



Minnewaska Area Schools

District 2149

2024 School Board Candidates

Meet the candidates



Angie Reichmann

Hometown: I grew up in several small towns in the area but I am officially from Alexandria, MN.

Family: I have been married to my husband Dean for 23 years and we have three wonderful sons Mason, August, and Alex.

Hobbies: My hobbies include spending time together on our family farm and relaxing on the lake when time allows. I do love to watch movies too!

Fun Fact about me: I love to sing!!

Angie Reichmann

Questions

1. What made you want to run for the Minnewaska School Board?

My school board journey started with the arrival of covid 4 years ago. I was looking to be more informed and more involved in the decision making process for our children and the tax payers of Pope County. I would like to continue my journey to help shape the district road map for the next season of students and teachers.

2. What attributes and behaviors are essential for school board members?

I believe that there should be many personality types on the board working together as a team to ensure that all sides are represented. We need to be good listeners and able to speak up when the time calls. It helps to have values that are important to you too but be able to compromise for the good of the entire community.

3. What do you believe would be your role as a MAS school board member?

I am here to try to speak for the hard working folks that love the outdoors and sports and love our Lakers. There is always room for improvements in our schools, that is a given, but we should be proud of where we are financially and with the test scores and graduation rates of our students.

Angie Reichmann

Questions

4. What are your thoughts on the school district's programs for students?

In a more rural district setting like like Minnewaska it can be challenging to keep all of the programs that we grew up with to thrive, but we are doing just that while continuing to add new technology classes like drones and robotics. The creation of the career pathways has also been a great tool that we can expand on for years to come to give all students a chance to see what real world jobs in our community look like.

5. As a board member, where would you look to make budget cuts should the district find itself in this financial situation? Are there any areas you would not consider cutting?

My hope is that we will be able to make cuts by not backfilling some positions as the enrollment numbers change over time. We can also look to make more efficient use of the footprint that we already have. This could be something as simple as perfecting the schedule to use every classroom every hour or as big as working toward consolidating to a K-12 school if that is where the numbers are heading.

Angie Reichmann

Questions

6. It is very likely that the District will be going to the voters in the near future to renew our bond for building improvement projects, providing \$15million on new tax neutral revenue. Share your views and opinions on this. What would be your role as a Board Member?

I believe that the best case scenario would be to remain tax neutral and keep the same level of revenue. We would be able to continue moving forward with normal operations and normal facility maintenance and updates while still giving us a chance to repurpose some areas that aren't being utilized to their full potential. Make key updates to our facility regarding safety and still be able to look for new ways to provide the best for our the young people in our community.

7. Describe your role on the board as a community member who is serving in a policy/governance capacity while staff manages operations.

I enjoy learning more about the inner workings of our district every time we gather. I am a good listener with attention to detail. I always wish to lead with the best interest of all students in mind while ensuring that the requests of our residents are heard loud and clear. We have a wonderful staff in place at all levels that are working together to provide a great education for our kids.

Chad Barsness

Hometown: Glenwood

Family: Wife Sheila: 3 Girls -
Dreya, Lexi, & Piper

Hobbies: Hiking and Skiing in
Colorado

Fun Fact about me: I am a
terrible singer



Chad Barsness

Questions

1. **What made you want to run for the Minnewaska School Board?**

This would be my third term and there are several projects that I would like to see through to the end.

2. **What attributes and behaviors are essential for school board members?**

School board members play a crucial role in shaping the educational environment and ensuring the success of a school district. One of the main attributes is having high ethical standards, transparency, and honesty in decision-making

3. **What do you believe would be your role as a MAS school board member?**

As a school board member, my role would involve a combination of strategic oversight, policy development, financial management, community engagement, and support for district administration. I would work to ensure that the district operates effectively and efficiently while advocating for the best interests of students and the community. Balancing these responsibilities with a focus on long-term educational goals and community needs is key to fulfilling my role successfully.

Chad Barsness

Questions

4. What are your thoughts on the school district's programs for students?

Evaluating a school district's programs for students involves examining how effectively these programs meet educational goals and support student development. I believe we are going the right direction on MCA scores and much of this is because of the large investment we have put into curriculum and our amazing staff

5. As a board member, where would you look to make budget cuts should the district find itself in this financial situation? Are there any areas you would not consider cutting?

Making budget cuts in a school district can be a challenging and delicate task, as it often involves balancing financial constraints with the need to maintain or improve educational quality. Some areas to make cuts would be Administration overhead, Non- curricular programs & Operational costs. Areas where we should not consider cutting would be: Classroom instruction, Special Education Services & Safety/Security.

Chad Barsness

Questions

6. It is very likely that the District will be going to the voters in the near future to renew our bond for building improvement projects, providing \$15million on new tax neutral revenue. Share your views and opinions on this. What would be your role as a Board Member?

Renewing a bond for building improvement projects and providing \$15 million in new tax-neutral revenue is a significant opportunity for the District. Here's how I would approach this situation and what my role as a Board Member would entail: 1) Evaluate the specific building improvement projects and their impact on the district. Ensure that the projects align with the district's long-term strategic goals and address critical needs. 2) Clearly communicate the benefits of the bond to stakeholders, including how the improvements will enhance the learning environment, support student achievement, and potentially increase property values. 3) Engage with the community to gather feedback and address concerns.

7. Describe your role on the board as a community member who is serving in a policy/governance capacity while staff manages operations.

As a community member serving on the school board in a policy and governance capacity, your role is distinct from that of district staff, who handle day-to-day operations. 1) Policy Development and Oversight: 2) Strategic Planning 3) Community Engagement and Advocacy & 4) Oversight and Accountability



Dawn Jenson

Hometown: Glenwood

Family: Husband of 22 years, David; son John (2024 graduate of Minnewaska - going to nursing school at Alex Tech. living at home) daughter, Kendyll, junior at Minnewaska

Hobbies: Spending time with my family and friends, reading, volunteering

Fun Fact about me: I am a 2000 graduate of Minnewaska Area High School and knew back in high school what career I was going to have. I've been a mortician for 20 years.

Dawn Jenson

Questions

1. What made you want to run for the Minnewaska School Board?

I would like to help ensure Minnewaska, it's teachers and all students are successful.

2. What attributes and behaviors are essential for school board members?

Being honest, organized, future driven and level-headed

3. What do you believe would be your role as a MAS school board member?

To help ensure the students, staff and administration have what they need to be successful.

Dawn Jenson

Questions

4. What are your thoughts on the school district's programs for students?

I think the programs are evolving and growing with the times and they need to continue to keep up with changes in our world.

5. As a board member, where would you look to make budget cuts should the district find itself in this financial situation? Are there any areas you would not consider cutting?

I'm not super informed about the budget at the school level, but I am willing to learn and help determine the best solutions for the future.

Dawn Jenson

Questions

6. It is very likely that the District will be going to the voters in the near future to renew our bond for building improvement projects, providing \$15million on new tax neutral revenue. Share your views and opinions on this. What would be your role as a Board Member?

I feel like my role would be to understand what improvements need to be done and why and help the voters be informed as to what is happening and why so they can make an informed decision. I think transparency and honesty go a long way with people.

7. Describe your role on the board as a community member who is serving in a policy/governance capacity while staff manages operations.

I think my role would be to come in and look with fresh eyes to see/understand the policies and how the school operates and what can be done to solidify a future for our community. To support the staff while they continue operations and raising our future contributing adults.



Gordy Moeller

Hometown: Glenwood

Family: Wife Diane, her 3 children and 2 grandchildren

Hobbies: Biking, traveling, watching sports and movies, and Music.

Fun Fact about me: I have run and completed 1 Marathon.

Gordy Moeller

Questions

1. What made you want to run for the Minnewaska School Board?

After 43 years of teaching in this District I can offer a different perspective to the board. Having been both a classroom teacher, and coach it gives me a broad view of our school. I tried to give my students the best I could as a teacher and feel I will bring that to the board. The students and staff in our school are awesome! I have told many people that I have bled Laker Blue all these years and I want to continue to try and help the students in this district, but now in a different role.

2. What attributes and behaviors are essential for school board members?

One must be a good listener and willing to hear all sides of any issue that may or may not be controversial. But the most important is that one has to think of the students 1st. It is our primary job as a school board, to do everything possible to give our students the best education and experiences we can. We are all part of one team, and that means one has to look at the school as a whole.

3. What do you believe would be your role as a MAS school board member?

As stated in the previous question, to provide a different perspective to the group. As a former teacher I can answer how decisions will affect the day to day life in this school either positively or negatively.

Gordy Moeller

Questions

4. What are your thoughts on the school district's programs for students?

I feel our school offers great programs for our students. There are many students, who upon graduation, enter 4 year colleges as Sophomores because of the college classes they have been able to take. We have started working more with local businesses to provide real life experiences for students who aren't necessarily interested in a 4 year degree. We have a great variety of electives for a well rounded student. We also offer great extracurricular activities and our facilities are some of the best. This is a great school district.

5. As a board member, where would you look to make budget cuts should the district find itself in this financial situation? Are there any areas you would not consider cutting?

Budget cuts are always a difficult decision. Having been in this District for many years I have been thru several budget reductions. I don't believe I can or should make a predetermined decision as to what areas can be safe and what areas can be cut. I do know that in the past every effort was made to cause as little disruption to student life as possible. Each time, in the past, that our district has gone thru reductions, our school has survived and come back strong.

Gordy Moeller

Questions

6. It is very likely that the District will be going to the voters in the near future to renew our bond for building improvement projects, providing \$15million on new tax neutral revenue. Share your views and opinions on this. What would be your role as a Board Member?

Everyone who owns a house knows that after 30 years things need to be improved. Things wear out and there is a need to update items. Tax neutral means the property taxes will not go up. Having been in the high school building for 30 years I know that there are some problems that need addressing. My role as a board member is to promote this and talk to people about this issue in a positive way.

7. Describe your role on the board as a community member who is serving in a policy/governance capacity while staff manages operations.

My role is to make sure I am listening to the staff working day to day. I think the question should always be, what can we do together to solve a problem, help all staff in doing their respective jobs better, or what can we do as a board to facilitate this idea to make our school better or more efficient? As a community member I feel great pride in our school. Can it be better? Yes, but the only way to make it better is for all sides to work together. Policy should be to make the students safer, and to provide them with a variety of opportunities so we can send them into the world as well-rounded individuals. It also should be to support our great staff, so they feel heard and motivated to continue doing their jobs with excellence.



Justin Zavadil

Hometown: Glenwood

Family: Wife - Alisha Zavadil, Daughter - Willow fifth grade at MAS

Hobbies: I love being outdoors, watching gopher sports, golf, and spending time with my family

Fun Fact about me: I worked at Jay Leno's comedy club when I lived in LA during the summers of college.

Justin Zavadil

Questions

1. What made you want to run for the Minnewaska School Board?

I have been on the board for the past 6 years and feel that we have a lot of great momentum going. There are a number of initiatives that I would like to see through for the next 4 years. The school is in a great place right now and I'd love to continue to contribute that success as a board member.

2. What attributes and behaviors are essential for school board members?

I think the most important attribute is to be able to look at issues and concerns with a level head and from the perspective of the students, staff and community members in a balanced manner.

3. What do you believe would be your role as a MAS school board member?

To continue to represent the community in making Minnewaska Schools the best experience for our students, faculty and parents. We do this by helping to set the vision and direction based on the needs of our community.

Justin Zavadil

Questions

4. What are your thoughts on the school district's programs for students?

I think we have wonderful programs at Minnewaska for students with diverse interests. I think that we have made amazing progress in curriculum in the past 4 years and I know that there are many more initiatives that we can add in the near future.

5. As a board member, where would you look to make budget cuts should the district find itself in this financial situation? Are there any areas you would not consider cutting?

As a business owner and a school board member, my beliefs are the same. We plan our work and work our plan so that we have success and are not put in the situations where these decisions are necessary. If we are put in this very unfortunate situation, we need to make the decision to make cuts where the students' education is the most important. I would propose we make cuts that don't impact the level of education our students receive until all other options have been exhausted.

Justin Zavadil

Questions

6. It is very likely that the District will be going to the voters in the near future to renew our bond for building improvement projects, providing \$15million on new tax neutral revenue. Share your views and opinions on this. What would be your role as a Board Member?

My role would be to help support the passing of the referendum that most benefits Minnewaska. I will be a champion of whatever effort the board decides to pursue as a whole, as I believe that this board has the best interests of our community, students and staff at heart.

7. Describe your role on the board as a community member who is serving in a policy/governance capacity while staff manages operations.

My role would be to continue to support the staff in their success both in the community and in our meetings. The school board does not run the school. We are there to make sure that the staff is working in the best interests of our students, faculty and community by providing our support inside and outside of the school.



Ken Moe

Hometown: Glenwood, MN

Family: Colton (4-Year Old Son), and grew up in a family of 8

Hobbies: Hunting, Fishing, Wrestling, Cars & Sports

Fun Fact about me: I truly would like to see Glenwood, Starbuck, and the surrounding cities, communities, and businesses thrive and succeed. I want the Pope County area to be a place where people stay and want to come to raise a family. A big part of that is having a strong school district.

Ken Moe

Questions

1. **What made you want to run for the Minnewaska School Board?**

I saw the school's post about the need for a school board member and thought I could help the school and community with that. I grew up on a dairy farm South of Glenwood and graduated from Glenwood High, Alexandria Technical College, and Moorhead State University. I was part of the Minnesota Army National Guard and have over 30 years of business-related experience in various roles and companies. I believe this experience would be helpful as a school board member.

2. **What attributes and behaviors are essential for school board members?**

Ability to listen, work together, and make hard or unpopular decisions. We need vision and an understanding of budgeting, metrics, and complete transparency. We need metrics/tools to measure success or failure and have the foresight to adjust our plans as needed. We need to create & develop programs that promote high student engagement. We need to have a safe environment and challenge our students to be more. We need to make the best decisions we can with the information available at the time.

3. **What do you believe would be your role as a MAS school board member?**

Help set the direction and support the vision of the MAS School District. Have a good relationship with staff, students, and community for long-term success. Help with any of the following as best I can such as maintaining and growing student enrollment, enhancing the learning process, retaining and attracting long-term teacher talent, managing and supporting how the school and students perform, approving budgets, managing and setting spending priorities, working closely with school and district leaders, ensure a high-quality education and prepare our students for the rest of their journey of life and learning. Ensure we have an environment where students want to come to school and learn. Ensure our students, teachers, and staff have the tools and clear direction needed to be successful. We need to benchmark what other school districts are doing that is working and not working. Ideally, we capture some best practices that we can consider for our school district.

Ken Moe

Questions

4. What are your thoughts on the school district's programs for students?

There was a lot of good content regarding school district programs, however on the surface it appears to be missing metrics. How do we know we are doing what we say we are? How do we know when something isn't going as planned and we need to adjust our direction vs. just letting it fail? We need to trust but verify. We need to have transparency and not be afraid to show our failures. These failures can then be looked at as possible opportunities for improvement.

5. As a board member, where would you look to make budget cuts should the district find itself in this financial situation? Are there any areas you would not consider cutting?

Without knowing and having the data available I'm unable to give a specific answer. I will need facts and data such as costs, benefits, students affected, participation, resources required, short/long term goals of the programs, etc. to understand the viability of a program or expense areas that could be opportunities for cost-cutting.

Ken Moe

Questions

6. It is very likely that the District will be going to the voters in the near future to renew our bond for building improvement projects, providing \$15million on new tax neutral revenue. Share your views and opinions on this. What would be your role as a Board Member?

I would want to understand what is driving the costs (why is this needed), I would also want to understand if it all must be done at once or if we can phase in the improvements to offset the initial high costs. I would also like to see what our preventive maintenance programs are with key building equipment and facilities or do we just let things go until they fail and need to be replaced?

7. Describe your role on the board as a community member who is serving in a policy/governance capacity while staff manages operations.

I will need to listen to the community, teachers, and staff while advocating for long-term student success and safety. Also do all I can to provide our Teachers, Staff, and Students with the necessary tools they need to succeed.

Thank You for Your Attention!

Reminder: Don't forget to vote on **Tuesday, November 5!**

Four school board seats are open — your vote makes a difference!

Let's shape the future of our schools together!



Minnewaska Area Schools
District 2149