

Sanders County Ledger - Your Best Source For Sanders County News

SANDERS COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Editor's Note: The Ledger sent questions to each of the school board candidates in all of the school districts who filed for the May election, regardless of whether or not the candidates were running opposed or unopposed. The following candidates returned completed questions and provided photos.

PLAINS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Name: Ellen Childress

Education: B.S. Zoology University of Montana, Education Certification in Biology and General Science Grade 7-12

Occupation: Teacher (Retired) Owner-Whistle Creek Pottery

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board? I can relate to various perspectives on a personal level as I have been a Plains school parent, a home school parent for our daughter for 2 years, a Preschool teacher and taught Title I. grades 7-12 for 15 years in the Plains Schools. Both my children graduated from Plains High School. After my retirement I was a substitute teacher in elementary and junior high and high school classes. During two terms as a Plains School Trustee I have learned much about school structure and funding. I have been involved in staff reviews, policy reviews and celebrations of student and staff achievements.

Describe your involvement with your school district. Currently I serve as a Plains School Board Trustee and have for 6 years. Most recently I was asked to serve on a committee to develop a co-op agreement with Thompson Falls. There were 8 very dedicated and talented volunteers who provided much insight and information for that process which we completed successfully after 4 months of research and meetings. I am a church member, teach classes at the Paradise Center for the Arts, and occasionally help with Plains Womans' club projects.

What one aspect of your school district do you feel needs more attention from the board? The greatest need for our school as I see it is to learn to navigate the confusion created by the changes in Statewide Educational policies which can create inequities between home school/school choice students and public school students. Finding creative ways to surmount the financial issues which surround decreasing student enrollment is also a large challenge.

Name: Robert O. Cutlip

Education: Dobson High School; Mesa Community College; South Texas College

Occupation: Operations Manager for Robert's Hay Farm LLC, 10 years and going.

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board? The reason I feel I would make a great choice for the school board is because I care about our community. I also feel that education is paramount in a child's development. It is a tool for success. It is my education that has helped me be successful in business. I have spent the last ten years managing my family's business. I am extremely familiar with sales, logistics, employee development, budgeting, crisis management and negotiations. I fully understand conflict and I even better understand the importance of working with people to resolve differences when and where they exist.

Describe your involvement with your school district. My current involvement with the school district comes in the role as parent to a six year old who is currently in 1st grade. She does extremely well in her studies.

What one aspect of your school district do you feel needs more attention from the board? What needs attention from our district? That is why I am running for this position. Being a member of the school board will allow myself to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of our district as well as our community. I want to work alongside the other members to keep strong what is strong and strengthen what needs to be for the best interests for all our children.

Name: Monica Allestad Weedeman

Education: Associates in Agri-business

Occupation: Manager of the Sinclair in Plains

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board? I am willing to take the time to listen and go to meetings and discuss ideas that would make our school better. I want to make sure that all the goals we have set for our school are followed. I also want to monitor the progress of all things we have put in place and spend time making changes on what doesn't work for the district.

Describe your involvement with your school district. I have three children enrolled in the Plains school. I have been on the school board for four years and am involved in the newly formed PTA. I currently sit on the Clark Fork soccer alliance board. I have been involved in many community based benefits and activities. I do my best to help when able. Plains has my heart as I was born and raised here and I am very invested in its future.

What one aspect of your school district do you feel needs more attention from the board? Change is always a part of life. I would really like to see our school be able to compete well with others. Putting our children out in the workforce with a wonderful set of skills and knowledge. Work readiness programs are a must. I would also like to see many more classes that would help those that choose college or trade schools. In essence, figure out the needs for each child and find them a niche to help them prosper once they leave school.

Sent from my iPhone

NOXON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Name: Kyra Bosker

Education: High School

Occupation: Marketing and Sales Manager at Bighorn Botanicals, Inc.

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board? I am a parent, I have children in the Noxon School for 12 years now and I have 10 years before my youngest graduates. I will have 22 years consecutively with children in the Noxon School. I have seen the school ran under many different Administrators and Superintendents. I believe all children deserve a quality education.

Describe your involvement with your school district. I go to School Board meetings regularly. I read the budget and agenda before the meetings as a parent to be informed. Most recently I helped with fundraising for the Noxon Red Devils Baseball team. We were able to get the uniforms and the protection gear paid for within the first week of fundraising.

What one aspect of your school district do you feel needs more attention from the board? We need to get our enrollment up. We have lost too many local children to neighboring schools and homeschool. Protect the taxpayers money by carrying out our fiduciary responsibilities.

Name: Jim Byler

Education: GED

Occupation: Fire chief and Harlows school bus manager

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board? I'm good with the students. THEY like when I do Christmas grinch some come to me when they need a ear to vent into I listen to them an never judge them.

Describe your involvement with your school district. My involvement with the school is I'e been bus manager for around 5 yrs now i'm the Christmas grinch along with my wife we an fire dept we provide students with things they might need clothes shoes food an she's a huge helping hand at the school. Jen my wife's a para in Noxon as also a bus driver together we have been involved with the schools for 5 yrs or so an the community volunteering.

What one aspect of your school district do you feel needs more attention from the board? My aspect of what I believe the district needs more attention to would be finances first of all things 2nd would be we as a board members need to listen more to parents an community concerns an I think there should be more answers an questions to be aloud spoken at board meetings last an most important listen to students even if we think its really nothing of concern an don't be afraid to cast a no vote when needed.

Name: Annie Manning

Education: University

Occupation: Marketing and Communications

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board? If elected, I will strive to maintain a high level of transparency by openly communicating and listening to concerns, and providing clear explanations for the decisions made by the board. Additionally, I will uphold accountability by being responsive to feedback, taking responsibility for my actions, and working with other board members to achieve the best outcomes for our school district.

Describe your involvement with your school district. As a parent of two daughters, aged 5 and 9, who attend Noxon Public School, I aim to increase my engagement with both the school and the local community as my children continue to grow.

What one aspect of your school district do you feel needs more attention from the school board? Parent and administration cooperation is crucial for improving the school for our children and the community. Collaboration is essential for focusing on the common goal of enhancing children's future, rather than engaging in unnecessary conflicts over who knows best.

Name: Arthur Potts

Education: B.S. Wildlife and Fisheries Management, Texas A&M University

Occupation: Terrestrial Program Manager, Avista

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board? I've had the opportunity to serve on the board the last year. I have great respect for the responsibility, and I have ensured my engagement reflects this. Additionally, I serve as a Govern-appointed chair of the Western Montana Conservation Commission, which has afforded me substantial experience with the duties of board participation. Throughout my career, I have experience with contract negotiations, long-term strategic planning, employee management, and budgetary responsibilities. I have been raised by a long line of educators and know the value of our public education system. I want to ensure my children are afforded the best education possible.

Describe your involvement with your school district. With having young daughters (ages 2 and 5), I'm invested in the long-term success of our school. While on the board, I have willingly worked to represent the Board during delicate task of NEA contract negotiations. In my professional career, I work closely with local schools and organizations to provide free access to Avista's facilities. I am currently working to improve baseball facilities at Pilgrim Creek Park, and I also volunteer as a coach with Noxon Youth Baseball. In addition, our family is very involved in supporting school clubs and sports through the Noxon Booster Club.

What one aspect of your school district do you feel needs more attention from the board? I would love to see an emphasis on more effective communication between staff, administration, and parents. Education needs to be a collaborative effort between all sides in order to ensure our students are receiving a quality education to prepare them for the future. I also feel that improving lines of communication will result in more positive community engagement, which will help to provide more sense of involvement and pride in Noxon School and our local community.

Name: Lars Swanson

Education: 13 Years-1 Year Montana State University

Occupation: Construction/Carpentry

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board?

I have been a board member for seven years and have a good base on how a board functions. I am very conscious to not make any decisions based on personal agendas or emotions. I believe that I bring an even keel insight to the table without emotional baggage.

Describe your involvement with your school district: As stated above I've been a board member for seven years and am currently board chair. I have assisted in the past as a volunteer Jr. High football coach. I have donated in a couple of ways to the Trout Creek archery program. I have a son that graduated from Noxon and have two daughters in highschool. I do my best to attend school activities i.e. sporting events, concerts, talent shows, and have been Santa for the grade school Christmas program. I have helped raise money for the BPA program for the students to compete on the national level.

What one aspect of your school district to you feel needs more attention from the board? Funding is one of the biggest obstacles of a lot of schools, and our school is no exception. Providing a fair wage for teachers is a must. We have a sound base of educators that are good at their job and they need to be compensated accordingly. This will also help in making our school attractive to potential suitors. I am committed to Noxon Schools.

DIXON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Name: Faus Silvernale

Education: Two years university

Occupation: Farmer

What qualities make you a good choice for the school board? I grew up in and went to school in Dixon. I now have two kids attending Dixon School.

Describe your involvement with your school district: My only involvement with the school district at this point is as a parent of two boys attending Dixon school.

What one aspect of your school district to you feel needs more attention from the board? I am not aware of any specific issues at this point.

Connect With Us

Sanders County Ledger

P.O. Box 219 / 603 Main St.
Thompson Falls, MT 59873
Ph: (406) 827-3421
editor@scledger.net

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