Omaha Public Schools Board of Education, Subdistrict 9 (Dates: October 2013 - December 2016); Volunteer Experience: Board Member, One World Community Health Center; Member, Sons of Italy Nebraska; Member, GI Forum; Member, Dahlman Neighborhood Association; Parishioner and Eucharistic Minister, St. Francis Cabrini Church*
Website: vargasfornebraska.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/vargasfornebraska>
Twitter: @tonyvargas

What specific measures, if any, would you take to protect voting rights, access to voting, and voter turnout? Why?

Don Bacon: The right to vote is one of the most cherished institutions in the United States as is the right of each state to

conduct their elections as outlined in Article I, Section 4, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution. I will always fight to protect both.

More specifically, I have and will continue to support enhancing voter system security, oversight of election vendors, early voting, the restoration of voting rights for individuals who have completed felony sentences, and voter identification requirements when voting. The federal government should only intervene when the voting rights of any American citizen are clearly undermined or threatened.

Tony Vargas: Secure and safe elections and the right to vote are the foundation of our democracy, and it is critical that we protect them.

When I ran for legislature for the first time in 2016, I saw how many barriers were in place for people to be able to engage in our democracy through voting. So many voters in my district didn't know where their polling places were, that they could vote by mail, that they could vote early, and that they needed to ensure that they re-registered to vote after they moved. After I was elected, I introduced legislation to expand early voting and enact automatic voter registration.

As a member of Congress, I will continue to fight to ensure our elections and our democracy are safe and secure.

What specific reforms, if any, would you propose in federal health care policy to address the cost and access to health care? Explain.

Don Bacon I will continue to work towards market-based options to bring down healthcare costs for working families. We can increase options and competition by encouraging associational pools and allowing insurance companies to compete across state lines. I support protecting coverage for those with pre-existing conditions, co-sponsoring the Pre-Existing Conditions Protection Act (H.R. 692). I will continue to advocate for an end to surprise medical billing and lowering prescription drug costs (H.R. 19). I also support modifying Medicare for our senior citizens to expand dental and optometrist coverage.

Tony Vargas: I believe that everyone deserves access to quality, affordable health care. That's why as a state senator, I've been proud to have secured \$16.5 million to provide health care services to Nebraskans all across our state.

But there's a lot more that needs to be done. We need to protect healthcare for seniors and veterans through Medicare and our VA system. Health insurance and prescription drugs are too expensive, so I would be open to exploring any option that will lower costs. But I won't support any healthcare plan that would kick Nebraskans off their current insurance and I believe that more competition, not less, is the key to affordable health care.

What changes, if any, should Congress make in immigration policies? Why?

Don Bacon: I support a bipartisan pathway to legalization for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA) and TPS (Temporary Protected Status) recipients while working to ensure that our border is secured once and for all. This includes the use of physical barriers, increased personnel and the latest technology. A secure border is a safe America.

More specifically, I voted in favor of H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act, in both 2019 and 2021. I was also the Republican co-lead on H.R. 5168, WELCOMED Act of 2021, which authorized funds to make certain individuals from Afghanistan eligible for any benefit that is available to a refugee, such as resettlement assistance.

Tony Vargas: I support comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform that creates an earned pathway to citizenship for those without criminal records. And I believe this must be coupled with effective border security measures that will keep our families safe.

But above all, this issue just shows how broken Washington is. Everyone -- Republicans and Democrats alike -- agrees that our current immigration system just doesn't work, yet they can't put partisan politics aside to get something done that will fix it and strengthen our economy. If we want to get something done here, it's time to send a representative to Washington who is a proven bipartisan leader and has a track record of getting things done.

STATE TICKET

Governor

Carol Blood (D): Education: *Metropolitan Community College*; Current Office held: *Elected in 2016 to serve District 3 in the Nebraska Legislature. Re-elected in 2020*; Past Offices held: *Elected as the At-Large Representative on the Bellevue City Council in 2008. Re-elected in 2012*; Volunteer Experience: *Bellevue Farmers Market, Bellevue Public Safety Foundation, Sarpy County Museum, Military Families Support, Veteran's Support, Foodbanks, decades of volunteerism to my community*
Website: <https://www.electcarolblood.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Blood4Governor>
Twitter: @Blood4G

Jim Pillen (R): No response received

Scott Zimmerman (L): Education: *Master of Education*; Volunteer Experience: *12 years serving the Libertarian Part of Nebraska*
Website: www.votezimmerman.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/zimmerman4gov
Twitter: @ZimmermanGov

What specific measures, if any, would you take to protect voting rights, access to voting, and voter turnout? Why?

Carol Blood: I will protect voting rights as follows: 1. Ensure/protect safe ways for eligible Nebraskans to easily register to vote through online & automatic voter registration. 2. Support access voting with early No Excuse/In Person voting and secure Vote By Mail methods. 3. Keep our elections fair and transparent to our citizens 4. Protect Nebraskans from any unlawful interference when they go to cast their ballots or when they register to vote. Why?: Democracy cannot work unless all voices are heard. Election day is one day in our lives where we are all equal. One vote-one voice. Fair and accessible elections protect those voices.

Scott Zimmerman: Nebraska voters deserve to have their voices heard. It is critical that we ensure fair and equitable access to the ballots. As Governor, I would work with industry experts in determining the most accessible and secure methods we could implement in Nebraska to ensure that ballot results accurately reflect the will of the people.

What specific reforms, if any, would you propose in state health care policy to address the cost and access to health care? Explain.

Carol Blood: Nebraska must bring all stakeholders to the table to pursue more than one strategy to address cost & access. Emergency rooms are not health care clinics, yet it is not unusual to see Medicaid patients come to the ER for sprained ankles, colds, covid testing, etc. We need to address this growing issue as it effects our health care costs and

access. As we lose rural population, we lose healthcare facilities creating an extra burden on our urban areas. We must invest in our current workforce, expand virtual opportunities such as telemedicine, accelerate programming, allow for remote and hybrid work and recruit internationally. Labor shortages drive up healthcare costs & lack of proper reimbursement from the state creates new hurdles.

Scott Zimmerman: The people of Nebraska have the right to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Access to quality healthcare is a detrimental component to living a quality life. The less Government involvement in healthcare decisions, the better. I will focus on opening up the healthcare market to include support for physician led healthcare decisions and cash based healthcare options. Medical insurance providers have driven the costs of healthcare to a level which prevents those without access to quality coverage to participate in receiving the best care they could possibly receive. It's time to put Doctors and Patients in charge of those highly personal healthcare decisions.

Referring to water, energy, public education, broadband, and transportation: what specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs? Explain rationale.

Carol Blood: To compete in a global economy, we must address infrastructure needs, fully fund our schools, protect our precious water, continue to support wind, solar and ethanol, and strengthen existing partnerships to move forward. Nebraska needs to do a better job of measuring what we treasure when funding these projects and include upcoming opportunities such as satellites for internet in rural and underpopulated areas, tap into AI when protecting our infrastructure to get our products from point A to point B, consider K-14 Public/Private partnerships allowing students to graduate with a HS Diplomas & Assc. Degree in high growth areas that support our infrastructure & protect our current investments & quit making our citizens collateral damage.

Scott Zimmerman: Access to clean water in Nebraska is a necessity. As a state, we will focus on ensure this access to all Nebraskans at an affordable cost. Access to public education is a Constitutional right in Nebraska. I will work to remove the monopoly current held by Government funded schools and allow access to alternate methods to educate our children. As Governor, I will focus on making Nebraska a leader in Education by making it easier for private sector and independent learning options to exist in our State. Access to broadband is a critical component and I will make it a priority to get high-speed internet to all residents of Nebraska. I will incentivize private rideshare and transport companies to lead the way in commuting Nebraskans.

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Carol Blood: This is a decades old problem in Nebraska. We must reduce the number of those we incarcerate using proven methods such as problem-solving courts, actually rehabilitate those incarcerated, invest in mental health and drug abuse treatment alternatives, and allow for more opportunities with pre-trial diversion programming. We need to be forward-thinking and invest in better Pre-K education, knowing that parents are our children's first teachers and many need better social tools. Nebraska needs to invest in our families experiencing cycles of violence and/or poverty, provide more innovative choices for successful probation/parole, invest in re-entry and continue bond reform.

Scott Zimmerman: Incarceration in our state prisons should be a last resort and reserved for violent offenders and individuals who are a true threat to our safety and security. I will work to reduce the burden on this system by reducing or eliminating prison terms for offenders of victimless crimes, which is the majority of the system today. I will divert resources into rehabilitation and mental health programs in order to support these individuals transition to becoming better citizens of Nebraska. The Judicial system must be non-political and I will work to ensure equality before the law is the top priority in our Judicial system.

Secretary of State

Bob Evnen (R): Education: *Michigan State University, B.A. with high honor, 1974; University of Southern California Law School, J.D., 1977; Current Office held: Nebraska Secretary of State, 2019 – present; Past Office held: Nebraska State Board of Education, 2005 – 2012*
Website: www.bobevnenfornebraska.com

What, if anything, needs to change in the way Nebraska conducts its elections?

Bob Evnen: I support Voter ID, winner-take-all in our electoral college voting, prohibiting the use of private money to fund election operations ("Zuckerbucks"), prohibiting ballot harvesting, further securing our ballot drop boxes, and making it possible for National Guard members and first responders who are called to service to vote as do our military service members.

What needs to be done to encourage young people and other underrepresented communities to register to vote?

Bob Evnen: Education as to the genius of our country's formation, and the value and necessity of their participation in it.

What changes, if any, need to be made in campaign finance regulations and reporting?

Bob Evnen: No response received.

State Treasurer

John Murante (R): No response received

Katrina Tomsen (L): Education: *Completed Nebraska teachers' education and certified to teach French; Residency at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, OK in Family Practice Optometry; Doctor of Optometry from Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, TN.; Military Experience: Cadet at United States Military Academy 1992-4; Volunteer Experience: secretary/treasurer for condominium*
Website: lpne.org

In your opinion, what is the proper balance of tax revenues sources to fairly fund state government, including public schools?

Katrina Tomsen: I do not want to see foreign investors take over our Nebraska real estate because the real estate tax is too low or tax-exempt. Thus, I would emphasize real estate parcel taxation keeping in mind it is a burden to family farms and urban home-ownership. Taxing real estate is the most fair way to get revenue. Wealthy individuals can always find ways to reduce their income tax burden. I disagree with the "carbon tax;" I want to see a "toxic tax."

What needs to be done to ensure that Nebraska meets its long-term financial obligations such as infrastructure maintenance, state employee pensions and health care coverage?

Katrina Tomsen: Nebraska needs to make its bureaucracy more efficient. Each department may need to come up with ideas on how they can be of more service to the average citizen that purchases the Nebraska Blue Book and tries to make a simple phone call for help with a problem in the State. Citizens want to talk to someone, they want a call back when they leave a message, and they want to be directed to the right person to solve the problem. Citizens do not want to hear that the position is vacant or that our bureaucracy is so narrow-minded that the problem cannot even get addressed.

As Treasurer, what would be your highest priorities for the next four years, and how do you intend to accomplish them?

Katrina Tomsen: My highest priorities for the next four years as a Nebraska State Treasurer: 1) Security. Digital cybersecurity does not exist. We need A) analog devices to keep the digital devices in check, B) people in the loop--no autonomous systems, C) tangibles such as paper back-up documentation. 2) Balanced budget. Good governance means

fiscal responsibility. 3) Review of tax-exempt real estate parcels.

Attorney General

Larry Bolinger (LMN): Education: *Bachelor of Science; Military Experience: US Airforce and Army National Guards; Volunteer Experience: Volunteered with Activate Alliance, Volunteer in Police Services, DAVA (Disabled Veterans), Nebraska Boys Ranch, YMCA, Planning Commissioner*
Website: www.LarryBolinger.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/larrybolinger>
Twitter: @Bolinger_Larry

Mike Hilgers (R): No response received.

What steps will you take to improve the efficiency and fairness of the legal system in Nebraska?

Larry Bolinger: I do believe in treating everyone equally. There have been some issues of inequality based on race and gender. That is something we cannot have in our legal system. We do need to hold the government and businesses accountable when they mistreat the population.

I expect to try all important cases. There will not be cases approved based solely on political affiliation. Cases are based on what is a constitutional infraction or a possible infraction.

I do take officer misconduct very seriously. I am very firm on the proper treatment of employees and I do expect officers to follow procedures.

What considerations, including costs, should be evaluated when filing and/or joining lawsuits relating to federal regulations or corporate misconduct?

Larry Bolinger: There are several things to consider when following through on a lawsuit. I don't want to fall into issues of supporting lawsuits based on party motivation. I will look at what is constitutionally correct. As far as suits against cooperation, I would have to look at the severity of the case. There are several that I would like to proceed with that have concerning issues of some banking industry's unethical enrichment practices and extortion of contractor funds that violate the 13th amendment. There are issues with IRS billing practices. There are several IRS ethics violations and enrichment violations in their billing practices that our current administration chooses to ignore.

What policies will you support to address discrimination based on race, gender, sexual identity, religion, disability, or socio-economic status?

Larry Bolinger: I have carried a very firm stance on equal rights towards all. I would like to see Congress sign the UN Human Rights Treaty and the Child Rights Treaty. I do support the Fairness Ordinance.

Auditor of Public Accounts

Mike Foley (R): No response received.

L. Leroy Lopez (LMN): No response received.

Gene Siadek (L): Education: *BS Civil Engineering, MBA*
Website: www.siadekforauditor.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SiadekforAuditor
Twitter: @Siadek4Auditor

What measures would you take to ensure the reliability of estimates of money available for state spending?

Gene Siadek: The auditors in the department are the experts in developing the proper test to confirm the amounts presented in the state budget are reasonable. However, I would be involved in the process and ask questions on how audit tests are developed. I would, for example, look at previous years budgets and look for large year to year variances and challenge the reasons for such variances. I would also take the process a step further and be an advocate for less state spending overall.

Should independent audit firms be prohibited from making campaign contributions to candidates for State Auditor? Please explain.

Gene Siadek: No. At this moment, I do not see a conflict of interest. If you are against government debt, inflation, mandates you have the power change this by voting for a candidate and a party that will work to change this.

How does the state office safeguard the accuracy of financial reports from villages, counties, SIDs, etc.?

Gene Siadek: I see no problem in the departments ability to audit political subdivisions. The audits I reviewed appear to be very thorough and accurate. The problem I see is that when fraud or abuse is discovered nothing seems to happen. I would use my position to ensure that such abuses are very publicly exposed and properly adjudicated.

COUNTY TICKET

Douglas County Assessor/Register of Deeds

Walt Peffer (R): Education: *Nebraska Real Estate License / Nebraska County Assessor Certificate / attended University of Nebraska Omaha;* Military Experience: *US Army Viet Nam;* Volunteer Experience: *United Way / Douglas County Census Committee / City of Omaha Charter Review Committee*
Website: VotePeffer.com

If elected, what would be your first-year priorities?

Walt Peffer: Ease the concerns of the taxpayer of being taxed out of their home. Equal and fair valuations. Hold town hall meetings to discuss any valuation questions the taxpayer may have, saves taxpayer the expense of taking time off work, driving downtown and pay for parking. Update technical aspects of the office. Improve customer services. Show respect for taxpayer.

What is a compelling issue to address within the office?

Walt Peffer: Establish Equalized valuations. No reason for similar homes or commercial properties to have a wide range of values. Control the drastic changes in values. Cap the annual increases in valuations if any at 3%.

What changes, if any, need to be made regarding property valuations and the process of contesting those valuations?

Walt Peffer: Work with my Nebraska Legislature contacts to introduce legislation to limit valuation increase to 3%. Another possible concept is to use the Midwest CPI as one of the gages for valuation. Hold town hall meetings in each of the county board districts in the evening to listen to taxpayer concerns about valuations. Should a taxpayer opt to go to the Board of Equalization and appeal the Assessor valuation and win, I will honor that decision for that year and the next.

Douglas County Attorney

Donald W. Kleine (R): Education: *Graduated from what is now University of NE at Kearney in 1974 and Creighton University Law School in 1977;* Current Office held: *Douglas County Attorney from January, 2007 to present;* Volunteer Experience: *Coached youth sports for over 25 years in Ralston and at St. Gerald's, on the Board of Directors for Project Harmony for over 15 years, Advisory Board for Live On Nebraska and National District Attorney Association Board of Directors.*
Website: <https://donkleine.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cadonkleine>

Dave Pantos (D): Education: *JD - Indiana University School of Law; MSES - Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs; BA - Rutgers College*; Past Office held: *Metropolitan Community College Board of Governors District 3 - Feb 2017-December 2020*; Volunteer Experience: *Volunteer Attorney, Tenant Assistance Project; President, Omaha Permaculture; Event Committee, Kids Can Community Center; Board President, Nonprofit Association of the Midlands; Board President, Domestic Violence Council*
Website: <http://www.davepantos.com>
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pantosforcountyattorney>
Twitter: @dpantos

What are your priorities in managing a large office with many legal divisions?

Donald W. Kleine: As Douglas County Attorney it is my priority to ensure that adequate resources are provided to my staff and to provide leadership by example. Since I've tried over 150 jury trials and have built relationships with law enforcement and experts across the country, I can provide the guidance and mentoring needed. I'm fortunate to have a strong leadership team with decades of experience. Brenda Beadle is my Chief Deputy, Nicole Brundo is the head of the Juvenile Division and Theresia Urich is the head of our Civil Division. Each of these women have over 25 years of experience. We have a team concept in my office with five team leads to provide mentorship to the less experienced attorneys. My past experience in the private sector is also useful.

Dave Pantos: As the former Executive Director and Legal Director of Legal Aid of Nebraska, I have significant experience managing a large law office with many legal divisions. Legal Aid has 50 attorneys and multiple support staff spread throughout 8 statewide locations. I will bring that leadership and management experience to the Douglas County Attorney's office.

I think we need to prioritize supporting the work of line attorneys serving the public good. I've heard so many stories about the huge turnover rate at the County Attorney's office. I will invest in the professional development of these deputy attorneys so they feel respected and connected to the communities they are serving. This will both increase public safety and reduce turnover.

What impact does the Douglas County Attorney have on overcrowding in the state prison system?

Donald W. Kleine: Although the judges do the sentencings on individuals going to prison our office also has a great impact on the issue of overcrowding prisons. That is why we have created more problem solving courts than anywhere in the State. These include Diversion, Young Adult Court, Drug Court, Mental Health Diversion and Veterans Treatment Court. Our programs offer a second chance to literally hundreds of individuals each year reducing the prison population. Here, individuals are incarcerated for very serious offenses such as homicide, child sex assaults and repeat

offenders who have been given several opportunities. We have worked to help establish training and education to those being released so they can become contributing members of our community.

Dave Pantos: Prison overcrowding is a public safety threat.

My opponent helped to defeat LB 920, which would have addressed our massive prison overcrowding problem. LB 920 was a bipartisan bill that would have immediately reduced overcrowding and modernized our criminal justice system. My opponent used his position to defeat this compromise and now the problem continues to worsen.

So, first policy when I am in office will be to work with law enforcement, legislators, and community members to pass criminal justice reform.

We also need to create more diversion courts. Let's end prosecution of marijuana. Let's partner with mental health so our prisons are no longer psychiatric institutions.

Finally, we should not prosecute reproductive health care.

Explain ways in which you see this office working with the larger community.

Donald W. Kleine: As Douglas County Attorney it is critical to work jointly with agencies in our community. This is why I serve on the Board of Project Harmony, Live On Nebraska, and speak at various organizations and business groups in Omaha. We work to address white collar crime, abuse of vulnerable adults, crimes against children, truancy and gang prevention and we're involved with the corresponding agencies dealing with those crimes. I was part of the implementation of the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council protocols. We work directly with Children's Hospital, Boys Town, Concord Mediation, Center on Children Families and the Law, Lutheran Family Services, U-Turn and CSI. The relationships we build are so important in seeking crime prevention.

Dave Pantos: We need to end the cradle to prison pipeline. I'll work directly with schools to identify risk factors and ensure that young people do not become offenders and system-involved.

We need to connect our county attorneys with the communities they are serving. We can directly improve public safety by having each deputy attorney "adopt" a neighborhood association to learn what crime issues they are experiencing and work to address them.

We need to be transparent. This office is currently the least transparent office in the state and I will work with the larger community to make it the most transparent.

Nebraska has the worst racial disparities in incarceration. I will work with BIPOC leaders and experts to confront this issue and end it.

Douglas County Clerk of the District Court

Thomas Flynn (R): Education: *Creighton Prep Grad 1990 University of Nebraska (Omaha) and Metro Tech Community College (1990-1995)*
Website: <https://flynnfordouglasclerk.com/>.

Crystal Rhoades (D): Education: *University of Nebraska Omaha, Bachelors - Political Science and Psychology, Masters - Political Science*; Current Office held: *Commissioner, Nebraska Public Service Commission, 2015-Present*; Past Office held: *Metropolitan Community College Board of Governors, 2006-2014*; Volunteer Experience: *Chairwoman Douglas County Democratic Party 2016-2020, South Omaha Neighborhood Alliance 2006-2015, Nebraska Democratic Party 2005-2018. Numerous Democratic political candidates 2005-Present*
Website: www.crystalrhoades.com

If elected, what will be your top priority or priorities while in office?

Thomas Flynn: When elected to office, my main priority will be to address the current mental health crisis in our community. In my 28 years on the sheriff's office, I have served over 2,000 board of mental health warrants. The clerk's office oversees that office. I will use my years of experience and training to find a collaborative solution to help the overwhelmed mental health professionals. I will advocate for the allocation of any available funds and resources to assist with treatment and case management. I will work to involve all elected officials and department heads in this goal. We need to work together to address the problem that we see play out in our streets, churches, and schools all too often.

Crystal Rhoades: My priority will be to use my experience with the judicial system and technology to address inefficiencies, reduce costs, and improve service. I will do a top to bottom review of the office and the budget and make data driven changes to improve service quality and reduce processing times. Many of the services provided by the office still require in person trips to the court house or a phone call and those options should remain available for people who do not have access to the internet or who prefer an in-person experience. However, many of those services could be moved to online platforms which would reduce cost and improve efficiency.

How could technology be used to improve services in the Clerk of the District Court office?

Thomas Flynn: By keeping current Deputy Chief of the office, Pam Cardenas, in her role we will continue to offer the most updated technology. Effective January 1, 2022, the Supreme Court implemented modernization rules making it mandatory that all attorneys e-file all filings to the Clerk of the District Court through the attorney portal. This allows attorneys to save time coming down to the courthouse to file documents. Mandatory e-filing will be implemented to self-

litigants once the processes have been put in place by the Supreme Court which will keep customers on-line instead of in-line. We are currently updating our jury technology system which will allow faster response time to juror issues and allow staff to access and process information faster.

Crystal Rhoades: While at MCC I advocated for the use of financial aid software, instead of paper files, resulting in students being able to access millions in additional federal aid. I advocated for energy audits on campus and we made energy efficiency upgrades and used smart technology to save taxpayers \$80,000 in utility costs annually. At the Commission I worked on legislation to legalize Uber and Lyft and Next Generation 911, which allows for text to 911, a must have in the age of active shooters. I want to use my skills to identify ways technology can be used to reduce processing times for everything from bond refunds to streamlining the jury duty process to make it easier for citizens to access the important services of the clerk's office.

Douglas County Commissioner District 2

James Cavanaugh (D): No response received

District 4

P.J. Morgan (R): No response received.

District 6

Mary Ann Borgeson (R): Education: *UNO BGS*; Current Office held: *Douglas County Commissioner 1995-Present*; Volunteer Experience: *College World Series, R.E.S.P.E.C.T., Aksarben Future Trust, Angel Share, Inc., Millard Business Community Foundation, Project Wee Care*
Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/maryann.stockborgeson/>
Twitter: @maryannborgeson

If elected, what are your priorities?

Mary Ann Borgeson: I will continue working full time for the taxpayers of Douglas County. My priorities will be 1) to continue investing taxpayer dollars wisely and providing accountability and transparency in all I do; 2) continue to look at ways to improve efficiencies in service delivery that provide cost savings to the taxpayers, 3) improving our mental health services and reducing the number of individuals with mental health issues in our jails; 4) focus on our older Americans and their caregivers and 5) explore a new, more equitable and favorable way to assess and set values on property.

What improvements are needed for mental health services and housing?

Mary Ann Borgeson: We need to focus and strengthen our mental health system in the areas of intervention and diversion services, especially diversion services from jail. We also need

a better crisis response system that is built around mental health professionals responding to mental health and mental health crisis calls rather than law enforcement. We need to reduce the wait times for services. We need to build service capacity. We need to increase the mental health workforce. We need to explore, plan and implement a countywide housing affordability plan. We need tiny home projects to serve our elderly, veterans, mentally ill and homeless populations.

With the new Juvenile Detention Center coming online, what changes in staffing and programming are appropriate?

Mary Ann Borgeson: As the leader of the Douglas County Justice Center Project, I am proud to have championed our juvenile justice reform efforts. This is an extraordinary time for our children and families served by our juvenile justice system in Douglas County. With the new facility and several new and exciting program opportunities coming online, such as, the Family Resource Center Network; Partnership with Metro Community College; Job Training Programs; Gun and Violence Prevention and Early Intervention Programs and Stability Services for our HOME Program to name a few, it will be essential that we have the proper number of staff and appropriate staffing expertise in place to serve our youth and families.

Douglas County Engineer

Todd Pfitzer (R): Education: *Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from University of Nebraska*; Military Experience: *6 years Army Reserve*; Volunteer Experience: *I spend a number of years chairing a motorcycle poker run in support of Alzheimer's "Ride to Remember" Fundraiser. Over the time I served for this event, we raised over \$20,000 towards the care and research of this disease. I volunteer at my church*
Website: toddpfitzer.com

Jim Rose (D): No response received

What particular experiences or issues compelled you to run for this office?

Todd Pfitzer: I have passion for public safety on our streets, sidewalks, trails and infrastructure system. Over my 32 years of practicing engineering, my list of most satisfying projects are always those that involve improving a school drop off area, unsafe intersection or pedestrian and bicycle accommodations on our public streets. I am also passionate about improving the efficiencies of our systems. We have implemented smart control technologies on several corridors within our region that improve traffic flows, reduce delays and reduce crash frequencies. This is why I got into engineering and why I want to oversee the Douglas County operational engineering challenges.

If elected, what are your priorities?

Todd Pfitzer: This ties directly into the reasons I listed for running for office. We have a lot of work to do in finishing our infrastructure as our county continues to grow. Safety innovations are always being improved. While at the City, I was part of the team that implemented Vision Zero, an effort to get our traffic and pedestrian fatalities to zero within our region. I will continue to work with those in our region from the County Engineer position to more toward achieving this. Creating efficiencies within government is always an area we should strive to improve. I have 32 years of experience working within our region as a consultant and City Engineer and will use that to continue moving towards this goal.

Douglas County Sheriff

Greg Gonzalez (D): Education: *Master's Degree Public Administration MPA, Bachelor's Science Criminal Justice UNO*; Volunteer Experience: *Mentor Nebraska, Completely Kids, PACE Coach (Police Athletics For Community Engagement, Latino Officer's Association, Black Officer's Association, National Association Of Women Police, Victory Boxing, FOP, Governor's Coalition For Juvenile Justice*
Website: gregforsheriff.com
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/gregforsheriff2022>
Twitter: @gregforsheriff

Aaron Hanson (R): Education: *Omaha North High School, UNO, Omaha Police Training Academy*; Current Office held: *SID 260*; Volunteer Experience: *Nebraska Center for Workforce Development and Education*
Website: www.AaronHansonForSheriff.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Hanson4Sheriff>

If elected, how will your office ensure the safety and trust of all people (per the mission statement)?

Greg Gonzalez: Transparency will be a hallmark of my organization. I believe any elected official is equally accountable to the public, employees, the county, and him or herself. As Sheriff, I will ensure community responsiveness and the prevention of crime shall always be a top priority. The community expects to know their Sheriff and staff are available to address public safety concerns. It will be a priority for me and my staff to attend community meetings. I oversaw training and gold standard police accreditation and brought body worn cameras to the Omaha Police Department. I have hired over 450 police officers and involved in evidence-based strategies, recruitment, retention, as a nine-year tenured Deputy Police Chief. I have an open-door policy.

Aaron Hanson: The primary responsibility of government is to keep people and families safe. We must keep all people safe from high risk criminals so all families can live a safer, less chaotic existence, focus on working and raising a healthy family with less fear of crime. Safer neighborhoods are more prosperous ones which attract quality employers and jobs. I

will use my 25+ years of street level experience working directly with families to break barriers to success and safety, focus on the core drivers of crime and poverty by promoting second chances for worthy people and access to good paying jobs for young people coming out of high school. Having good communication, empathy and a shared vision is key.

How could you use Crisis Response programs to respond to mental health events?

Greg Gonzalez: All DCSO deputies will be trained in crisis intervention and undergo best practices training to respond to emergency crisis calls. I am a CIT trained officer. As deputy police chief, I was part of instituting our first mental health co-responder program where we embedded practitioners to ride with officers on crisis calls. Our team helped create the Douglas County School Threat Advisory Team. This project included the implementation of an anonymous school threat/safety issues reporting system (monitored 24/7 by Boys Town National Hotline counselors), ensuring local school officials, law enforcement and mental health officials work together on problem solving solutions to mitigate violence. I will replicate programs as your next Sheriff.

Aaron Hanson: I am a strong advocate for enhanced, specialized approaches to Behavior Health challenges. OPD has been an area leader with their CORE (Collaborative Outreach, Response & Engagement) model which matches police officers with civilian co-responders to identify, assist and diffuse individuals with an upward trending behavior health condition. I will push to expand that effort by creating a Behavior Health Task force, in which DCSO and other Omaha Metro area Law Enforcement partners will work collaboratively with OPD to expand the numbers of focused police and co-responders across the metro. With enhanced collaboration we can help more people and keep our entire community safer.

What role does your office have to play in Community Policing?

Greg Gonzalez: Community Policing is an integral role for law enforcement. Community Policing and crime reduction mean a shared responsibility between deputies, neighbors, and community leaders to work together to solve all violent crime and strengthen relationships. This is my opportunity to expand youth programs like the police athletic league as these efforts have measurable results for crime and gang reduction. I will bring PACE to the DCSO. We raised over \$3 million in funding from local donors to provide free athletics and educational resources for 6,000+ at-risk youth. We will sponsor more community-based events such as bike rodeos, a citizen's academy, community forums, at which time we can share results of various community policing efforts.

Aaron Hanson: The Sheriff's Office can play a much larger role than currently utilized. DCSO is responsible for patrol and investigations in unincorporated Douglas County and will continue to maintain strong relationships and communications

with leaders and citizens in those communities. But the Sheriff's office also has a unique nexus with the courts system and touches many of the people navigating that system (ex. Victims, witnesses, defendants, family members). People navigating the courts system often need the most help, but struggle with advocating for themselves. My goal is to train my Deputies to be efficient "system navigators" to help people navigate and demystify the complex CJ system and reentry / rehabilitation opportunities.

Douglas County Treasurer

John R. Ewing Jr. (D): No response received

NONPARTISAN TICKET

State Legislature

District 04

Cindy Maxwell-Ostdiek: Education: *I have taken courses at Metropolitan Community College, University of Nebraska-Omaha, and Bellevue University;* Volunteer Experience: *I'm President of Rank the Vote Nebraska, Co-Founder of the Nebraska Legislative Study Group, and volunteer with: my children's schools, the Foodbank for the Heartland, OneWorld Community Center, Civic Nebraska and other community organizations*

Website: www.cindyfornebraska.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CindyForNebraska/>

Twitter: @CMaxwellOstdiek

R. Brad von Gillern: Education: *BS Construction Management, Engineering College, University of Nebraska, Lincoln;* Volunteer Experience: *Salvation Army Board; Chair of MidAmerica Council of Boy Scouts of America; Secretary, Omaha Leaders; Elder, Lifegate Church; YMCA Board; UNMC Board of Advisors; Commissioner, Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission*

Website: www.vongillern4ne.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/vongillern4ne>

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Cindy Maxwell-Ostdiek: Nebraskans are right to be concerned. Our prison population has steadily grown over the last decade, while most other states reduced their numbers. We've reached more than 150% of the system's design capacity and more than half are nonviolent offenders. Staffing and turnover issues are also a problem. To address the overcrowding crisis, I support problem solving courts, treatment programs as an alternative to prison, correcting parole eligibility calculations, and ensuring quality programming required for release. In the big picture, I will prioritize legislation that addresses long-standing issues that contribute to crime, including education, mental health, poverty, and racial disparity in statewide arrest and incarceration numbers.

R. Brad von Gillern: I don't believe that sentencing should be driven by our prison capacity. If a crime is committed, a sentence should be reflective of that crime and be an according punishment. We need to get busy building a new prison for a number of reasons. The safety of the prison staff, the safety of the prisoners, and the opportunities for rehabilitation and reduced recidivism will all improve with a new facility.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Cindy Maxwell-Ostdiek: Nebraskans should be able to rely on quality infrastructure to support their growing families and businesses. Prudent appropriation of the federal dollars from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will be important to address our highways, bridges, airports, and transportation needs. The Nebraska Legislature must be accountable to distribute those investments equitably and with commitment to long-neglected communities across the state. As a Senator, I'll build on Legislation passed during this current session with focus on rural and urban broadband access, which is critical for education, small businesses, and agriculture. My priorities also include ensuring our clean drinking water and expanding electric vehicle infrastructure.

R. Brad von Gillern: I am supporting of the Perkins County Canal project as it will preserve our water rights which is our most precious resource and key to our infrastructure. Improving our roads for safer and more efficient travel will always be a priority for me and the State of Nebraska. Lastly, growing our ability to produce electricity, including considering nuclear energy options will be a huge driver for our economy in the future.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Cindy Maxwell-Ostdiek: All of Nebraska's children are guaranteed an education through our state Constitution and deserve excellent schools that are fully, equitably, and sustainably funded. I am a strong supporter of public education, including paying our hard-working teachers and school staff competitive salaries. Nebraska's reliance on property taxes to fund our local school districts negatively impacts many communities across the state. Fixing this issue is a priority for me. I am disappointed the Legislature did not seriously debate the bipartisan proposal introduced this session. Whether fixing the current equation and/or finding new revenue sources, I believe the Senators should work together to find a solution through compromise, creativity and hard work.

R. Brad von Gillern: The current funding sources appear to be appropriate. That said, the State Aid to Schools equation is often contested as unfair to many districts and could be reconsidered, especially as a part of an overhaul of our total tax system

District 06

Machaela Cavanaugh: Education: *Masters in Public Administration, University of Nebraska, Omaha;* Current Office held: *Nebraska State Legislature, January 2019 – Present*

Website: cavanaughforlegislature.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cavanaughforlegislature>

Twitter: @CavanaughforLeg

Christian Mirch: Education: *Juris Doctor*; Volunteer Experience: *Millard Rotary and Boy Scouts of America*
Website: <http://www.votemirch.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/votemirch>
Twitter: @votemirch

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Machaela Cavanaugh: In the 2022 session, we had the opportunity to pass significant criminal justice reform in Nebraska. I would like to see the Legislature revisit the recommendations from the Criminal Justice Institute. We cannot build new prisons fast enough to keep up with the growth in population. We need to utilize early, community-based interactions, rehabilitation, and ways to avoid 'jamming out'. Additionally, we must address the severe lack of mental health access across the state and invest in law enforcements training related to mental illness and specialized de-escalation techniques.

Christian Mirch: There must be a four-prong approach. First, we must continue programs in place and develop new prevention/diversion programs. Second, we must ensure that those who find themselves incarcerated and those who work in the state's prisons are safe. That is why we must build a new prison. Third, I believe that prior to breaking ground on a new prison, the state needs to invest in job training programs for low-level offenders. This will reduce our prison population and increase our workforce. Lastly, Nebraska's recidivism rate is over 30% with a recidivism rate of 14% for those who complete probation. This means the state must develop a reintegration program designed to support inmates transitioning back into society.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Machaela Cavanaugh: The first step would be to maximize the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to invest in infrastructure, and then a long term plan for cash reserve.

Christian Mirch: Due to an influx of federal aid in the form of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, the state has the opportunity to make a major investment in repairing and in some cases expanding our infrastructure without the need to levy additional taxes or bonds. By using ARPA funds to repair and expand our infrastructure, the state can accomplish to long-term goals and plan for future repairs by creating a fund to be used in 10 to 15 years. The use of ARPA funds will place the state in a sound financial position for future expenses, by allowing the state to beginning saving money for future repairs. Thus the state will have flexibility to invest in social programs that will bring Nebraskans out of poverty.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Machaela Cavanaugh: Nebraska is 49th in the nation for state

funding for public education. Because of this lack of investment at the state level, our property tax system has become unduly burdened with this cost of education. I would like to see the state's property tax relief fund go to funding property tax relief by taking the cost of education away from the local level resulting in lower local property taxes.

Christian Mirch: Our current formula for funding education is not serving taxpayers, schools, or children. Currently, our educational system is over reliant on property taxes in order to fund our local schools and that over-reliance is actually harming our community. For example, while we are inefficiently funding education, we are creating housing insecurity for low- and middle-class families who cannot afford the significant tax burden and are losing their homes. That is why I believe that it is imperative that we address school funding in a holistic way, considering all sources of revenue to fund education. By balancing the tax burden and spreading it across more than just property we will relieve the pressure placed on taxpayers.

District 08

Marilyn Arant Asher: No response received

Megan Hunt: Education: *B.A., Intercultural Communication and German, Dana College 2008; Certificate of Completion, Senior Executives in State and Local Government, Harvard Kennedy School, 2019; Current Public Office: Nebraska Legislature, LD8, 2019-2022; Volunteer Experience: Board service: Charles Drew Health Center, Friends of Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, Friends of the Nebraska AIDS Project, Omaha Area Youth Orchestras. Trustee: Business Ethics Alliance. Volunteer: Girls, Inc., Women's Center for Advancement*

Website: www.meganfornebraska.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MeganHuntNE>

Twitter: @nebraskamegan

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Megan Hunt: We have to understand that solutions to overcrowding don't begin and end with the Department of Corrections. I have fought for resources for people facing poverty who engage in survival crimes, opportunities for incarcerated people to maintain connections with their communities, for the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated to develop civic connections to their communities through the right to vote, and for education and employment after release to prevent recidivism. Nebraska must also begin reconciling our failed war on drugs and its negative effects on communities of color by legalizing cannabis and allowing people with cannabis convictions to clear or modify their records.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Megan Hunt: Infrastructure is a public good, including public transportation, renewable energy, housing, accessibility for people with disabilities, and a health and education system that works for all of the people of Nebraska. These are things worth investing in, protecting, and advancing for all society and future generations, and they are issues I have always prioritized as a lawmaker. State and local leaders have an obligation to do the most we can for working people, civil rights, and the planet with the power people have entrusted to us. The vision has to be for those coming after us — not just for the next four years.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Megan Hunt: I am against the use of public funds for private education, full-stop, period. In the Nebraska Legislature I have been an active and vocal check against bills that siphon much-needed funding away from our public schools and into private education. I envision a public education system in Nebraska where every parent feels proud to enroll their children, because parents know that our schools are well-funded and well-staffed and can fulfill the diverse needs of the children in each community. Public funds from taxpayers should only be used to further improve our excellent Nebraska public schools.

District 10

Wendy DeBoer: Education: *Burke High School; Hastings College (B.A. in economics and English); University of Nebraska College of Law (J.D.); UNO (M.A. in English literature); Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (M.A. in Theology); Syracuse U. (MPhil in religious studies);* Current Office held: *State Senator, District 10 (2019-2022);* Volunteer Experience: *Rejoice! Lutheran Church, Adult Education Instructor*
Website: deboerforlegislature.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/votedeboer>

Lou Ann Goding: No response received

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Wendy DeBoer: As a member of the Judiciary Committee, this is an issue I've worked on extensively. I've worked to reduce recidivism rates through funding, making programming available, and doing more with the post-release transition. I also believe that we need to do more to help families who are struggling and give everyone the chance to be successful. My goal is to make mental health services and job training more accessible. By doing so, we can prevent crimes from happening in the first place. This will reduce our prison population and make our communities safer.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Wendy DeBoer: In my time in the Legislature, I've championed infrastructure bills that help repair our crumbling roads and bridges and expedite the building of new projects. When I think about infrastructure, I think about how new technology in the future will impact the way we travel, work, and live. I've supported broadband expansion to unserved and underserved populations in rural and urban areas. This allows for more economic development opportunities, healthcare options, a better learning environment, and overall a better quality of life.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Wendy DeBoer: Last year, I introduced LR141 to create the School Finance Study Committee. As an educator, I know that supporting our schools and providing the best education possible gives each student a chance to succeed and improves our state's workforce needs. I also know that high property taxes can hurt farmers, businesses, and families. That is why I supported the largest property tax cut in state history and eliminated taxes on social security and military retirement benefits. Going forward, it is vital that we work together to continue to create a more fair tax system, while also keeping basic services, like the future of our kids strong.

District 12

Robin Richards: Education: *Bachelor's UNO/Mater's Colorado State;* Current Public Office: *Vice President of the Ralston School Board 11/2019-present;* Volunteer Experience: *I have outstanding volunteer awards from OPS, Westside, Millard and Ralston School Districts. I serve on the boards and volunteer for many arts organizations in town including the Omaha Children's Choir and Vesper Concerts*
Website: www.richards4ne.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RR4NE>

Merv Riepe: Education: *Bachelor of Science, Business Finance, University of Nebraska at Omaha; Master of Arts, The University of Iowa, Health Care Policy and Management;* Current Office held: *Ralston Board of Education, 2020 to date;* Past Office held: *Nebraska State Legislature, Legislative District 12, 2014-2018; Chair, Health & Human Services Committee, 2016-2018;* Military Service: *U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman, Honorable Discharge;* Volunteer Experience: *Board member, Mid-America Council of Scouts, Omaha Symphony, Outlook Nebraska (Chair), United Way of the Midlands (Vice-Chair), Nebraska Wesleyan University (president's advisory board), Combined Health Agencies Drive (CHAD)*
Website: voteriepe.com

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Robin Richards: The first step happened when the state started paying correctional officers nearly double what they had before, bringing some highly trained staff to our state. I believe that the next step is the Legislative Bill that Senator Lathrop has up for discussion this session. In this bill, the reform starts, not with new facilities, but with educational and vocational training programs for the incarcerated people in our state. Next the decriminalization of marijuana, we can release 14% of incarcerated people from our prison system if we legalize and a plant that is considered medicine in most other states, including many of our neighbors.

Merv Riepe: Believe the dated prison in Lincoln needs to be replaced and located in close proximity to Omaha given the population base and work force. Also need to focus on re-entry of prisoners into society with training of personal skills, personal issues, mental health services and general education. Explore the opportunity for community sponsors (including employers) for non-violent prisoners pre- and post-release. Monitored work release programs.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Robin Richards: As a school board member, the inequality of the distribution of resources in our state became overwhelmingly clear as we tried to navigate the pandemic. Having reliable internet was a concern but even more that, it was making sure kids are safe and fed. Some of the American Rescue Plan funds should be used to help make sure that no child in Nebraska lives in poverty, through adult training programs and employment opportunities, as well as tax breaks for child care and tax credit for parents, we can make that a reality. The next step is to fix our roads, internet connections, and ensure clean drinking water and air for all. Working closely with the agencies in charge of each of those, the state should have recommendations on achieving that.

Merv Riepe: I think of infrastructure as highways and bridges. Nebraska has many bridges in particular in need of repair and replacement. We must prioritize replacement to promote the highest and best use of resources. In the world of technology, broad ban is important but merits pro-formal cost/benefit analysis, and establishment of priorities for replacement or new construction.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Robin Richards: I would contact the Nebraska Department of Education for needed and trusted information but I would also rely heavily on the Ralston and Millard Schools Districts to know what would work best for them. I know that the power of school lies in local control. No one knows and understands a district's needs like the people who live and work there. The

boards are legally required to live in the district they serve and the administration in most districts has decades of experience. I trust these professionals and committed citizen to know what is best for their community.

Merv Riepe: Our schools currently are highly dependent of property taxes and we must seek other sources. Other sources would require funding from the General Fund. As a sitting school board member, I recognize we have approved most school bond issues--yet have fallen short on testing proficiency and the challenges of families, poverty, and English learning students. We need to engage the parents and the philanthropic community as to the critical importance of education and education's need for funding stability

District 18

Christy Armendariz: No response received

Michael Young: Education: *Metropolitan Community College and University of Nebraska at Omaha*; Past Offices held: *Metropolitan Community College of Nebraska Board of Governors 2016-2020, The Transit Authority of the City of Omaha 2010-2020*; Volunteer Experience: *Carole's House of Hope, Code Black Tech, Butler Gast YMCA, Partnership for Kids, 100 Black Men of Omaha, City Sprouts, Downtown Omaha Inc, Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals*
Website: <https://www.youngforne.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/young4ne>
Twitter: @youngforne

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Michael Young: I would champion legislation that would provide more support for prevention programs, such as community and gang outreach that treats the causes of why our prisons are over populated. Additionally, we need to work on programs in our perspective communities that allows our returning community members to truly have a success and not reenter the system. I currently volunteer with RISE.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Michael Young: Working with our Congressional and Senate delegations to bring infrastructure funding to Nebraska and then champion legislation that allows for these funds to make large impacts in our communities. As former Transit Authority Chair, I know the large impact transit and infrastructure has on economic development and growth.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Michael Young: I am a proponent of the existing structure in the TEEOSA even though there has been some changes. We used a similar structure that the community college. I am not a proponent the currently proposed voucher based system.

District 20

Stu Dornan: Education: *University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida B.A. - 1979 Major: English. Louisiana State University Law Center, Baton Rouge, Louisiana J.D. – 1983;* Current Office held: *2010 to present - Board of the Nebraska Educational Service Unit #3;* Past Offices held: *2000 - 2003 Board of Education, Westside Community Schools. 2003 - 2006 Douglas County Attorney;* Volunteer Experience: *Board of Directors, Community Alliance. Board of Counselors for UNMC. Past member, Board of Directors at Lutheran Family Services and the Ronald McDonald House. Youth basketball, softball, and baseball coach for 30 years*
Website: votestudornan.com
Twitter: @votestudornan

John A. Fredrickson: Education: *New York University: Bachelor of Science in Social Work; Columbia University: Master of Science in Social Work;* Volunteer Experience: *Operation Others, America Reads, West Africa AIDS Foundation*
Website: <https://www.johnfornebraska.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/people/John-Fredrickson-for-Legislature/100076096687574/>
Twitter: @JohnforNE

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Stu Dornan: Our criminal justice system includes our courts, law enforcement, prosecutors, defense counsel, correction facilities, and offender programs. As a community, we must continue to work together to address repeat offenders, provide meaningful opportunities for rehabilitative programs, institute and expand problem-solving courts, prevent additional crimes, and support and ensure justice for crime victims, as the cancer of crime infects victims physically, emotionally, and often financially. Separate housing for low risk and elderly offenders at the Women's Center in York; and the construction of a new women's facility at much less cost and capacity is a novel but very cost-effective solution.

John A. Fredrickson: The overcrowding of Nebraska's prisons is a crisis in need of immediate action. This is both a public safety issue as well as a moral issue as a society. We must address the root causes of crime and incarceration with a focus on evidence-based preventative measures, including investing in mental health services, early childhood education, supportive housing, and employment opportunities. In January 2022, the Nebraska Criminal Justice Reinvestment Working Group published a report outlining 21 policy options to address overcrowding in our prisons. This report offers promising solutions, and I believe implementing these measures will begin to improve the intolerable situation we currently have.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Stu Dornan: I believe Nebraska has sufficient funding to address our most critical infrastructure needs. This is especially true with the enactment federal infrastructure bill last November that provides funding of \$1.2 trillion for our nation's infrastructure needs. In Nebraska, this includes \$2.5 billion for roads and bridges, \$100 million for rural broadband expansion and \$200 million for replacing lead pipes that deliver drinking water. With this new funding and our existing state resources, we must be laser-focused on the management and appropriations process to ensure these and other funds are well managed through strong competitive bidding, coordinating expenditures with cities and counties, and ensuring transparency in all our spending.

John A. Fredrickson: The passing of the federal infrastructure bill gives Nebraska the opportunity to utilize nearly \$2.5B for our state's hard infrastructure needs. We need to repair the 1300+ bridges and 1100+ miles of highway that are deemed in poor condition. Nebraskans have seen a 6.6% increase in commute times since 2011 - a time tax on all of us. These updates will improve this quality of life issue. Additionally, Broadband Internet has become essential for education, telehealth, and our economy. We need to ensure all Nebraskans have access to reliable, high speed internet. I am also focused on our community infrastructure. We must prioritize paid family leave, affordable housing and childcare, and mental health services to enable Nebraskans to thrive.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Stu Dornan: Our public schools now operate primarily with revenue from local property taxes and additional funding from the State of Nebraska. I believe this is an appropriate mix of revenue sources for our taxpayers because it provides local control through local school boards who set and manage property tax rates and spending. Having served on the Westside Community Schools board, it is important to me to have this close community and parental input on local education, funding, and curriculum. However, we should direct more funding from the state to our local public schools. The Legislature has made significant strides in this direction in the past few years - because of our strong economy and higher state revenues - and this trend should continue.

John A. Fredrickson: A strong education system is an essential component of a healthy, flourishing society. I am passionate about ensuring that our teachers and schools have the resources they need to ensure that our children graduate with the skill sets needed to be successful in today's world. School funding has long been debated in Nebraska, with a focus on the role of property taxes. The state has not adequately funded our public education and ranks near the bottom in the US for state aid to education. I believe that the state needs to increase its funding of our school system so that

we are not overly reliant on property taxes. This will help alleviate the tax burden and ensure our school funding is reliable, stable, and equitable.

District 31 – 2-year term

Kathleen Kauth: Education: *Masters in Public Policy, BA in Criminology*; Current Office held: *State Legislator - LD31 June, 2022 – current*; Volunteer Experience: *Omaha City Charter Commission Aging Advisory Committee, State of Nebraska Volunteer Judge and Coach, UNL Law School Vice President, Omaha Senior Resources Group 2017 ENOA Foster Grandparents Advisory Board Member 2017 - current Concord Mediation Cent*

Website: <https://kathleenkauth.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/electkathleenkauth>

Tim Royers: Education: *Bachelor of Science in Social Science Education (Northwest Missouri State University), Master of Arts in History (University of Nebraska - Omaha), Master of Science in Educational Leadership and Administration (Walden University)*; Volunteer Experience: *St. Luke Teen Center mentor, YMCA Youth Soccer Coach*

Website: <https://royersfornebraska.com/>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/RoyersForNebraska

Twitter: @RoyersForNE

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Kathleen Kauth: Our prison was built in 1869 and our population has more than doubled since then. Nebraska is doing a good job with diversionary programs to keep people out of prison, but a new prison needs to be built that will accommodate our population needs and allow for the types of programming that help with rehabilitation.

Tim Royers: There have been some worthwhile efforts in the Legislature in recent years that we need to continue to build on. Namely, we need to thoroughly examine our sentencing guidelines, and assess what we currently offer to assist people in completing their sentences so they can successfully return to the community and have gainful employment. Reducing recidivism is critical to addressing prison overcrowding.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Kathleen Kauth: Making sure the funding is directed to the types of infrastructure that is most needed based on each area. Urban areas will have very different needs and solutions than suburban or rural areas. Ensuring the efficient movement of goods and people is a primary goal.

Tim Royers: We need to make sure we're utilizing the federal funds that were recently made available to help address critical issues like rural broadband. We also need to make sure that we have enough resources allocated, through sources like the

Highway Trust Fund, to keep up to date with our maintenance needs. Finally, we need to make sure that we are promoting the skilled trades in our school systems, so that way we have the workers with the needed expertise to maintain and upgrade our bridges, electrical systems, and other critical infrastructure.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Kathleen Kauth: The existing formula to fund public schools is unsustainable. Our sky-high property taxes are the primary driver of public school funding in Nebraska, and our tax climate is not competitive with our neighboring states. This results in brain drain and a lack of economic growth. We need a complete tax code overhaul to ensure our state can be competitive while providing appropriate funding to maximize our children's education and potential.

Tim Royers: Nebraska is one of the most property tax reliant states in the country to fund its schools, and until we redesign the state's funding formula (TEEOSA) to make the state an equal partner in funding, that will not change. Millard Public Schools has seen a cut in state funding for the past three years, which creates an impossible situation where we either have to provide less for our kids, or ask more of the homeowners in our community.

The state currently has a revenue surplus, we should use those additional funds as well as thoroughly examining the tax loop holes and carve outs that currently exist to build enough funding at the state level that we can lower our property tax levies and provide more stable funding for our kids.

District 36

Angie Lauritsen: Education: *Bachelor of Liberal Arts in Professional Communication*; Past Public Offices: *Gretna City Council 2016-2020*; Volunteer Experience: *Board Member (current) - Survivors Rising (Treasurer), Lift Up Sarpy County, Concord Mediation Center, Leadership Nebraska Alumni Council and Gretna Tree Board Board Member (past) - PromiseShip and Gretna Chamber of Commerce Committee Member – Gretna*

Website: AngieLauritsenForLegislature.com

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/AngieLauritsenForLegislature>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AngieLauritsen>

Rick Holdcroft: No response received

Nebraska's prisons are the nation's most overcrowded. What measures would you use to manage this situation?

Angie Lauritsen: When we think about crime, we need to be proactive in preventing it from happening in the first place. We need more focus on mental health resources and other proven methods that keep our communities safe. In addition, we need to focus on rehabilitation and not just punishment.

We should be providing those who are incarcerated with education, job training, and other skills to lower recidivism rates and make those who have done their time productive members of our society.

What specific measures do you propose to meet the state's growing infrastructure needs?

Angie Lauritsen: We need to be innovative in how we approach infrastructure projects going forward. Infrastructure isn't just the concrete we use in roads and bridges. It's also building out broadband to underserved and unserved areas, adequate water and sewer lines to ensure our water is clean and safe, and upgrading our power grid to support modern technology. I'm a supporter of LB1016, which allows for more public-private partnerships to allow roads projects to be built quicker by using a new funding mechanism. This also saves the taxpayers money by not having the added costs of inflation by kicking the can down the road.

From what funding sources will you draw to educate our state's children?

Angie Lauritsen: I believe that strong schools are an economic driver that helps local businesses thrive and are essential to attract and retain families in Nebraska. There is no doubt that property taxes are too high. That is mostly due to the fact that Nebraska ranks in the bottom five in state aid to schools. For us to provide real property tax relief that is needed for farmers, businesses, and families, we need to provide an alternative source of funding that does not fall solely on the backs of property owners. The easiest solution is to balance the three-legged stool (property, income, sales taxes) that is out of whack. We need a comprehensive approach that evaluates our entire tax system to find a fair approach.

State Board of Education District 8

Deborah Neary: Education: *MA History & Public Administration*; Current Office held: *State Board of Education 2018-present*; Volunteer Experience: *Leadership Nebraska; Leadership Omaha; ServeNebraska Board appointed by Gov Ricketts in 2015 & 2018; Madonna School Board 2016-19; Business Ethics Alliance Trustee; League of Women Voters 1990-present. West Omaha Rotarian since 1990.*

Website: www.DebForEd.com

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/DeborahNeary4StateEducation>

Twitter: @Neary4StateEducation

Marni Hodgen: No response received

Should Board members be elected or appointed? Explain.

Deborah Neary: Elections of SBOE members help to limit the influence of politics and provide for greater input from

voters. Legislators recognized the importance and value of an elected board when they proposed creation of the State Board in 1951.

An elected board is crucial to a strong education system because:

- Elected State Board members serve as the citizen's voice in education.
- Board members represent geographic districts across the state.
- Nebraska has long prided itself as a "local control" state. Having regional elections for state board members ensures decision making and responsiveness is closer to the local voter.
- Greater stability and continuity of policy is maintained with an elected board.

What influence should the State School Board have on academic freedom in public schools?

Deborah Neary: I believe that the State Board of Education should do its job to continue to ensure the development and passage of policies that set academic goals and guidelines--but that also give local school districts and education professionals the freedom to make decisions on lesson delivery and book selections. The Department of Education was founded 2 years after Nebraska became a state, and since that time there has been a continual improvement of regulations and policies to insure that Nebraska's education policies are balanced for scholarly achievement, parent voice, and teacher creativity.

In your opinion, what is the purpose of mandated academic standards in Nebraska public schools?

Deborah Neary: Having a State Board set academic "standards" is intended to ensure that all students have the skills & knowledge necessary to succeed in college, career, & life upon graduation from high school, regardless of where they live. Not all standards are mandated. The curriculum requirements, text books & other resource materials, are all decided by local school districts which allows for strong local control & more parent input. The balance of local & state allows for the best results possible. There have been many controversies around "standards" previously in Nebraska. In the past voters fought to exclude climate change from science standards & fought to include creationism instead of evolution. Balance of state & local ensures excellence.

Board of Governors Metropolitan Community College

District 1

Phillip Klein: Current Office held: *Metropolitan Community College Board of Governors - completing second term*; Past Office held: *City Council for City of Elkhorn - 1 term, Mayor for the City of Elkhorn - In the middle of 4th term when annexed by Omaha*

Mark Stoj: Education: *Associate's Degree in Professional Studies--Metropolitan Community College, Bachelor's Degree in Business Management--Bellevue University, Master's Degree in Business Management--Bellevue University;* Volunteer Experience: *Notary Public 1994-2021, Treasurer Steve Brock for Metro College Board 2006-2013, Vice Pres. Ramble Ridge Neighborhood Assn 2009-2011, Pres. Omaha Chapter of The Nebraska Credit Union League 2001, Pres. South Omaha Neighborhood Assn 2001-2002*
Website: <https://markstoj.com/>

How can a comprehensive (career and academic transfer) community college best serve our community?

Phillip Klein: By providing our students with great educational or training programs for their path forward regardless of what it might be at a reasonable cost.

Mark Stoj: Metro best serves the community by improving our culture and the local economy. By providing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs, students can compete for careers with higher pay and outstanding benefits. While men outnumber women in STEM fields and in trades, Metro offers a great opportunity to increase equity and ready workers for these fields.

Trade training, general education classes, and higher education programs make our community attractive to new business, retain existing businesses, and create growth in many industries. With a strong presence in underserved areas, Metro inspires students and lowers unemployment. It also reduces the Brain Drain when young people leave our state for more attractive jobs.

How do you define and measure student success?

Phillip Klein: Student graduations and input from the private sector on how happy they are with new employees trained by Metro.

Mark Stoj: Success occurs when a student reaches their goal. Grades and graduation rates are our objective measurements. However, with over 100 career programs and many non-credit classes, there are many different unmeasurable signs of success. One example is my mother's face when she learned I would be the first in our family to graduate from college.

Other examples are when a student gets a long-needed raise and promotion after finishing computer classes; an electrician program graduate enters an apprenticeship; hearing the doctor's excitement when he finds out you lost ten pounds after a non-credit fitness class; and, having someone buy your items after taking a craft class. These are all examples of how I and many Metro students measure success.

What particular experiences or issues compelled you to run for the Board?

Phillip Klein: Every successful life should include some form of public service. I feel my life experience which includes my terms with the City of Elkhorn serves the Metro board well.

Mark Stoj: When I was 22 years old, I worked paycheck to paycheck overnight in a warehouse in harsh weather and with poor management. I was worried this would be my life. I decided to take night classes at Metro and graduated with my Associate's Degree.

Metro changed my life. Today, I have 20 years experience as manager of a credit union serving Creighton University. I have a Master's and a Bachelor's Degree in business and decades of experience with college students, professors, and staff. My son takes Gen Ed classes at Metro, and my nephews graduated from the Electrician and IT programs. I want to use my education, experience, and leadership skills to improve lives and to ensure your tax dollars are spent wisely.

District 2

Erin Feichtinger: Education: *B.S. in Special Education from Loyola University Chicago; Ph.D in Early Modern History from Loyola University Chicago;* Current Office held: *Metropolitan Community College, District 2 (2018-2022);* Volunteer Experience: *A Just Harvest Community Kitchen (Chicago, IL); ENOA Foster Grandparents Advisory Group; Benson Neighborhood Association*
Website: erinformetro.com
Facebook: facebook.com/erinformetro
Twitter: @erinformetro

Tammy L. Wright: No response received

How can a comprehensive (career and academic transfer) community college best serve our community?

Erin Feichtinger: MCC's mission is to deliver relevant, student-centered education to a diverse community of learners. That means recognizing that our community needs affordable, accessible education for any of our neighbors. Higher education has become increasingly unattainable for students who need a credential to achieve a good job that allows them to live the life they want. MCC has dual enrollment, trades education, and continuing education which are going to be more important than ever in the coming years. We provide the type of flexible and adaptive education to all of our neighbors that's incredibly important work for the stability and empowerment of a community. Education is the bedrock of democracy and society - MCC builds that foundation.

How do you define and measure student success?

Erin Feichtinger: In the classroom, success means knowing their classes are relevant to helping them achieve their goals

and that they aren't wasting their time or money. We've overseen the development and implementation of an advising program that helps make MCC more relevant, more affordable, and quicker to adapt when a student needs help or changes course. Outside the classroom, students need to know where their next meal is coming from, that they'll be able to continue learning despite what the world throws at them, and that they're valued as learners and achievers at MCC and in their community. A food pantry, more financial assistance, and clear paths to problem-solving when an issue arises are all critical in this regard.

What particular experiences or issues compelled you to run for the Board?

Erin Feichtinger: My background as a Special Education teacher showed me how important community colleges are to the continued growth of a diverse group of students who might not otherwise have access to higher education. Community college meant these students could reach their goals affordably and on their schedule. As a former professor, I saw students for whom a 4-year education wasn't the right fit - and that's okay! More students should feel like community college is a viable option and the right choice for them and their future. My work in the community shows me every day how important and life-changing an MCC education can be for a person working toward success, and how critical it is that MCC continues listening to the community it serves.

District 3

Tyler Fausset: No response received

Maureen K. Monahan: Education: *St. Robert Bellarmine Grade School, Marian High School, Boston College B.A., Loyola Chicago School of Law, J.D.*; Current Office held: *METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS, District 3 TERM 2019-2023*; Volunteer Experience: *Leadership Omaha, Nebraska Bar Association, Juvenile Section, past chair, Parishioner, St. Robert Bellarmine.*
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MonahanforMetro>

How can a comprehensive (career and academic transfer) community college best serve our community?

Maureen K. Monahan: A Community College best serves our community by providing quality affordable education that prepares our students for the opportunities right here. Academic transfer makes a 4 year degree affordable. Career training makes the difference between minimum wage and the living wage. A trained and educated workforce attracts more and higher paying opportunities. Having the skills and education to take advantage of local opportunities means a child remains to care for an aging parent and grandchildren know their grandparents. At heart, our community is about our families. A community college best serves its community

by providing the education that makes it possible for families to remain together and gives them the skills to prosper.

How do you define and measure student success?

Maureen K. Monahan: Student Success is about a student or potential student taking a step. Every path at MCC starts with a step. In exploring the catalog, starting a degree or certificate, or finishing a class - each is a success. MCC is uniquely set up for anyone to walk through the doors and take a step toward a goal. Many students have other demands on their time. MCC works to assist students to figure out each step and how and when they are going to take it. Every step is a success on the way to the goal - a bigger success.

What particular experiences or issues compelled you to run for the Board?

Maureen K. Monahan: My brother was severely disabled. Even though a federal law was passed guaranteeing an appropriate education regardless of disabilities, local officials refused to implement it. I watched as my brother was denied an education over and over while elected officials were indifferent. I went door to door with my Father when he ran for and won a seat on the State Board of Education since no one else was going to help. He worked hard to ensure that every student received the benefit of education. I grew up meeting his constituents who thrived from putting his values to work for public education. As a Board Member, I will have the opportunity to set the policy that allows thousands in our community the education they need to thrive.

District 4

Ron Hug: Education: *Bachelors From Bellevue University*; Current Office held: *metropolitan community college board of governors, at Large, two terms beginning in 2014*; Past Office held: *metropolitan community college board of governors, district 1, 1998 to 2014*; Volunteer Experience: *board member, Carlson Federal employees credit Union/president-Roxbury homeowners association, president- Cinnamon Creek homeowners association, president-village Green townhouse association*

Kimara Snipes: No response received

How can a comprehensive (career and academic transfer) community college best serve our community?

Ron Hug: the first and probably the most important way a community college can best serve our community when it comes to transfers, is a low tuition rate. metropolitan community college has the lowest credit hour rate in the state. cost coupled with accessibility and a broad course offering helps those individuals seeking to pursue a four-year degree a viable affordable option. currently metropolitan community college offers dual credit classes in high schools across our four county service area. this year high school students can

take these classes and no cost to them. we have had students graduating high school with a full associates degree they earned simultaneously while pursuing their high school diploma utilizing these dual enrollment class.

How do you define and measure student success?

Ron Hug: the standard for measuring student success rate has been measuring the amount of students that enter metropolitan community college and of those students how many ultimately leave with a degree. this can be deceiving due to the fact that success is measured individually by each student. many students come to Metro to increase their current job skills which may require only taking a class or two, such as individuals that need to enhance their computer skills, individuals that may need to pick up added skills in auto mechanics or auto body has industry changes. if these individuals attain their educational goals in one two or three classes and they deem themselves successful, then that is a success. this is difficult to measure

What particular experiences or issues compelled you to run for the Board?

Ron Hug: I was the first student to acquire a GED through metropolitan community college in 1974. I ultimately obtained a bachelor's degree from Bellevue University. I did this working full-time and raising a family every one of my credit hours was part-time. the largest percentage of students at metropolitan community college are just like I was they're working they're raising family they're going to school part-time trying to achieve a goal. I was first elected to the board in 1998 and I have advocated very strongly for the non-traditional students such as I was. I will continue to do so. we need to make sure that the classes we offer are conducive to individuals that are working and raising a family. that is how we ensure student success.

At Large

Kristen DuPree: Education: *B.S. Business Administration, Actuarial Science - University of Nebraska-Lincoln*; Volunteer Experience: *Partnership for Our Kids - Group Mentor (2012-13); Food Bank for the Heartland - Backpack Program (2012-14); Society of Actuaries - Curriculum Committee Member (2014-16)*

Website: www.KristenforMetro.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KristenforMetro>

John M. McCarthy: Education: *universal trades school -- 52 years in the school of hard knocks --McCARTHY ONE HOUR HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING*; Volunteer Experience: *AIR CONDITIONING CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA, PAST PRESIDENT OF HACCA*

Website: <https://mccarthyformetro.com/>

How can a comprehensive (career and academic transfer) community college best serve our community?

Kristen DuPree: A community college best serves its community when (1) the programs offered are affordable and accessible, (2) the diverse needs of the student population are identified and supported, and (3) collaborative opportunities for hands on training that address needs in the community are sought out and prioritized.

John M. McCarthy: I HAVE EXPERIENCED THIS DIRECTLY IN FINDING ALL TYPES OF EMPLOYEE'S IN THE HVAC, PLUMBING, AND ELECTRICAL TRADES AND ALL SUPPORT STAFF THAT ARE AS IMPORTANT AS THE FIELD STAFF. MCC HAS DONE A GREAT JOB BUT DOES NOT HAVE THE CAPACITY OF STUDENTS TO SERVE THE STUDENTS TO EMPTY THE WAITING LIST.

How do you define and measure student success?

Kristen DuPree: Gaining knowledge and skills that help students accomplish their academic, professional, or personal goals while inspiring a sense of purpose that connects their talents to the needs of the community.

Traditional measures like completion and retention rates are useful; however, they don't capture meaningful progress made by the non-traditional students that community colleges serve. Additional metrics such as academic improvement, re-enrollment of students who have stepped away from their studies, and usage rates of student support services help provide a comprehensive view for measuring student success.

John M. McCarthy: THE TRUE LEVEL IS GRADUATION, BUT THE SHORTAGE IN OUR FIELDS, IS THAT WE DO NOT HAVE STUDENTS THAT GO THRU GRADUATION, BECAUSE THEY GET A JOB IN THE FIELD.

What particular experiences or issues compelled you to run for the Board?

Kristen DuPree: I believe education is an investment we make in the community, and Metro provides an excellent return on investment. Every \$1 invested in Metro generates almost \$12 in economic benefits for our community. Benefits from an education at Metro are family-supporting financial stability, a diverse talent pool for local businesses to hire from, and an educated and skilled workforce to meet the demands of our evolving economy.

As a board member, I will work to increase student enrollment, expand partnerships for dual credits with area school districts, and collaborate with non-profits and businesses to maximize Metro's reach as well as taxpayer value.

John McCarthy: WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY THAT HAS THE SHORTAGES OF MANPOWER AND WORKING WITH MY GOOD FRIEND MIKE ROWE OVER THE YEARS HAS TAUGHT ME THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT I'M TRYING TO SOLVE. MANPOWER THAT STAYS IN OMAHA, EARN'S A GREAT LIVING, AND COLLECT THE STRONG BENEFITS FROM OUR COMPANIES.

Learning Community Coordinating Council

Vote for ONE

District 1

Gerald Mike Kuhn II: No response received

Brian Thommes: No response received

District 3

Mark Hoeger: Education: *BA University of Nebraska at Lincoln 1975, Graduate Studies in Film and Television University of Maryland at College Park 1976-78*; Current Office held: *Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties Coordinating Council, Sub district #3 and Treasurer 2018 to present*; Volunteer Experience: *Leadership Omaha, Omaha Chamber of Commerce, Omaha Together One Community, Kiwanis Club of Omaha, Nebraska Film Association*

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HoegerLCC3/>

Sally Otis: Education: *Masters in Art of Teaching (George Washington University), Bachelors of Art (Drake University)*; Volunteer Experience: *Western Hills Parent-Teacher Organization, Social Justice Sewing Academy, Common Senses Festival (April 2022), Riding for the Disabled Association*

Website: www.SallyForLCCC.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SallyForLCCC>

Chris Tooker: Education: *Creighton University Heider College of Business - Summa Cum Laude*; Volunteer Experience: *Past President of the Kiwanis Club of Omaha; Downtown Rotary Club of Omaha Foundation Board Member; Board Member Catholic Business Group; Past board member of Arthritis Foundation, Serra Club of West Omaha, and CHAD*

How can the Learning Community help partners overcome student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Mark Hoeger: Improving student learning deficits has been the core mission of the Learning Community since the Legislature created it in 2007. The pandemic is THE greatest natural disaster to disrupt our community's educational progress. The Learning Community staff, with Council oversight and approval, has worked closely with all our member school districts to facilitate creative flexibility in the use of

existing grants and programs to directly tackle the monumental task of student learning recovery. A surprisingly effective adaptation has been in the use of LC funded teacher coaches that help teachers develop more effective remote learning. Technology has also allowed our early childhood and family support programs to continue.

Sally Otis: Throughout Nebraska, early childcare has been undersupported and an ongoing problem for many families. The achievement gap and concern with student and teacher well-being didn't originate with COVID-19, but these problems were exacerbated and became more visible to those less affected. There are no easy answers, however the Learning Community is well positioned to help communities move in a positive direction. Because partner organizations are already in place in vulnerable communities, they are able to identify, advocate for, and implement solutions. With an ongoing emphasis on social-emotional health, the Learning Community also needs to consider the strengths of current partners or what additional support might be needed.

Chris Tooker: Adapting to life with COVID was extremely challenging for all of us. However, the COVID pandemic impacted our most disadvantaged students the hardest. This unfortunately increased the learning gaps and well-being deficits experienced by the very children LCC serves. We will need to meet newcomers where they are in the educational journey while respecting their personal boundaries. Online/virtual sessions must remain an option for parents and families who prefer that service approach while maintaining a personal connection and understanding the needs of each child. Parental engagement will be even more critical than before so the LCC multi-generational approach will be essential to closing the gap.

What challenges do you foresee in expanding programming to school districts and community organizations?

Mark Hoeger: The good news is that we know what works, thanks to 15 years of R&D with our school districts and Buffet Early Childhood Institute partners. The program models we have developed, test implemented and rigorously evaluated are nationally recognized by the US Dept. of Education and The Aspen Institute as among the most innovative and effective in the nation in closing the educational opportunity gap between rich and poor. Our challenge is to bring this opportunity to all children and families in need. State law limits the LC's direct program administration. The job of the LC is to build a consensus solution that will involve, school districts, colleges, local and state governments, businesses, and private philanthropy.

Sally Otis: Future success can only be achieved by recognizing that while there are some universal truths in supporting positive early childhood development, not all communities have the same needs or challenges. Any efforts made to expand must be responsive to the communities they wish to serve and include community members as equitable stakeholders.

Additionally expansion should not be at the expense of current programs. Capacity must be built in step with expansion to ensure sustainability. The current programs are evaluated with results shared publicly and this thoughtful reporting can provide insight into what works and what might need to be reconsidered before expanding.

Chris Tooker: Funding is always a major hurdle to expansion of any program or services. Property taxes are already a hot topic in Nebraska because we have some of the highest rates in the country. However, we are also blessed with some of the most generous private citizens in the nation. The council must seek partnerships with those individuals as well as nonprofit and for-profit organizations in our community that may be able to assist with funding and/or in-kind services. Property valuations have skyrocketed over the last several years so the LCC budget will naturally increase even though the levy remains constant. I do not support raising the levy to expand services.

List one of your goals for this four-year term and how you plan to achieve it.

Mark Hoeger: Our immediate next step is to build a new early childhood and elementary learning center. Our current centers in North and South Omaha are popular and effective. The new South Central center will serve the nexus of the Westside, Ralston, Papillion-La Vista, Millard and West OPS; districts that in the last decade saw low-income enrolment increases of 94% to 266%. My goal is to build philanthropic support for its programming. Our success will create billions in new wealth to be shared by the entire community. Over 50K students in the Learning Community struggle with the challenges of low-income. Raising their career average annual income by just \$5K, will directly infuse \$2.5 billion into our economy and greatly reduce our work force shortage

Sally Otis: During my four-year term, I will approach my responsibilities to the Learning Community with a community-first mindset. I want to ensure that the Learning Community partner organizations are responsive to the families, professionals, and districts they engage with. Partner organizations need to demonstrate active engagement with families and education professionals in the creation of programs. I'm committed to being available and listening to community input about Council decisions and I will actively examine what perspectives may not be represented so that any barriers might be addressed.

Chris Tooker: My main goal is to increase the number of lives impacted by LCC programs without increasing taxes. The mission & services provided by LCC are essential to our city's future & it is the council's responsibility to maximize the return on tax-payers' investment. Several contractors & partners perform duplicative services. Some contractors report to multiple entities without being fully accountable to anyone. Additionally, some programs do not have measurable goals and results reported back to the LCC. As a council member, I will hold all organizations

accountable for the tax-payer funds they have received & insist we keep better records of reportable outcomes for our most vulnerable citizens.

District 5

Andy Allen: Military Experience: 9 yrs Nebraska Army National Guard
Website: VoteAndyAllen.com

Douglas Brady: Education: Millard Graduate 1979, Metropolitan Community College, Southwest Community College; Military Experience: US Army Truck Driver; Volunteer Experience: Girl Scouts, multiple venues for DJ Music, Sarpy County Republicans
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Douglas-Brady-Candidate-for-District-5-Learning-Community-108656365102821/>

Erik Servellon: Education: Bachelor of Art, Political Science and International Studies, UNO; Master of Public Administration, UNO; Current Office held: Learning Community Coordinating Council, 2021-Present; Military Experience: Medic, Nebraska Army National Guard, 2018-Present
Website: www.erikserves.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ErikServesNebraska/>

Tonya Ward: No response received

How can the Learning Community help partners overcome student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Andy Allen: The last two years have had multiple departmental effects on children and families and they are going to require multiple efforts to provide relief. Some of the things that can be provided is first tutoring to assist children who have been negatively effected in reaching educational goals, another issue that has effected not only the children but their families as well has been emotional and social which by providing the ability for families to come together through educational as well as social settings can help rebuild these bonds and strengthen our communities.

Douglas Brady: Unfortunately, it has been a rough 2 years. The full scope of most of the deficits will not be fully understood at first. We may need to eliminate or temporarily postpone some programs or areas so we can focus on the most important areas. The Learning Community board needs to research partnerships that have been used in the past and assess their effectiveness. We need to implement programs that are in the best interest of the children. It may be difficult to postpone some programs temporarily, but it may be necessary in order to focus on the needs of the children. I believe we will continue to find more needs in the future.

Eric Servellon: The Learning Community's mission is to work with school districts and community partners to improve educational outcomes for children in poverty. Simply put, the

LC is already in the position to understand and help respond to the disparities that were amplified by the pandemic. Through LC-led programs like the Superintendents' Plan and District Initiatives, we provide training and resources that are district-specific, to help teachers and administrators during these trying times. Programs like Parent University and Educational Navigators help parents and students build strong emotional and social foundations while providing the resources needed to overcome deficits.

What challenges do you foresee in expanding programming to school districts and community organizations?

Andy Allen: Active participation of the schools and districts, the learning community already has multiple programs that have shown to help children and families that schools are not referring families too as well as programs where they are not providing information or not in a timely manner so that these children and families receive the assistance they need. We need to improve community outreach to work around some of these issues and work with school boards so they can create expectations for their superintendents, principals and teachers to not only participate but do so in a timely manner. To accomplish this, we need to develop buy-in from all the stake holders to make certain these programs can be effective.

Douglas Brady: Expanding programming will need to be prioritized based on our current funds. Children returning to the public schools within the Learning Community may have significant needs and this will require more funding or a change to the current programs. Expanding programming may require more quality teachers, aides, and staff. We must carefully look at all aspects prior to acting. We have a responsibility to taxpayers and to partners.

Eric Servellon: The Learning Community is one of the lowest tax levies and I honestly believe its one of the best investments taxpayers are making. Additionally, I will continue to support the Council's position to not collect on the full authorized levy. We continue to be very conscientious on spending taxpayer money responsibly.

Expanding programs across Learning Community districts will require stronger public-private partnerships including a stronger collaboration with the Learning Community Foundation. We have strong, proven programs and positive impact on our kids - now is the time to ask our philanthropic community to support this effort!

List one of your goals for this four-year term and how you plan to achieve it.

Andy Allen: The Learning Community is facing a need to expand its footprint and services to families and children, partially caused by the pandemic and also caused by economic and social issues beyond that. To accomplish that we need to more build new partnerships and find some new ways to reach those who need us in an efficient manner. So, I plan to make

use of my broad contacts list to develop many new avenues where we can bring our programs to those who need them in an efficient and broad reaching manner.

Douglas Brady: One of my goals is to make sure that we are using proven ideology. In today's climate, we must be very diligent in researching curriculum, programs, and practices. We should only use proven practices or programs with our children. I will speak to people within the LC to get feedback from parents and taxpayers. I will ask a lot of hard questions. I will be honest with what I learn and find. We must be 100% transparent to the public as well as our partners. One area of concern is the methods and curriculum used for training our teachers. Anyone working with the children, should have the best education and use proven practices to help the children. I will work with the board and staff to make necessary changes.

Eric Servellon: My primary goal is for the Learning Community to have a long-term fundraising plan in place. I work in the non-profit world and will lend my experience to make this happen.

Board of Directors Papio-Missouri River NRD

Subdistrict 2

Fred Conley: No response received

Subdistrict 4

Tim McCormick: No response received

Barbara Nichols: Education: *Tekamah HS; University of Nebraska-Omaha; BS Environmental Science-Planning; BS Political Science; MS Public Administration;* Past Office held: *Papio Missouri River NRD 2000-2004;* Volunteer Experience: *Lifelong history of volunteer service in Education, Religion, Youth, Community. BSA Scoutmaster, Merit badge, Cub-Webelos; Brownell-Talbot Friends; Food Bank-Pantry; 7CanHelp; Family Service projects; Political campaigns-local; Fundraiser events.*

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100085356931337>

Climate change presents unique challenges for resource management. What do you consider the greatest challenge and how will you meet it?

Barbara Nichols: Water is a basic need in everyday life and its cycle is inextricably linked with climate change, from turbulent flooding to devastating drought in this country. Water resources, both in quantity and quality, is our greatest challenge in this region. Preparation and planning is key. Partnerships. Cooperative agreements. Natural resources management is an interrelated whole and flood control projects should continue to be a priority in our increasingly urban setting. While we cannot change the climate, I will persist in study and monitor current research in the scientific community to be the most credible asset I can in contributing to the best informed decisions that will protect and grow our community at a prudent and responsible cost.

What specific solutions will help improve water quality, water quantity, and reduce soil erosion in your NRD?

Barbara Nichols: For 50 years NRDs have been working to improve water quality, water quantity, and reduce soil erosion. Each river basin has its own integrated water management plan that is implemented by its locally elected board. In our NRD the need for flood control is extreme and becomes greater as more and more farmland is converted to development. I support working cooperatively with area developers to provide much needed flood control in the District. I will help to bring flood control policies to approval so that plans for flood control structures can be developed. I support NRD's Storm Water Management Policies to protect water quality and reduce soil erosion, along with cost-share programs available for seeding and building terraces.

Soil is the literal foundation of agriculture. How should the NRD manage for healthy soils?

Barbara Nichols: In addition to urban area flood control and water quality, our NRD manages for healthy soils in agricultural areas as outlined in its Erosion and Sediment Control Program. Localized flood management is especially important in rural agricultural areas for both flooding and to protect water quality due to ag chemical and livestock waste carried by soil erosion and sediment, but also to enhance and maintain soil hydration and gain greater effectiveness from necessary ag chemicals at the source. I support the numerous cost-share programs available to landowners for erosion and sediment control practices such as terraces and grade stabilization structures, ground cover seeding on highly erodible land, and field windbreaks to reduce wind erosion.

Subdistrict 6

Jim Thompson: Education: *BSB, University of Minnesota*; Current Office held: *Director, Papio-MO River NRD, 2002 – Present*; Past Office held: *Director, Papio-MO River NRD, 1987- 1998*; Volunteer Experience: *Paralyzed Veterans of America, Leavenworth N.A., Keep Omaha Beautiful, Nebraska State Recycling Assn., Grover Little League, Midtown Development Steering Committee, First Lutheran Church.*

Climate change presents unique challenges for resource management. What do you consider the greatest challenge and how will you meet it?

Jim Thompson: Due diligence in keeping control over those factors contributing such as pollution and the burning of fossil fuels.

What specific solutions will help improve water quality, water quantity, and reduce soil erosion in your NRD?

Jim Thompson: More dams to control the increasing volume of runoff from urban sprawl, more water quality control structures, wetlands conservation and education within the ag community to install soil erosion methods.

Soil is the literal foundation of agriculture. How should the NRD manage for healthy soils?

Jim Thompson: Continue in cost sharing opportunities with the producers.

Subdistrict 8

Tim N. Fowler: No response received

**Board of Directors
Metropolitan Utilities District of Omaha
Subdivision 6**

John S. McCollister: Education: *Univ of Nebraska BS Business Adm*; Current Office held: *NE State Senator - District 20 (2015 - 2022)*; Past Office held: *Metropolitan Utilities District (1979-2008)*; Volunteer Experience: *One World Community Health Center Board, Boy Scouts of America and UNL Business Advisory Committee*
Website: johnmccollister.com
Facebook: facebook.com/senatormccollister
Twitter: @senmccollister

Mike McGowan: Education: *BS. Mathematics, Masters in Business (MBA) - both from Creighton Univ.*; Current and Past Offices held: *Director. MUD Board of Directors*; Military Experience: *Army Veteran*; Volunteer Experience: *Red Cross, College World Series Board Of Directors*

What do you expect/hope to accomplish in 6 years while on the board?

John S. McCollister: MUD must continue to provide safe and affordable natural gas and water to Omaha. The lead pipe situation in east Omaha and the sewer relocation projects will require continued diligence and creative solutions by the MUD Board of Directors. And the utility will need to participate in efforts to reduce its carbon footprint by expanded home weatherization programs for customers.

Mike McGowan: Safe and reliables water and natural gas service at reasonable and the lowest cost possible!

To what degree do you agree with the following statement (ranked 1 to 5, lowest to highest)? Increasing power supplies from renewable sources is a priority.

John S. McCollister: 5, Very Important

Mike McGowan: 4, Important

What are the challenges in providing public power at a reasonable cost, while maintaining reliability and protecting the environment?

John S. McCollister: Climate change is an existential threat to the world. CO2 traps heat which results in more frequent and severe wildfires, hurricanes, heat waves, floods, droughts, and storms. Those living in poverty are the hardest hit by climate change despite being the least responsible for its cause. Renewable energy, wind and solar generated electricity, are the lowest cost zero carbon producing sources of energy available.

Passage of my priority bill in the Unicameral, LB824 in 2016, allowed wind and solar companies in Nebraska to thrive by removing 1930's regulatory barriers. Since passage, these companies have invested over \$3 billion dollars to build wind and solar electricity generating facilities in NE.

Mike McGowan: Safety to the employees and the general public. Fair and reasonable pricing. Strong communications and leadership!

**Board of Directors Omaha Public Power District
Subdivision 5**

Craig Moody: Education: *Masters in Business Administration, University of South Dakota*; Current Office held: *Omaha Public Power District: Subdistrict 5, Jan 2017 – present*; Volunteer Experience: *LEADERSHIP Lauritzen Gardens Board of Directors (2019 – current) Inclusive Communities Lead DIVERSITY Cohort 2 (current) Omaha Rapid Bus Transit (ORBT) Stakeholder Committee, Chair (2016 – current) Omaha Business Ethics Alliance, Board of Trustees (2)*
Website: craigmoody.org
Facebook: [facebook.com/MoodyOmaha](https://www.facebook.com/MoodyOmaha)
Twitter: @craigmoody

Kevin Ryan: Education: *St. Pius X Grade School, Creighton Prep High School, University of Nebraska College of Law*

What do you expect/hope to accomplish in 6 years while on the board?

Craig Moody: The board has accomplished a great deal in my first 5 years, but much work remains. Priorities include:
*Executing on Power with Purpose (adds 400-600 MW of solar and 2 natural gas facilities)
*Continued reliability upgrades to grid distribution and management system
*Migrating to a digitally-driven organization; includes technologies to seamlessly interact with customer-owners on their terms in the ways they prefer
*Catalyzing the adoption of customer-owned solar and electric vehicles
*Adding even more programs to help customer-owners

achieve greater energy efficiency
*More utility-scale clean energy with an eye toward accelerating the district's reduction of greenhouse gasses, all while maintaining affordability and reliability.

Kevin Ryan: We know the future capacity to serve OPPD customers relies on the expansion of renewable energy sources. I would like to achieve a new sense of transparency and fairness on the Board and assure everyone in the district that their voices will be heard throughout this transition. Quality service, affordable rates, jobs, all need to be given priority, along with the goals of a clean energy transition. I would like to achieve that balance as a member of the OPPD Board.

To what degree do you agree with the following statement (ranked 1 to 5, lowest to highest)? Increasing power supplies from renewable sources is a priority.

Craig Moody: 5, Very Important

Kevin Ryan: 5, Very Important

What are the challenges in providing public power at a reasonable cost, while maintaining reliability and protecting the environment?

Craig Moody: OPPD's mission is to provide affordable, reliable, environmentally-sensitive energy services to our customers. All 3 facets are important, but they are not always easy to balance. The board was able to keep rates flat the first 5 years of my term (2017-2021), which was a big accomplishment.

Going forward, I aim to keep an eye on affordability by ensuring the district:
*Completes and potentially expands its pilot program to assist those customers experiencing an energy burden
*Invests in grid reliability upgrades & expansion
*Invests in technologies to better & more efficiently serve customers
*Invests in clean energy, which is less expensive than older, dirty technologies (coal)
*Assists customers with onsite solar and energy efficiency

Kevin Ryan: Protecting our environment, maintaining reliable service, and keeping rates reasonable, are not mutually exclusive goals. We need to approach the transition to clean energy intelligently, fairly, and in a way that puts people first. I have been an environmentalist my whole life. There is no reason that we cannot move toward a future of clean energy and keep in mind the working families that need their service to be reliable, and their electricity bills to be reasonable. I'm running in this race as a candidate that will listen to the people of the 5th District, and always keep in mind their best interests as customers, as we move into the future of renewable energy sources.

**Board of Directors
Educational Service Unit Number Three**

District One

Stan Turner: No response received

District Three

Sean M. Fennessey: No response received

Marla Fries: No response received

Tyler Gloe: No response received

District Five

Brett Kuhn: No response received

District Seven

Brenda Sherman: No response received

Bennington City Council

Ward 1

Shane Pekny: Education: *Bachelor of Journalism, UNL; Master's in English, UNO*; Current Office held: *Bennington City Council, Ward 1B, December 2018 to present*; Volunteer Experience: *AmeriCorps member, Habitat for Humanity of Omaha, Nebraska State Fair, Lutheran Family Services, Bennington Soccer Club*
Website: www.shanepekny.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/shane.pekny/

Why are you the best candidate for this position?

Shane Pekny: Since joining the City Council in 2018, I have helped secure new sources of revenue in order to decrease our small town's reliance on personal property taxes. I have approached challenging issues, including the rebuilding of our police department, with an open mind and a reasonable approach. I always put safety first, especially when it comes to streets and managing pedestrian traffic around our schools. Most of all, I've strived to keep my constituents informed and engaged on the issues they care about. I serve them.

If elected, what would be your first year priorities?

Shane Pekny: I will continue supporting the city and its nonprofit partners in advancing the plan for Neumeyer Farm Park. This new park will provide much-needed space for our community's youth sports clubs and new amenities for residents of all ages. I will also continue to look for ways the city can welcome new businesses, further reducing our over-reliance on personal property taxes.

What is an important issue your city is facing and how would you address it?

Shane Pekny: Bennington is a small town of about 2,000 people that serves a larger and rapidly growing community of 15,000 or more. Growth is good, but it brings challenges. We are transitioning from a bedroom community to a commercial hub, albeit slowly. Our streets have gotten much better, our parks are second-to-none, our library is a treasure, and our police department has modernized and grown to serve our residents well. To preserve these assets, our challenge is to keep more commercial activity within our city and to bring in outside resources as well.

Ward 2

Kay Bridgeford: No response received

Ralston City Council

Ward 3

Brian Kavanaugh: No response received

Ward 4

Jerry Krause: No response received

Ward 5

Catherine Payne (write-in): Education: *Associates in liberal Arts- Metropolitan Community College; Associates in Science from Metropolitan Community College; Bachelors of Science psychology major from Bellevue University; Bachelors of science- sociology Bellevue University; Master's c; Volunteer Experience: American Red Cross; Habitat Restore (over 3 yrs); Charles Drew Health Center; YMCA*

Michael Sanchez: No response received

Why are you the best candidate for this position?

Catherine Payne: I have lived in Ralston for almost my entire life, having attended Seymour for kindergarten, Blumfield for 1st grade, Mockingbird 2nd-6th, then Ralston middle and senior high (class of 2001). I care for the community and choose to raise my children here.

If elected, what would be your first year priorities?

Catherine Payne: To make sure that all are aware of what is occurring with our city. To listen to fellow residents and continue to help Ralston be a great community to live in.

What is an important issue your city is facing and how would you address it?

Catherine Payne: Taxes. The increase of property evaluation

has negatively effected many. I would address taxes by understanding the budget. Seeing where areas can be revised to allow individuals from various social economic areas reside within the city.

Valley City Council

John Batcher: Education: *Nebraska Wesleyan University; Postgraduate: University of Nebraska - Lincoln and Vanderbilt University;* Volunteer Experience: *Valley Fire and Rescue Department, FBI Citizens' Academy, Department of Defense JCOC - 73rd Class, Trinity Classical Academy Board of Directors, Nebraska Wesleyan University President's Advisory Council, Ginger Woods HOA Treasurer*
Website: www.johnbatcher.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/VoteJohnBatcher

Haley Cortez: No response received

Linda Lewis: No response received

Why are you the best candidate for this position?

John Batcher: Having lived in Valley for a majority of my adult life I am excited to have the opportunity to serve my neighbors, friends, and the citizens of Valley as a member of the City Council. Valley is home. I live here, I am raising my family here, I am building my business here. I bring a farm-raised work ethic and successful business background to the office of City Council. I believe that together we can build a proactive vision for Valley while honoring the legacy of those who have served before us.

If elected, what would be your first year priorities?

John Batcher: I have been attending City Council meetings, Valley/Waterloo Business Association gatherings, Western Douglas County Chamber meetings, community events, and city office briefings in preparation for serving the city well. In this time I've learned of efforts currently underway and those being contemplated alike. I would hope to continue many of those efforts during my first year in office in addition to proactively addressing the important issues and opportunities we have ahead of us as a growing city.

What is an important issue your city is facing and how would you address it?

John Batcher: Balancing growth with services is perhaps the most important issue facing Valley. While the city and its citizens need to embrace growth we have to pair that growth with the availability of services. A successful balance will address aspects of infrastructure, residential and commercial development, revitalization, education, and corporate and philanthropic partnerships.

Boys Town Village Board of Trustees

Unable to obtain contact information. Vote for up to THREE

James E. Gilg

Joseph West

Kyle Skartvedt

Waterloo Village Board of Trustees

Vote for up to TWO

Travis Harlow: No response received

Ashley Livengood: Volunteer Experience: *Previously was a member of the Waterloo Park & Tree Board. Current Lead for the Waterloo Bluebird Trail. 2020 President of the Women's Council of REALTORS- Omaha*

David E. Rochford: Education: *University of Nebraska at Omaha;* Current Office held: *Waterloo Village Board of Trustees (since 2018);* Volunteer Experience: *Lifegate Church - Local/Global Outreach, Kids Ministry*
Facebook: <http://facebook.com/RochfordforWaterloo>

Why are you the best candidate for this position?

Ashley Livengood: No response received

David E. Rochford: During my first term on the Village Board our village faced multiple challenges. Even so, myself and the board was able to add new amenities, update our roads, and expand our police and library hours. And we were able to do this without raising taxes. I have the experience to continue to serve my community to the fullest while being fiscally responsible with our taxpayers' money.

If elected, what would be your first year priorities?

Ashley Livengood: No response received

David E. Rochford: While we have been able to accomplish a lot the past four years, my work is not finished! We've been focusing on our streets, and have struck a partnership with MAPA to widen River Road Dr. I am very excited to continue working on this project for our community !

What is an important issue your city is facing and how would you address it?

Ashley Livengood: No response received

David E. Rochford: Our city isn't currently facing any "major" issues, but I want to continue to grow our community and make it the best place to live in Douglas County.

Board of Education Arlington Public Schools #24

Unable to obtain contact information. Vote for up to THREE

Jason R Arp

Erich Meyer

Brian Laaker

Carrie Voss Flesner

Steve Slykhuis

Board of Education Bennington Public Schools #59

Vote for up to THREE

Mark A. Byars: Education: *BS Business Administration (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) ; MBA (Northwestern University);* Current Office held: *Bennington Board of Education, 2015 to present;* Volunteer Experience: *Director, Nebraska Chamber of Commerce; church; school; Boy Scouts; coach, youth soccer*
Website: markbyars.com

Brittany Cameron: Education: *University of Central Arkansas, Bachelors Degree in Psychology. Indian Hills Community College, Associates Degree in Nursing;* Volunteer Experience: *I enjoy being a regular volunteer at my childrens' school. I am a room parent for both classrooms' which involves organizing class activities, collecting donations from parents and helping out in the classroom*
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Brittany-Cameron-for-Bennington-School-Board-109149601720280/>

Jeremy Dick: Education: *B.S. Business Administration-Banking and Financial Markets*
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jdick2022>

Sandra Hulm: Education: *MBA - Illinois State University, Bachelor of Science in Agriculture - University of Saskatchewan*
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Sandra-Hulm-for-Bennington-Board-of-Education-110749198218707>

Kristi Ryan: Education: *BS in Secondary English Education, Masters and Specialist in Education Degrees in School Counseling*
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kristi-Ryan-for-Bennington-Board-of-Education-109907944979999/>

Steve Shannon: No response received

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Mark Byars: Bennington's student achievement gaps have generally been smaller than those of neighboring districts

because of our community's partnership to deliver quality remote learning in early 2020 and to keep kids in school in 2020-21. However, some students do need help catching up. Providing good interventionist resources is an effective way of identifying specific gaps for students and developing targeted improvement plans. Having sufficient counseling resources helps kids who need emotional support. Full staffing of paraprofessionals, bus drivers, and food service staff relieves the pressure on stretched and stressed classroom teachers, so that everyone can do their best work to help our children learn and grow.

Brittany Cameron: The changes adopted by our education system during 2020/2021 were necessary but did produce some negative effects for our children. I have spoken with parents who report seeing regression in their children, and some feel they have missed out on a year or more of their education. I feel the most appropriate course of action is to address any issues head on. This will take collaboration from the education team including teachers, support staff, therapy and so on. Our parents must work alongside teachers to recognize and identify our childrens' specific needs related to the changes our county has faced since 2020. We must meet our children where they are and provide any additional support to address all their needs.

Jeremy Dick: These issues are best address by ideal classroom size. Elementary classrooms of 18, middle school of 20-22 and high school of 22-24. However, knowing resources are limited, the greatest benefit appears to be keeping classrooms grades K-3 at 18 students. At these ages, children are learning the fundamentals of math and literacy. Growth and development in these key areas benefit from small group instruction and one on one time with teachers and paras. Furthermore, smaller class sizes and greater one on one time provide teachers greater opportunity to identify learning deficits and address them at an earlier age.

Sandra Hulm: Prioritizing social-emotional learning will be essential to bridge some of the unfinished learning as well as health and wellness gaps that occurred during the pandemic. It will important students and educators have flexibility to work in the environment and at the pace that is required to maximize success.

Kristi Ryan: This is a very complex issue. Please see my facebook page for my full response. Here is a sampling of my ideas: Change the purpose and use of high stakes testing; Simplify expectations and get back to basics; Employ targeted skills tutoring for students, particularly in the areas of math and reading; Build space within the school schedule to have time dedicated to unfinished learning; Implement a K-12 well-being curriculum; Provide parent education opportunities for families who would like to be better equipped to support overcoming unfinished learning and/or well-being at home; Collaborate with local universities and college students to provide services to our students; Secure additional partnerships with outside mental health providers.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Mark Byars: The job of a school board member is to set policy and promote processes designed to balance and align three things: the curriculum recommendations of our expert educators, the financial resources of the district, and the interests of our community. My priority has always been to invest our tax dollars most effectively by putting them to work in the classroom. Quality staff with the right resources in good facilities is what delivers results for students. The board's actions should promote long-term, sustainable strategies that align with the district's mission and community expectations.

Brittany Cameron: We know that adjustments must be made, and additional resources need to be utilized to help bridge the gap for our children. These are needs that must be addressed and call for an adjustment in budgetary priority. The new needs of our children should be on the forefront and appropriate action plans should be developed to address them. The school board must keep the end goal in mind as well as the fiscal aspect of rolling out new additional resources for areas such as education, tutoring, mental health and any other needs that should be addressed by the educational system.

Jeremy Dick: Teachers are the bedrock of the Bennington School District and should be the last to feel a budgetary crunch. In Bennington, we have one of the highest tax levies in the state. Recently the district has spent money on expensive Administration Building remodels, surveys and other seemingly unnecessary expenses. As a board member, I will strive to be a good steward of citizens' tax dollars and ensure that resources are funneled to areas that will benefit our children the most.

Sandra Hulm: Addressing difficult decisions with transparency, candid and clear communication, listening with the intent to understand, while taking a pragmatic, fact based approach, with the ultimate focus on the students best interest will guide the best course of action.

Kristi Ryan: When faced with difficult decisions, I believe focusing on the best interest of students helps determine the best course of action. The stated mission, vision and strategic goals of Bennington Public Schools are also valuable filters in making tough but necessary decisions. If you establish a set of foundational questions based on these criteria (best interest of students, achieve mission, realize vision and meet strategic goals) and filter each decision through those predetermined questions, you will remain consistent, reach conclusions based on desired impact and established district objectives and have sound rationale for each determination made.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Mark Byars: Bennington's educators are instructional experts, relationship builders, and forward thinkers who are motivated by their students' success. Their constructive

feedback, innovative ideas, and practical solutions are vital to the pursuit of excellence and Bennington's drive for continuous improvement. Educators should engage in and contribute to the district's processes for curriculum development, building administrator hiring, new facility design, professional development programs, and planning teams for school improvement and district strategy. The board should evaluate the feedback of our educators – and all district stakeholders – to make fact-based decisions that benefit all of our kids.

Brittany Cameron: In the same ways that I am currently an involved parent, I hope to continue that approach and maintain an open line of communication with our educators. It is important to be a resource for our educators. One way to start is by asking what changes they could see that could make a difference in their classrooms. I would also visit our schools and see in person what needs are not being met and take those findings back to board meetings. Spending time in the classrooms is an important step to better understanding what our teachers face on a daily basis.

Jeremy Dick: Through surveys and face to face interaction it is important to determine what our teachers need. After needs are determined to prioritize with input from teachers to determine how to effectively utilize resources to assist them. Students receive the highest quality education when teachers have smaller class sizes, paras, adequate materials, time to plan/refresh and competitive/commerate wages & benefits.

Furthermore, our teachers are individuals who have an expertise in education and childhood development. As a board member, it is important to recognize our teachers' as subject matter experts in determining what is best for our students in terms of curriculum, text books and activities.

Sandra Hulm: A board is a governing body tasked with setting the vision, goals, and policy for the district with the guidance and support of the administration and community. Our educators are essential in identifying and executing the educational goals for the school district. In turn, there must be consistent, organized and direct engagement and feedback loops from the educators to the board. To effectively implement policies and directives all entities must work together in a collaborative, transparent and respectful manner.

Kristi Ryan: The voice of educators in any work impacting schools and students is essential. My experience over the past 20 years in the field has been that educators are smart, resourceful, solution-focused, caring, compassionate and desire best outcomes for our kids. This is particularly true and prevalent when they feel valued, heard and involved in making decisions that impact our students. As a member of the board, I will continue to build relationships with Bennington educators by being visible and present at school and community activities and by maintaining open lines of communication. I will also seek to gather input more formally through forms and surveys as the situation calls for and allows.

Board of Education Douglas County West Community Schools #15

Vote for up to THREE

Kelly Hinrichs: No response received

Jamie Jorgensen: No response received

JJ Swierczek: No response received

James Tomanek Jr.: No response received

Board of Education Elkhorn Public Schools #10

Vote for up to THREE

Brett Elliott: Education: *Bachelor's Degree*; Volunteer

Experience: *Love Church, NFC Soccer*

Website: www.elliott4elkhorn.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ElliottForElkhorn

Amy Parks: Education: *Bachelor of Science in Family Science*; Current Office held: *School Board Member (2014-present), School Board Secretary (2019-2020) School Board President (2021-present)*; Volunteer Experience: *Lifelong community volunteer in both the Omaha and Elkhorn communities. My positions can be found on my Facebook page.*

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/parksforelkhornschoolboard>

Nancy Rogic-Greufe: Education: *Bachelor of Science(BS); Medical Degree(MD); Residency in Anesthesia/Pediatrics*; Current Office held: *Elkhorn School Board , American Civics and Curriculum Committee, Buildings and Grounds Committee, Common Ground Advisory Board, Finance and Insurance Committee Chair*; Past Office held: *Elkhorn School Board 2018-2022, Policy and Procedures Committee*; Volunteer Experience: *Elkhorn Volunteer of the year(2011), Skyline PTO President, ERMS Booster Club President, Prom Chairman(2X), Baccalaureate Chair(X5), Homecoming(X6), Band/Chorus/Football-Boosters, Wellness Council, First Covenant Lead/Music, Salvation Army Night Watch,*

Website: <https://nancy-rogic-greufe.webnode.page/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057963044115>

Luther Starks: Education: *Bachelor of Business Administration from Wayne State College*; Volunteer Experience: *Finance Board for Urban League and former Hope Center Board Member*

Website: SET4Elkhorn.com

Jerid Tingelhoff: No response received

Mark Wortman: Education: *BA from University of Northern Colorado 1975, MA from University of Nebraska at Omaha 1980*

Website: <http://markwortmanforeps.com/>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/markwortmanforelkhorn

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Brett Elliott: The lack of transparency and accountability, and for parents and teacher's voices to be heard is front and center. The arrogance displayed by school boards and the administration impacted negatively all the parties they were elected and hired to represent and protect. Parents, teachers and students all deserve better.

Amy Parks: One of the best ways to address this issue is retaining current staff and continuing to seek the most qualified candidates when hiring. Elkhorn test scores show our students weathered the pandemic well, which leaves our teachers in a better position to move forward. Supporting those teachers through time, money and professional development, while validating their value is key.

Nancy Rogic-Greufe: The education and well-being of our students is of primary concern. All children shall be treated with the utmost respect, care and kindness. Elkhorn is privileged to have teachers, staff and administrators that care and use measurable standards to address problem areas. Concerning well-being needs are addressed individually. As an example, if any student types any concerning words on any school-provided communication tool, principals and personnel are alerted and the situation is hopefully helped. As before, at the beginning of the school year all children are assessed for their academic status and encouraged to be the best they can be. If needed, additional assistance is provided. We will continue to support and communicate positively.

Luther Starks: Ensure that schools remain open and make sure mask mandates never come back into play.

Mark Wortman: We are still trying to understand the impact the Covid pandemic had on our children and their education. Data and test scores can be used to see if there are deficiencies in any subject matter. Teachers' input will be critical to determine if there are dips in scores or skills or if a knowledge base is missing in our children. Teachers should be provided special training to implement strategies to help students recoup any deficiencies they may have. Teachers and parents, working together, can guide students in adjusting to a "new normal" educational environment.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Brett Elliott: I have been a business owner for many years. Managing budgets and asking the right questions is a requirement. The current process between the school board and the administration has lost all of its checks and balances as the school board has become a rubber stamp. I would get much more involved in all the aspects listed as a requirement of the job.

Amy Parks: Having a solid relationship with the district administration is crucial to processing the information provided by the admin in making these decisions. My years of Board service have educated me in the areas of the district budgeting, staffing and curriculum processes, and allowed me to build a trust relationship with the administration which is essential to the efficiency and to the success of a school district. Additionally, my years of living and serving the community give me direction as to what is best for Elkhorn students and families.

Nancy Rogic-Greufe: Communication with all stakeholders is key. Decisions are made for the majority of the district and made by the specific personnel or standing committees that are responsible for the decision. Data and analysis are used in the decision-making process. Constant communication and advice are sought, if necessary. Many times legal counsel is involved in decision-making. No decision is made lightly and all those affected are taken into account and communicated with, if possible. Most importantly, it is imperative to listen, be empathetic, supportive and respectful. Students, teachers, parents, and the community which we represent are all taken into consideration when decisions are made to protect children and provide the best education for all.

Luther Starks: By being honest...if I don't know something admit it do my research and get back with them.

Mark Wortman: Our mission should always revolve around one premise - "What is best for the children of EPS?" Any decisions made regarding these subject matters should incorporate opinions from various groups within the Elkhorn community. The knowledge and experience of teachers and staff members should be heard whenever possible. Their daily work with our children and their expertise make them indispensable cogs in any decision. No one is more invested in the children of our community than the parents. Parents need to have a voice, and they must be heard. Communication lines need to be open and discussion forums need to take place. While making these tough decisions, we must make the best use of our resources and money so as not to over burden taxpayers.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Brett Elliott: Along with parents we have to provide an ear and a voice for teachers. The majority are as frustrated with the current process as the parents. If we don't solve this issue many good teachers will leave. It would be a priority to hold quarterly open townhall forums for all voices to be heard.

Amy Parks: We are very fortunate to have a mutually respectful and solid working relationship with the EEA teachers' union, additionally educators are currently part of the process of presenting information to the Board when decisions are to be made.

Nancy Rogic-Greufe: Fortunately, we have positive relationships with our educators. These wonderful people are the most important part of our educational system. They will mold our children and impact our future. We will continue to communicate in larger groups and as needed on an individual basis. We support, engage and negotiate with the Elkhorn Teachers Association. I have had the privilege of meeting with both groups and individual teachers with concerns and I do everything in my power to ensure their voices are heard. Communication, respect and support are key. Teachers are also part of the decision-making process for curriculum development. We will continue to provide support for our most valuable resource.

Luther Starks: I will listen to their concerns and make sure their needs are being met as well.

Mark Wortman: For forty-one years I taught in the Elkhorn Public Schools until my retirement in May of 2021. Teachers are the backbone of our educational success, and I will advocate for them every chance I get. I will be a visible and accessible board member, attending activities and as many school functions as possible. I have many close relationships with educators, and I will continue to be an active listener to their needs and concerns, and I will gladly share my knowledge and expertise with the board.

**Board of Education
Fort Calhoun Community Schools #3**

Vote for up to THREE

Jon Genoways: No response received

Cassie Kelly: No response received

John Pane: No response received

Amanda Schrum: Current Office held: *Fort Calhoun School Board January 2018 to Present*; Volunteer Experience: *St. Johns Catholic Church, Youth Sports, ALS in the Heartland*

Ryan J. Sevcik: No response received

Ted Welchert: No response received

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Amanda Schrum: As a school board member, I will continue to work with our administration and staff to help all of our students address any learning deficits that may have occurred over the past two year. I, along with the other school board members have continued to make technology and curriculum a priority at Fort Calhoun Community Schools. We also have used federal funds to offer summer school programs for students in our district.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Amanda Schrum: I believe that our students and staff are the most important piece to our district. As all school districts face difficult decisions about budgeting, staffing, ect, I believe that we have to take care of our staff and students first. We need to be aware of where we are spending our tax dollars and being fiscally responsible throughout the year.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Amanda Schrum: As a school board member, I have continually made myself available to all members of our community to discuss school related issues. I also have reached out to staff and the public when big items are taking place and asked their opinions and thoughts. I feel that as a public official, we are there to represent the people who elected us, and the best way to do that is to ask them their thoughts on different items that may be before the board. We also have to have a good working relationship with our administration and staff to keep those lines of communication open so that we are all working together for the greater good of the community.

Board of Education Fremont Public Schools #1

Vote for up to THREE

Mike Petersen: No response received

Sandi Proskovec: No response received

Terry Sorensen: No response received

Board of Education Gretna Public Schools #37

Vote for up to THREE

Greg Beach: Education: *Bachelor of Science Degree-Finance University of Nebraska Lincoln*; Volunteer Experience: *Teammates Mentor -Gretna Public School (2012-present) Teammates Mentoring Program Gretna Chapter (2016-present)*

Website: <http://www.gregbeach4gps.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/gregbeach4gps>

Jenna L Garcia: Education: *Associates in Applied Science-Business (General); Bachelor of Science-Political Science; Master of Public Administration*

Website: <https://www.jenna4gretna.com/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/jenna4gretna/>

Mark Hauptman: No response received

Lori Lowry: Volunteer Experience: *Numerous hours volunteered through my local church as well as independently.* Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Lori-Lowry-for-Gretna-School-Board-102235942409344/>

Ann Sackett Wright: No response received

Blake Turpen: Education: *Bachelor of Science - University of Nebraska, Lincoln*

Facebook: [BlakeTurpenforGretnaSchoolBoard](https://www.facebook.com/BlakeTurpenforGretnaSchoolBoard)

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Greg Beach: Expect the district leadership to have a plan to address the identified deficits – with an emphasis not only on the book-learning issues but also the student social-emotional challenges. Listen to what building principals are saying as they gather information from teachers, para-educators, parents, and students. Focus on what the local data says – hard to compare testing results to those reported prior to Covid but recognize challenges teachers face each day. If the info suggests there are gaps in student learning, think in terms of no easy/fast fixes, but communication between stakeholders is important to create strategies and then give them the resources to implement those strategies.

Jenna L. Garcia: The last two years have been difficult for students, families, and staff. To address any learning and well-being deficits, there needs to be open and continued communication happening between the parents/guardians, staff, and students, as well as the administration and school board. If there is any concern about a student, it needs to be addressed sooner rather than later and all parties need to come to the table ready to engage. As a board member, I will actively listen to staff and parents to find solutions to address loss from the past two years.

Lori Lowry: I firmly believe in getting parents back into the classroom. Parents not only serve as a great help to teachers, but to students as well. It's so important to get our students the one -on-one help they need. This can be done again through parents helping individually in the classrooms, after school study clubs as well as online learning communities for our older students. It is so important to help our kids regain what they lost during the last few years. They say it takes a village, and this task is no exception.

Blake Turpen: While the 2019-2020 school year concluded with remote learning, we have been fortunate that Gretna Schools have maintained a near normal school day for most students since that time. As such, the ongoing support of academic and emotional needs of the students has been widely maintained. For those students needing additional resources, it is important that them and their parents to know those resources exist and where to find them. I believe that we cannot over communicate the importance each student brings. Each one of them is cared for and valued.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Greg Beach: On a daily basis, you will need to have open conversations with school stakeholders. At the end of those conversations, was what you discussed, and the courses of actions developed good for kids? How will you determine the best course of action?

Have we followed our Board of Education policies? Do we have all the facts? Have we considered alternatives? Have we engaged those individuals closest to the situation? Is what we consider the "best course of action" good for kids? Does our best course of action include an evaluation component to determine if our course of action was successful? If all of these questions can be answered with "we did this with the kids in mind" then you have done what you were elected to do.

Jenna L. Garcia: When faced with difficult decisions in general, I believe it is best to first step back and gather all information/data available. Since I am not a subject matter expert in any of these issues as it relates to public education, I would refer to the experts at hand (after I informed myself of all I could) and ask for their opinion. Then we could have an informed discussion about said topic and go from there. Our school district has some of the brightest and most talented staff who truly want the best for all students (and the rest of the staff and community). When the community elects informed, inquisitive school board members who want to collaborate with parents and the community as a whole, we can make educated decisions for all.

Lori Lowry: It is important to look at the whole picture or issue. Determine who will be most impacted by budget cuts or staffing issues and choose a solution that causes the least amount of upset or damage to the whole. Gretna is growing, so we must be well researched on the long term affects of new growth. Curriculum has been a hot button issue. It is important to remember that parental rights and input must be taken with the upmost of consideration. Certain curriculum may work for other districts, but not for Gretna. We need to be bold enough to say we are not adopted certain standards or curriculum because it is not best for our students at this time. Parents and students must come first and it most come from a local level.. not the top down.

Blake Turpen: The filter that has been in place for some time within Gretna Schools is "doing what's best for kids." When any issue is looked at first through this lens, landing on the appropriate decision becomes fairly straightforward.

Doing what's right for kids means students are provided:

- * A safe environment to learn and grow
- * Educators who are committed to their profession and will not bring politics into the classroom
- * Challenging coursework and are held accountable to the districts' high standards

- * Opportunities to excel outside of the classroom to help develop a sense of teamwork and community;
- * Recognition for their accomplishments - both academically and in service to others and their community.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Greg Beach: You need to be accessible, however the Board of Education needs to work through the superintendent to address questions – following communication protocols. Board of education members can be open to conversation with the caveat of directing questions through the protocol of communications. As a board member you will need to engage with the administrative teams and reinforce open and honest communication with their staff for the betterment of the district. We as board members must then work with the administrators to involve the feedback into action plans that the educators can support and execute.

Jenna L. Garcia: Educators and school staff are greatly under-appreciated. They are the experts in what they do, so their feedback has to be treated as such. I am always open to feedback in all work that I do, and that will not change as a board member. I plan to be even more engaged in the school district as a board member. If the board does not engage with and seek feedback from staff, it quickly becomes apparent to staff that their ideas and opinions do not matter. Board members should regularly visit the different district facilities to establish relationships with staff because if there is no relationship to begin with, how will they ever engage with said board member and get honest feedback? Feedback takes two people to be successful.

Lori Lowry: I absolutely love our educators! They are at ground zero with our children and know what works and what doesn't. I will make myself always available for discussions and feedback and will take it open minded back to the board. I promise to be an advocate for our teachers and their needs in the classroom. I always have been, and promise to always be very involved with our schools. I have worked as a substitute teacher in the past, and understand how vital an open line or communication is to create a positive work environment for our educators.

Blake Turpen: Having an open access policy is the best way to gain helpful feedback in realtime. While school board meetings are open to the community, and public comment on agenda items is encouraged, insightful commentary can also be had on the sideline at a school sporting event, in the parking lot at the end of a school day, or by reaching out to talk live.

Board of Education Millard Public Schools #17

Vote for up to THREE

Terry Dale: No response received

Stacy Jolley: Education: *University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Marketing major; Communications and Psychology minors Study abroad at Oxford University – Economics*; Current Office held: *Millard Public Schools Board of Education, 2018-present, current President*; Volunteer Experience: *Weekly volunteer for MPS for 19 years. MPS Foundation Pres., classroom volunteer, PTO Pres., District Cmtes, etc., Girl Scout Leader, Asst Cubmaster, YMCA bball coach, Harvey Oaks HOA membership chair, FRIENDS/Stuttering conference organizer, etc.*

Website: <https://www.stacyjolley.com/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/StacyJolleyforMillardSchoolBoard>

Twitter: @SingerStacy

Mike Kennedy: Education: *BS Political Science UNO, Juris Doctorate Creighton University School of Law*; Current Office held: *Millard Public Schools Board Member 2003 to Present, Omaha Public Library Board 2015 to Present, President of the Omaha Public Library Board 2020 to Present*; Past Office held: *Metro Community College Board 1999 to 2002, Omaha Charter Convention Committee 2013 and 2022, Omaha Naming Committee 2017 to 2022*; Volunteer Experience: *I have volunteered in our schools, homeless shelters and with the Boy Scouts*

Website: <https://parentsformikekenedy.com/>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/ParentsForMikeKennedy/>

Twitter: @ MikeKennedyNE

Mark Krueger: No response received

Lisa Schoenberger: Education: *University of Nebraska-Lincoln: Bachelor of Journalism - Advertising and Bachelor of Arts – Spanish*; Current Office held: *Learning Community Coordinating Council, elected 2020*; Volunteer Experience: *Millard Public Schools Strategic Planning Action Team*

Website: <https://lisaformillard.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lisaformillard>

Twitter: @Lisa4MPS

Sean Swanson: Education: *Bachelors in Music, University of Miami (FL), CLU, RICP, LUTCF*; Volunteer Experience: *Church Volunteer, Habitat for Humanity, Open Door Mission, Millard Baccalaureate*

Website: <https://swansonformillard.com/>

Facebook: <www.facebook.com/SwansonforMillard>

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Stacy Jolley: Fortunately in MPS, other than a few weeks of closed classrooms/school, we were able to remain open all of

the 20-21 and 21-22 school years. This provided our students access to the best version of education, face-to-face with an outstanding teacher. Despite that, some learning was delayed and must be addressed in order to bring struggling students back to grade level and beyond. Step one is thorough assessment. In MPS we use MAP growth testing three times/year. It tells us where a student is, and also highlights the specific skills that a student is missing or needs retaught. Step two is that this powerful tool helps our teachers tailor instruction to students' needs. We also are helping seniors gain missing credits to graduate on time.

Mike Kennedy: I have worked hard as a member of the Millard Board of Education through the pandemic to minimize learning loss over the past 2 years. We made the right decision in reopening our schools full-time in August of 2020. Those students that came to school every day did dramatically better than those that did not. We as a Board worked closely with the administration to gauge our students progress and deficiencies and quickly allocated resources to address learning loss. We also gave a herculean effort to help those students nearing graduation that were behind in credits to catch back up and graduate with their class. We as a Board are continuing to address those students that have not caught fully backup until the issue is resolved.

Lisa Schoenberger: I believe the team at MPS has done a fantastic job of providing additional academic support, such as credit recovery programs and adding additional interventionists to help students close any achievement gaps resulting from the pandemic. I hear from parents and district staff that well-being deficits remain, both among our student population and with faculty and staff. As a Board, I believe we will continue to listen and adjust as we return to steady state. This may mean additional support for mental wellness through community partnerships or additional resources for staff members who are struggling. The pandemic has bolstered our ability to adapt and we will continue to leverage that strength to support our entire school community.

Sean Swanson: COVID hit our schools hard. Educators felt like they had 3 jobs during COVID, not 1. Millard Educators said in their most recent survey that they would like Para pay to be increased to be in line with other area districts and they would like more Counselors in the Elementary schools. I support both of these initiatives and will work to pass the mill levy again next year that voters approved 4 years ago in order to fund these initiatives. Know that Millard is only using 3 cents out of the allowed 9 cents in the mill levy.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Stacy Jolley: There are two questions I always ask myself: how will this impact student achievement and how will this impact our teachers' workload. Thanks to our community members loving their schools and funding them with the levy override and bonds, we have had stable budgets and have been

able to keep our aging buildings in good repair. However, if cuts become necessary, my first priority is to keep them as far away from the classroom as possible. Our high curricular standards and student achievement always come first. Beyond that I will always work to preserve the activities, arts, and athletics that engage our kids and make school fun. Those programs are force multipliers; data shows our busiest, most engaged kids are our most successful students.

Mike Kennedy: I have served on the Millard Board of Education since 2003 and when times are tough I have always focused on keeping cuts as far away from the classroom as I can. Our budget process is fully transparent and we as a School District just received an "A" from the Nebraska Taxpayers for Freedom for our 2022-23 budget. We put teaching our challenging curriculum first in our priorities. We also need to continue to address the staffing shortages that many districts are facing and retaining high quality educators by securing more resources for competitive pay and benefits. I have always worked as a board member to secure adequate funding from the State and the Millard Community. Our Board needs experienced leaders to meet our funding needs.

Lisa Schoenberger: In my current elected office, I use our strategic plan to provide a framework for decision making. Strategic planning in Millard involves a variety of key stakeholders: parents, teachers, administrators, staff members and community members. I believe this process ensures that decisions reflect our values as a community as well as educational best practices. I am committed to evaluating each decision by determining whether it contributes to the long and short term goals of the district, always keeping student academic achievement, safety and well-being as the most important factors in evaluation. Any budget cuts should be kept as far away from the classroom as possible.

Sean Swanson: As a Financial Advisor by trade, I am used to reviewing numbers and budgets. When faced with difficult decisions I will address where money can be saved first that does not impact student education and work to save money via process improvements and technology.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Stacy Jolley: In our strategic plan, one of our beliefs is that "People are our greatest resource." Without a doubt, Millard is a world-class district because of our teachers and staff. I am so grateful for the smart, kind, dedicated professionals who teach our kids every day. The best way that I engage with them is by visiting classrooms. Each year that I've been on the board, I have visited all 35 of our schools. I tour each building, stopping in multiple classrooms, to see the inspiring work being done. I talk with teachers, students, paras, custodians, kitchen staff, & admins. I see, in action, the programs and curriculum I vote on at meetings. That's the best way to understand their needs. And having a strong relationship with the MEA is also vital.

Mike Kennedy: We as a Board have always engaged our educators for feedback. We work well with the Millard Education Association and our other bargaining groups to gauge the pulse of our educators and staff. I also personally take the time to talk to our staff and invite them to ask questions and give their feedback. My wife is an educator in Millard and that allows me to attend events and gain feedback as well. Finally, as a school board member for the past 19 years, I have always asked the administration what their efforts have been in obtaining employee input and I have been very pleased with their efforts

Lisa Schoenberger: As a current Millard parent and the wife of a teacher in a neighboring district, I have a deep appreciation for our educators. One of the best parts about campaigning has been meeting so many of our world-class teachers and earning their trust in my ability to champion people, our district's greatest resource. I know that being present in the buildings is fundamental, as is a willingness to engage and ask questions about what is working, what isn't, and what we can do better for our team. I also believe there is an excellent structure in place to allow teachers to advocate collectively through the Millard Education Association and I look forward to maintaining a positive and productive relationship with them as well.

Sean Swanson: I have already been engaging teachers as I meet people going door to door. As a board member I plan to engage educators by visiting schools, inviting teacher feedback and attending district events.

Board of Education Omaha Public Schools Subdistrict 2

Brianna Full: Education: *Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) from the University of Nebraska – Omaha;* Volunteer Experience: *Completely Kids, Tri-Faith, Parrish Alternative School, Heartland Family Services, Planned Parenthood, City Sprouts, The Big Garden, Spark CDI*
Website: www.Full4OPS.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/Full4OPS
Twitter: @AdvocacyBri

Marque Snow: No response received

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Brianna Full: I will ensure that OPS spends their funds and adjusts their short-term and long-term strategies in a way that will improve school conditions and prioritize the children they serve. For example, I would approve the use of funds to pay teachers an additional stipend to teach summer school and make summer programming more robust. We're coming up on three years of interrupted learning because of the pandemic which has made our socioeconomic disparities even larger. This means we need to make sure that the children's basic

needs are taken care of by expanding school breakfast and lunch options during breaks and the summer time. We also need to expand comprehensive mental health support systems not only for the students, but teachers too.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Brianna Full: First and foremost, I will look to the community and what they want to determine how I will move forward with important decisions relating to spending and policy. The community's agenda is my agenda. I will consult teachers, parents, students, admin, and support staff before voting on measures passed in the school board. I will especially listen to the stakeholders with their boots on the ground in the system, the ones who are most affected by these changes.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Brianna Full: I have already been working to build a strong relationship with the Omaha Education Association (OEA) and the Nebraska State Education Association (NSEA) who are the teachers unions representing their respective areas. I would take a proactive approach by reaching out to them, along with making myself available and accessible to teachers, when an important decision pertaining to them comes up. I will closely listen to them especially about their issues regarding their contracts, pensions, and curriculum requirements.

Subdistrict 4

Shavonna Holman: No response received.

Subdistrict 6

Hina D. Agarwal: Education: *Master's of Science in Education; Master's of Science in Chemistry Education; Bachelor's of Science in Biochemistry; Bachelor's of Science in Bioengineering*; Volunteer Experience: *MCC Foundation Board; Completely Kids Guild; Bemis Art Auction Committee; Intercultural Senior Center*
Website: www.agarwalforeducation.com

Nancy Kratky: Education: *Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Education from UNO*; Current Office held: *Current board member OPS District 6*; Past Office held: *OPS Board Member proudly representing District 6 for 22 years, 1994 - 2014, 2018-2022*; Volunteer Experience: *Salvation Army Auxiliary; Lifetime Member OEA, NEA, NSEA OPS Citizens Advisory Committee*

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Hina Agarwal: We must acknowledge each school in OPS has different needs. Most of the schools will need to add reading and math specialists to help those students who are not meeting the grade level standards or simply need some extra one-on-one time to get proficient. To address any mental well-being deficits, we will ensure the right support staff are available. We will also have to enlist the help of parents/guardians and perhaps host some sessions on how they can help their student at home. Getting the community educated and involved will help alleviate stress on the staff and improve outcomes.

Nancy Kratky: By engaging community leaders, families and the superintendent we are working diligently to address this issue. We continue to expand summer school hours at each level. There will also be an opportunity for each elementary student to select up to ten books for their home library.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Hina Agarwal: As a board member, one of the most important skills I offer is my ability to actively listen to education professionals and engaged members of the public. Because each school in the district has a unique set of students, staff and administrators, it is imperative that we acknowledge and respect these differences. We cannot always rely on a one size fits all approach. I will ensure we spend tax dollars wisely to ensure we continue to produce active learners and graduates ready for the future.

Nancy Kratky: I will continue to work with educators, families, community leaders and fellow board members along with the superintendent to prioritize the best course of action.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Hina Agarwal: In order to fulfill our dream of excellence in education, we need qualified and dedicated teachers. These individuals have spent years learning and embedding best practices for classroom brilliance. Our educators need to be respected, appreciated and compensated for all the work they do in and out of the classroom. The teachers are the eyes and ears in the classroom and their perspective on what is happening in the school is an integral part of how to meet the needs of our students. There has to be a solid foundation of trust and transparent communication between the teachers, staff and administration. It is the Board's role to make sure that these relationships are established and cultivated.

Nancy Kratky: As a former teacher and board member I do this every day and everywhere I go. I completely enjoy visiting and listening to the concerns of all teachers. I fully support the board's and district's efforts to retain and seek effective, high-quality teachers in every classroom. My support for the Teacher Academy Project and student teacher stipends will enhance teaching throughout the district.

Subdistrict 8

Margo Juarez: Education: *BSBA, MBA from University of Nebraska at Omaha*; Current Office held; *Omaha School Board December 2021 to present, appointed*; Volunteer Experience: *South Omaha Neighborhood Alliance*

Carl G. Satterfield Jr: No response received

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Margo Juarez: We have provided summer school options for our students this past summer. Summer school will also be in the proposed budget for June 2023. The teacher observation will be important to assess any well-being deficits. Resources in the school district are available.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Margo Juarez: I will evaluate my choices based on the most critical and immediate needs of our school district. Staffing is a top priority for me. The challenges are many including our bus transportation.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Margo Juarez: I plan on continuing to make visits to all the schools in my district. As time permits, I will try to visit other schools outside my district. I would also like to encourage the teachers to work with their union representation. In addition, I hope teachers are communicating with their principals about any issues. It is important that the Superintendent shares any concerns with the Board as she deems necessary.

Board of Education Ralston Public Schools #54

Vote for up to THREE

Carrie Hough: No response received

Cynthia. R. Huebner (write-in): No response received

Elizabeth Kumru: Current Office held: *Ralston Public Schools Board of Education - 2019-2022*; Volunteer Experience: *PTA, Nebraska StoryArts*

Mary K. Roarty: No response received

How will you address student learning and well-being deficits encountered in the past two years?

Elizabeth Kumru: The curriculum and learning team at Ralston Public Schools has worked hard and continues to work hard, addressing student learning and well-being needs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They regularly inform and update the Board on their plan, allowing us to ask questions and be up-to-speed on how things are going in our schools.

Specific actions taken include: analyzed student learning, adjusted schedules to provide regular supplemental support for students in grades 7-12, provided K-12 core social-emotional curriculum, hired additional reading specialists at the elementary level, offered additional summer courses for credit recovery, and refocused on strong teaching of procedures and routines to ensure students are ready to learn.

When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, curriculum, etc. how will you determine the best course of action?

Elizabeth Kumru: As elected officials, we constantly face difficult decisions every year. The process I like to follow is to first gather all the information on any issue. I ask many questions on a particular decision to know the background, reasoning and impact it will have on our staff and students. It is also crucial to conduct additional research from credible sources so I can further my understanding of the subject matter. One of my last steps is to have conversations with other Board members, District administration, staff, students, and community members to garner their thoughts and opinions on the particular issue. Once I have all this information, try to reach the best decision that benefits the students and staff of Ralston Public Schools.

How will you engage educators and integrate their feedback in the board's work?

Elizabeth Kumru: The perspective of our District's educators is important to RPS, as they are the ones in our classrooms working with our students daily. I am actively engaged in the RPS school community and attend as many district events throughout the year as possible. I also visit schools to see firsthand what's happening in our buildings. I interact with staff, students and the community. I listen to their feedback, discuss important issues, or get a feeling of how the school year is going from their point of view. Any ideas, comments, or concerns I share in my Board comments during our meetings, or I take them straight to District Administration. This process has and can lead to future goals or work to be accomplished by the Board.

JUDICIAL RETENTION

Judicial Retention

Voters choose whether to RETAIN judges with a YES or NO vote. The State of Nebraska Judicial Branch offers a Voters' Guide to Nebraska's Judicial Retention Elections at <https://supremecourt.nebraska.gov/public/vote>

Nebraska Supreme Court

Michael G. Heavican – Chief Justice
William B. Cassel – District Three
Jonathan J. Papik – District Four

Court of Appeals – District Three

Francie C. Riedmann Weis – District Three

Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court (statewide)

James R. Coe
Daniel R. Fridrich
John R. Hoffert

Douglas County District Court - District Four

Peter C. Bataillon
W. Russell Bowie III
James M. Masteller
Kimberly Miller Pankonin
Shelly R. Stratman

Douglas County Court - District Four

Grant A. Forsberg
Thomas K. Harmon
Jeffrey L. Marcuzzo

Douglas County Juvenile Court

Chad M. Brown
Vernon Daniels

SPECIAL ISSUES TICKET

Final layouts and titles were not available by the deadline for print publication. Ballot language will remain the same. Please visit VOTE411.org for the latest available information.

State of Nebraska Proposed Amendment No. 1

A vote FOR this amendment will authorize any city, county, or other political subdivision that owns or operates an airport to use its revenue for the purpose of developing or encouraging the development of new or expanded regularly scheduled commercial passenger air service at such airport.

A vote AGAINST this amendment will not authorize a city, county, or other political subdivision that owns or operates an airport to use its revenue for such purpose.

A constitutional amendment to authorize any city, county, or other political subdivision owning or operating an airport to expend its revenues for the public purpose of developing or encouraging the development of new or expanded regularly scheduled commercial passenger air service at such airport.

State of Nebraska Initiative 432

(Voter ID Constitutional Amendment)

A vote "FOR" will amend the Nebraska Constitution to require that, before casting a ballot in any election, a qualified voter shall present valid photographic identification in a manner specified by the Legislature.

A vote "AGAINST" means the Nebraska Constitution will not be amended in this manner.

Shall the Nebraska Constitution be amended to require that, before casting a ballot in any election, a qualified voter shall present valid photographic identification in a manner specified by the Legislature?

State of Nebraska Initiative 433

(Minimum Wage Initiative)

A vote "FOR" will amend the Nebraska statute establishing a minimum wage for employees to increase the state minimum wage from nine dollars (\$9.00) per hour to ten dollars and fifty cents (\$10.50) per hour on January 1, 2023, to twelve dollars (\$12.00) per hour on January 1, 2024, to thirteen dollars and fifty cents (\$13.50) per hour on January 1, 2025, and to fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per hour on January 1, 2026, to be adjusted annually thereafter to account for increases in the cost of living.

A vote "AGAINST" means the Nebraska statute establishing a minimum wage for employees will not be amended in such manner.

Shall the Nebraska statute establishing a minimum wage for employees be amended to increase the state minimum wage from nine dollars (\$9.00) per hour to ten dollars and fifty cents (\$10.50) per hour on January 1, 2023, to twelve dollars (\$12.00) per hour on January 1, 2024, to thirteen dollars and fifty cents (\$13.50) per hour on January 1, 2025, and to fifteen dollars (\$15.00) per hour on January 1, 2026, to be adjusted annually thereafter to account for increases in the cost of living?

**Special City Election
City of Omaha**

**Douglas County School District 0059
(aka Bennington Public Schools)
School Bond Election**

Vote YES or NO to each of the following:

Charter Amendment 1

“Shall section 2.06 of the Home Rule Charter of the City of Omaha be amended to provide that a Councilmember who is vacating a City Council position cannot vote for the Councilmember's replacement all as provided in the Cotice of Election?”

Charter Amendment 2

“Shall section 2.07 of the Home Rule Charter of the City of Omaha be amended to change the process for determining if a mayor is disabled and unable to perform the Mayor's duties from one which requires the appointment of a medical committee to a process that is similar to the process outlined in the United States Constitution where the ultimate determination is made by a two-thirds majority of the City Council all as provided in the Notice of Election?”

Charter Amendment 3

“Shall Sections 2.08, 2.10, and 2.18 of the Home Rule Charter of the City of Omaha be amended to provide for a line of succession in the event that the Council President and the Council Vice President are unable to perform as Acting Mayor when it is so necessary, to provide an exception to the requirement that the City Council must meet at least twice a month in the event of an emergency declared by the state or federal government, and to require that the publication related to any initiative petition be made only in the City's designated official newspaper all as provided in the Notice of Election?”

Charter Amendment 4

“Shall Sections 5.03, 5.16, and 5.17 of the Home Rule Charter of the City of Omaha be amended to amend Article V. Finance of the Charter to allow for an increase in the size of the cash reserve fund from 8% to 12% and to increase the monetary amount which requires public bidding and City Council action from \$20,000 to \$50,000, all as provided in the Notice of Election?”

Charter Amendment 5

“Shall section 7.04 of the Home Rule Charter of the City of Omaha be amended to include a requirement that the City of Omaha's master plan must address affordable housing development and sustainable development in addition to the elements that it is already required to address as provided in the Notice of Election?”

"Shall Douglas County School District 0059 (Bennington Public Schools), in the State of Nebraska, issue the bonds of said District in the principal amount of not to exceed One Hundred Fifty-Three Million Dollars (\$153,000,000) for the purpose of paying the costs of constructing a new high school building, which shall include a new stadium and track facility, a new softball and baseball complex, and new tennis courts, providing for necessary furniture and apparatus for such new high school building and additions, constructing improvements to the existing high school building and existing stadium, and providing for technology and security updates in the existing facilities of the District; said bonds to be issued from time to time as may be determined by the Board of Education, to bear interest at a rate or rates to be determined by the Board of Education and to become due at such time or times as may be fixed by the Board of Education; and

"Shall the District cause to be levied and collected annually a special levy of taxes against all the taxable property in said District sufficient in rate and amount to pay the interest and principal of said bonds as the same become due?"

FOR said bonds and tax
AGAINST said bonds and tax

10 Tips for Voting by Mail*

- ① Follow the instructions enclosed with your ballot.
- ② Use a blue or black ballpoint pen to mark your ballot.
- ③ Use the return envelope provided for your ballot only.
- ④  Sign the back of your ballot return envelope.
- ⑤ You cannot change your vote after you return your ballot.
- ⑥ Return your ballot via U.S. Postal Mail (voter must provide postage)

OR

at an Official Ballot Drop Box - 13 locations throughout the county. Secure drop boxes are available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week - no postage needed.

- ⑦ All ballots must be received by 8 p.m. on Election Day, whether by mail or by drop box.
- ⑧ Do not return your early voting ballot at a polling place.
- ⑨ All accepted early voting ballots are counted and reported.
- ⑩ More information at www.votedouglascounty.com. Contact the Election Commission at earlyvoting@votedouglascounty.com or (402) 444-VOTE [8683] if you have questions.

* Tips courtesy of the Douglas County Election Commission.

If You Live in Douglas County

Return your ballot to the

Douglas County

Election Commission

by USPS mail, or use

Drop Boxes at these locations:



Douglas County Election Commission

west of main entrance in parking lot

12220 W Center, Omaha

Omaha City/County Building

Between 18th & 19th on Farnam, near sidewalk

1819 Farnam Street, Omaha

South Omaha Library

Relocated: East Side Parking Lot

2808 Q Street, Omaha

Charles B. Washington Branch Library

Southwest corner of building

2868 Ames Avenue, Omaha

Clarkson College Parking Lot 8

42nd & Farnam Sts, Omaha

Goodwill

4805 N 72 Street, Omaha

Ralston Police Department

Southwest corner of building

7400 Main Street, Ralston

Asian Market

321 N 76 Street, Omaha

Milton R. Abrahams Branch Library

South of main entrance

5111 N 90th Street, Omaha

Douglas County Engineer's Office

Near sidewalk by parking stalls

15505 W Maple Road, Omaha

Millard Public Schools Foundation

Northwest corner of building

5225 South 159th Avenue, Omaha

Spring Ridge Shopping Center

178 & Pacific Sts., Omaha

Bess Johnson Elkhorn Branch Library

Northeast corner of building

2100 Reading Plaza, Elkhorn

YOUR VOTERS' GUIDE

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