

This candidate information is brought to you by the League of Women Voters of Wood County as a public service. Candidate responses are printed exactly as received, including spelling, grammar and content. Candidate biographies and responses to questions were limited to 60 words

Office Board of Education A
Name Stephen Thomas Smith
Party Non-partisan

Biography

Retired Professor of Business, Accounting and Finance at WVU-Parkersburg. Married for twenty years to Paige, a health care administrator. Parents to Abigail, a student at WVU-Morgantown. More information about me can be found at www.smithforboe.org

1. What changes, if any, in the curriculum for students would you like to see?

I feel that enhancements to curriculum delivery methods, rather than curriculum itself are most important currently. The Covid-19 situation has pointed out that we do not have distance learning in place in any meaningful way. A robust distance learning infrastructure could serve to enhance our curriculum offerings within the limits of teaching resources as our student population declines.

2. How do you feel about the present school consolidation plan?

When our student population declines, consolidation is inevitable. The current plan asks sacrifice from students, families, teachers and service personnel but, none from school level administration or the central office administration. I find this unacceptable while the current Board obviously does not. Our dollars must go into teachers and service personnel who keep things running and not solely the administration.

3. What experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for board of education?

Two Master's degrees in business and 35 years of experience in management of various enterprises. The BOE is not a business but many aspects of its management are similar as you must be fiscally prudent and get the most from each dollar. Couple that background with 11 years as a college teacher. I appreciate the challenges faced by classroom teachers.

Office Board of Education A
Name Ron Tice
Party Non-partisan

Biography

Bachelor's of arts degree in education from Fairmont State College and a Master's degree in Adult Education from Marshall University . Retired school teacher with thirty years' experience and have been a BOE member for the past four years. In addition, I own a small business and have officiated volleyball for thirty-five years.

1. What changes, if any, in the curriculum for students would you like to see?

There are two urgent/needed curriculum changes: 1) Consistent curriculum used in all schools. Each school receives the same printed curriculum but it is not always used. We need to be a "school system" and not a "system of schools." 2) Technology and curriculum partnerships need to be improved.

2. How do you feel about the present school consolidation plan?

Even though it is a painful experience to have to close schools and/or consolidate, this action needed to be done a long time ago. Due to declining enrollment, outdated buildings, and limited resources more schools will eventually need to be closed, based on the ten year Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan for 2021-2030.

3. What experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for board of education?

Most importantly I am a retired teacher. As a current board member I care most about our students, employees, and service personnel. I supported the hiring of our new superintendent as well as the initiatives that led to the increase in our Math and Language Arts scores. In addition under my watch the levy and bond issue passed.

Office Board of Education B
Name Judy Johnson
Party Non-partisan

Biography

I received my B.A. and M.A. from Marshall University. I have been a teacher, principal, and Director of Curriculum & Instruction for Wood County Schools. I worked as a consultant for the WV Department of Education and evaluated schools for the Office of Educational Performance Audits. I have been a foster parent, have two adult children, and two granddaughters.

1. What changes, if any, in the curriculum for students would you like to see?

Teachers need time to plan, analyze assessments, and conference with students to execute the curriculum successfully. Assuring instructional time to ninety minutes for math in elementary will allow for intervention or enrichment and 60 minutes in secondary would be beneficial for students. I congratulate students and teachers on increased math scores and recognition by the state this year.

2. How do you feel about the present school consolidation plan?

State funding has decreased because of a declining student population. The board must address reducing costs. What other cost saving measures are in place? What factors led to decisions on each school? Was input from the school community considered? Will staffing be adequate? Will the schools' cultures blend or be lost?? I will weigh each aspect to determine future consolidations.

3. What experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for board of education?

My experience provides a working knowledge. I have taught in the classroom, library, physical education, computer lab, and alternative school for grades 9-12. As a district administrator, I wrote policies, developed school calendars, conducted professional development, created budgets, wrote and received grants. I have worked as a state consultant for schools on improvement and evaluated schools throughout the state.

Office Board of Education B
Name Brent West
Party Non-partisan

No Reply

Office Board of Education C
Name Kevin R. Burkman
Party Non-partisan

Biography

Dropped out of high school in 10th grade, failed 2nd and 6th grade and have a GED. Earned a Bachelors in CJ/Phyc, Masters in Leadership and Management, Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership and Management. 24 years of increasing leadership responsibility with 16 years in executive level leadership positions in the United States military and government. Husband/father of four children.

1. What changes, if any, in the curriculum for students would you like to see?

My goal is to ensure that educators have the tools to effectively teach and the administrator have the resources to support the district. Even with curriculum changes, it's a team sport...the board members together with the administrators/educators and the parents provide input. These are three pillars that must be in place to make Wood County #1 in the State.

2. How do you feel about the present school consolidation plan?

The school consolidation is a sensitive topic I empathize with the families/children that the last consolidation impacted. I'm sure the decisions were not made lightly nor made without data and evidence to support the determination. I use data to make decision also. In this care I will not armchair quarterback this plan, as I was not involved in the planning.

3. What experience, training or education do you have that makes you the best qualified candidate for board of education?

I'm qualified to be on the school board because I have 3 children in Wood County schools. Secondly, I'm a father of an autistic child and I personally fell through the cracks as a student with a learning disability, failed 2nd and 6th grades and drop out in the tenth due to no support programs. I want to help.

Office Board of Education C

Name Mike Howerton

Party Non-partisan

No Reply