

Douglas County Voters' Guide Statewide Primary Election

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER OMAHA

Primary Election Date: May 10, 2022

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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

Steve Kuehl (R): Education: *Bachelor's in Psychology and Criminal Justice from Eastern Michigan University*; Volunteer Experience: *Open mission, catholic charities*
Website: campaign@stevekuehl.com
Facebook: rep.stevekuehl
Twitter: @RepSteveKuehl

Alisha Shelton (D): Education: *B.S. Psychology-PreMedicine Minor in Chemistry, M.S. Human Services, M.S. Clinical Counseling*
Website: <https://alishashelton.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AlishaKShelton>
Twitter: @AlishaKShelton

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*
Tony Vargas (D) continued:
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.

Steve Kuehl: It's imperative that the United States citizens feel the election process is secure and free. I believe in our current election system with minor enhancements. I support voter ID and making election day a national holiday. Any measures that hinder voter turnout and/or access to voting, I will vehemently stand against.

Alisha Shelton: I would support the John Lewis Voting Rights Act and the For The People Act. Both are bills that will ensure all Americans have the right to vote, ending partisan gerrymandering and big money in politics. We live in a democracy that was built on the idea that all men are created equal. That democracy needs to be protected for everyone and not just to a select few.

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.

Steve Kuehl: An estimated 15-20% of our GDP accounts for the United States health care system. The system is broken at almost all levels. Addressing a single issue affects the entire system, which makes reform difficult. If you pull one spoke from the health care system wheel, it will dramatically affect the system. The administrative/reporting and pharmaceutical companies are two components within the system that need reform. Addressing and surrounding policy around these two is where I'd first start.

Alisha Shelton: We need to lower the cost of prescription drugs, starting with capping the price of insulin and other life-saving drugs. We should also work to continue to improve the Affordable Care Act and reduce the costs of premiums. With COVID-19 hitting our communities so hard and prices going up, we should work to make healthcare costs as manageable as possible. I believe healthcare is a right. Not a privilege. I support the expansion of medicaid in all states and I would support measures to lower premium cost for healthcare such as with implementing the public option of the ACA.

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.

Steve Kuehl: We are a welcoming, compassionate nation. However, we are also a nation of laws. The most compassionate way to welcome those who wish to become a part of our great nation is by following the rule of law. We all know this system is broken, we must fix our immigration systems to fairly, justly, and safely welcome others to our great country without sacrificing the integrity of our nation and its laws.

Alisha Shelton: We should pass the Dream Act. Those who have been born in America who have parents migrated to the United States. We should not be sending back those who only know this country as their home. I would also work in Congress to pass immigration reform that is compassionate and consistent with our values. We are a nation of immigrants and our policies should reflect that. I support a humane immigration reform policy that provides a realistic pathway to citizenship for all folks of any age. I support a humane immigration reform policy that provides a realistic pathway to citizenship for all folks of any age.

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

Donna Nicole Carpenter (R): No response received.

Michael Connely (R): Education: *Multiple degrees at multiple schools*; Military Experience: *Marine Corp and Air Force*; Volunteer Experience: *Multiple including Big Brothers of America, Red Cross, Lincoln Literacy Council. Too many to list.*
Website: <https://www.voicesofnebraska.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Connely2022>

Roy A. Harris (D): No response received.

Charles W. Herbster (R): Education: *Falls City High School, one year at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln*; Volunteer Experience: *Supporter of multiple charities in Nebraska*
Website: <https://charleswherbsterfornebraska.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CWHerbster>
Twitter: @CWHerbster

Brett Lindstrom (R): Education: *University of Nebraska - Lincoln, B.S. in History*; Current Office held: *State Senator in the Nebraska Legislature, 2014 – present*
Website: www.votelindstrom.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Lindstrom4NE>
Twitter: @votelindstrom

Lela McNinch (R): Education: *Homeland Security Certification-University of Israel, Tel Aviv. Bachelors-Education University of Nebraska Kearney. Associates-York College*
Website: <http://www.lelamcninchforgovernor.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/298779755189945>
Twitter: @LelaMcNinch

Jim Pillen (R): No response received

Breland Ridenour (R):
Website: www.RidenourForGovernor.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nebraskansforridenour>
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Theresa Thibodeau (R): No response received.

Troy Wentz (R): Website: <http://www.troywe.xyz/> No other 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.

Michael Conely: The problems we are facing now does not involve voting access. There is a long period of early voting, access is extremely open. The problem is with our election integrity. The contract that our state has with the election computer company states that if problems are found with programs, vote count etc, they may NOT be disclosed to the public. Our election contract allows the company to put in any program, cheat, manipulate the numbers and distort our vote so there is NO honesty in the vote count. Check the contract yourself. I believe the candidate for Attorney General has it on her website www.voicesofnebraska.com

Charles W. Herbster: The State of Nebraska, through appropriate legislation, should move to ensure that all legal votes are cast and counted, and that every eligible voter should be given access to the polls. One sure way to ensure stronger controls on voting is through Voter ID programs. Another measure is to ensure that early voting be monitored more closely by poll watchers and that absentee balloting be allowed for those who truly need to be absent during the voting windows. Every measure possible should be taken to curtail or eliminate ballot harvesting. Every county should conduct a voting process audit to ensure that every measure possible has been put in place to secure valid votes.

Brett Lindstrom: Voting is a sacred right in our republic. Ensuring that our elections are transparent, fair and safe is

essential to protecting that right. To ensure that our elections are fair, we must put into place protections that enable every legal vote to be counted. I believe that while Nebraska has experienced safe elections, we must be proactive and not reactive.

Lela McNinch: To ensure voter integrity, I would like voter registration each time we renew our driver's license or State ID. A new State ID would require a certified copy of a US birth certificate to verify citizenship which would create a watermark upon the ID. Mandatory voter ID at the polls to verify citizenship to protect State sovereignty in voting. Bring polling booths into senior living homes to ensure ease of voting for our seniors. Hand count votes first before counted by machines. Verify that count at the local, county and State level before submitting them nationally. Ensure the voting numbers match. This is to ensure accuracy and fairness in voting.

Breland Ridenour: First, our ballots need counterfeiting countermeasures. Watermarks, serial numbers, and QR codes will make each ballot unique and very difficult to replicate. I believe mail-in ballots should be by request and verification of identity only.

We must also implement voter ID.

Our elections are the only means to diplomatically change our country's leadership. It must be protected and secured for all parties, at all cost.

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.

Michael Connely: I am not familiar with the current health care systems, but would seek out briefings if elected during the May 10 primary.

Charles W. Herbster: If it were possible, the State of Nebraska should allow as much competition in the state for healthcare insurance providers. The market works. Also, the state should ask for doctors, clinics and other healthcare providers to voluntarily provide prices for procedures, lab work, etc. This way, consumers could shop for the best prices. As for Medicaid, the state should do all it can to curtail or eliminate Medicaid fraud. This includes providing Medicaid benefits to those who are ineligible to receive these benefits. One more factor ought to be in place, and that is to bring self-care and fitness back into focus. Preventative self care would lower costs for the state and for the individuals.

Brett Lindstrom: Our rural communities are losing access to local health care facilities due to a lack of workforce and loss of funding. By increasing Medicaid reimbursements, hospitals can continue providing vital care to our communities.

Lela McNinch: Work to develop incentives to make quality healthcare a priority to rural Nebraska. Encourage an expansion of tuition forgiveness to medical students who make commitments to rural areas of the State. Each person should have equal and affordable access to healthcare without restrictions on preexisting conditions. Work in collaboration with the congressional delegation to sponsor legislation at the federal level to cap medical and pharmaceutical costs. Support existing legislative initiatives for tort reform. Increase Medicaid to low-income families and especially children.

Breland Ridenour: I believe the free market is the best approach to providing competition among insurance providers and medical facilities.

Providing information and encouragement for all options available, including alternative medical care, health savings accounts, and legalizing medical marijuana are a few options for chipping away at the issues.

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.

Michael Connely: This question is too broad and would require at least a 10,000 word response to cover it. I will mention one point however. The USA allows up to 10,000 times greater radiation exposure than other countries do. The cell phone towers popping up everywhere emit extreme levels of radiation and our cancer rates will skyrocket. Get an EMF radiation detector. Check it yourself. We need underground highspeed fiber optic cables not the 24/7 radiation spewing towers.

Charles W. Herbster: All of these topics are important for the economic health and prosperity of the state. We should protect our water rights on the South Platte. We should provide better and stronger oversight of our electric grid and energy providers in the state. We should strive to have broadband available to every Nebraskan, regardless of geography. We can achieve all of these goals through bold action. As for public education, tax dollars should follow the child. Every parent and student should be able to choose what school they might wish to attend. As for the infrastructure, Nebraska has the capability to offer bond sales for roads and bridges. That's what we ought to do.

Brett Lindstrom: Infrastructure Investment is long overdue throughout Nebraska. Business relies on safe roads, reliable utilities, and a comprehensive infrastructure backbone that connects Nebraska to the world. Broadband is crucial for education and growth in rural portions of the state and ensures small businesses can compete on the world stage. I am a supporter of the Rural Development Projects Act - which will support transportation infrastructure throughout the state and encourage businesses to expand, leading to a more competitive Nebraska.

We must expand education funding through the TEEOSA formula and invest in partnerships between K-12 schools,

community colleges, and our state's universities to prepare young people to enter the workforce.

Lela McNinch: Ensure we have a clear plan with prioritization on the most pressing need for the State. Utilize the federally awarded money to repair or replace our existing infrastructure first focusing on rural transportation routes, bridges, and dams. Expansion of utilities to meet the growth of communities should be partially included in new construction costs to keep the cost to taxpayers lower. Expansion of public transportation to include a light rail connecting cities throughout the state will assist in education choice as well as access to quality healthcare. Quality education is paramount for the success of our children and access to broadband is essential to make this happen, with emphasis on availability to community colleges.

Breland Ridenour: Broadband is a critical component to growth in our state. I support it 100%, but we need a plan that will actually be sustainable. The current project has little oversight and accountability with no minimal requirements once service is installed. This is not good enough.

I believe Nebraska needs to have a ready-to-break-ground infrastructure for prospective companies. This includes roads, electrical grid, and utilities at the ready so prospective companies can begin building right away.

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.

Michael Connely: Some sentencing is excessive. Illegal aliens should be repatriated to their home countries instead of crowding up our prisons. Simple drug use penalties should be changed to community service. If an offender is not a violent offender, why is he or she there! Early release of victimless crime prisoners.

Charles W. Herbster: Building a new prison seems a simple answer, but there is much more to this challenge. We need to assess our criminal justice system in Nebraska. Sentencing guidelines should be examined. Mental health reform should be part of this overall set of reform initiatives. There should be more efforts made in reform and retraining of individuals who have not committed violent crimes. There should be more efforts in evaluating those incarcerated so that those who do not pose a threat to society might be pardoned or placed on probation sooner. The enforcement of the law is still paramount, but reforming Nebraska's criminal justice system is required.

Brett Lindstrom: The State of Nebraska is currently deliberating the need for a new prison. While I do believe that our facilities are in dire need of upgrading, we also need to focus on rehabilitation. Many inmates are dealing with substance abuse and mental illness. The cycle of addiction coupled with untreated mental illness does not equate to success once released from prison. Prison reform must include sentencing reform. Nebraska must uphold law and order but we must also provide proper rehabilitation to prevent recidivism. This is in the best interests of society and the citizens of Nebraska.

Lela McNinch: Address the root cause of incarceration in Nebraska. Once this is identified, we can begin fixing the problem to help reduce arrests and incarcerations. Do not build a new prison but utilize existing facilities throughout the state to separate and house inmates based on custody level or crime. Provide education, skills and trade training and counseling to reduce recidivism. Consider alternatives to prison for non-violent crimes, such as GPS monitoring and house arrest so a person can continue to work, engage, and provide for their family. Additionally, the individual must participate in community service on a weekly basis.

Breland Ridenour: We need prison reform in the model of balanced punishments for crimes, rehabilitation and trade training for non-violent, non-reoccurring offenders, and the death penalty for the most heinous criminals. I will work with our legislature to implement policies and solutions that will address these areas mentioned.

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

Robert J. Borer: Education: *AAS in Fire Protection Technology, Bachelor's in Liberal Arts, summa cum laude*
Website: <http://www.robertjborer.com>

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; I Website:*
www.bobevnenfornebraska.com

Rex Schroder (R): Volunteer Experience: *25 yrs vol fire department*
Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/rexvoicesofnebraska.comschroder>

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

Robert J. Borer: We need to bring transparency and integrity to every step of the process. Election integrity is integral to the security of our God-endowed “unalienable” rights and essential to consent of the governed and government of, by and for the People. We have lots of issues, not the least of which is that our county elections have been hijacked by the state. Our elections belong to our counties, to be conducted with transparency and integrity. An elective franchise without transparency and integrity is not an elective franchise. It is a sham. A pretense. We don't need laws to do the right thing. We only need laws to punish those who refuse to do the right thing. Our Constitution calls for an elective franchise with integrity.

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.

Rex Schroder: We need to clean up the poll books, we need to stop counting by machines, we need to show id to vote

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

Robert J. Borer: We need to prove to them that their vote counts, and counts the they cast it. That comes from putting a transparent process in place that builds the audit directly into the count, a count that includes and only includes every certifiable, constitutional, legal, chain-of-custody vote from verified American citizens. Every voter will be able to watch and audit the count. Right now we have a third-world process that is not transparent to We the People. There are only one or two reasons for that. Cheating and laziness. We do not sacrifice integrity for convenience. The only people who are currently content, by-and-large, with our Nebraska elections are Democrats (not all) and incumbents. That's not good.

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

Rex Schroder: Our youth need to be taught capitalism and conservatism. Encourage them to learn the government is we the people

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

Robert J. Borer: I have not yet looked into this. Off the cuff, campaigns need to be financed by private American citizens living in the jurisdiction of the race. I have not yet taken a critical-thinking look at limitations on the amount. When I do, my thoughts will be transparent and up for debate.

Bob Evnen: No response received.

Rex Schroder: Complete open and honest transparency

State Treasurer

Paul Anderson (R): Education: *High School Diploma (1971) Kensington Ks. Associate Degree (2018) Metro Community College;* Military Experience: *Retired US Navy Reserve (21 Years) Mobilized (2004) Operation Iraq Freedom (2005) Hurricane Katrina Relief Effort;* Volunteer Experience: *Habitat for Humanity (5 Years)*

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?

Paul Anderson: This question, is the total responsibility of the Nebraska legislature.

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?

Paul Anderson: This question, is the total responsibility of the Nebraska legislature.

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?

Paul Anderson: As treasure, my highest priority will be, to establish and maintain a high level of trust, integrity, and accountability when it comes to spending or not spending Nebraskan's (hard earned) tax dollars.

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

Jennifer Hicks (R): Education: *Bachelor's University of Arkansas, Little Rock, 1997 Graduate (English) Truman State University, 2000*; Volunteer Experience: *4-H (Ten years)*

Website: www.voicesofnebraska.com

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/voicesofnebraska/>

Twitter: @VoicesNebraska

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.

Jennifer Hicks: I would do everything within my power to uphold the constitutionally protected rights of every citizen. Many of the abuses of government stem from the failure of our elected officials to adhere to the oath that they swore to uphold the U.S. Constitution and the Nebraska State Constitution.

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.

Jennifer Hicks: I believe in small government, so I would support lawsuits which seek to defend against overreach of the federal government and against violations of rights imposed by private sector corporations. The line between the two (government and private sector corporations) has become extraordinarily blurred, and the partnerships between the two is leading to a two-tiered government in which the divide between the elite and the common folk grows greater by the day. With regard to the costs of lawsuits which would protect our freedoms, I think what must be considered is the cost to us if we do not defend our rights.

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.

Jennifer Hicks: We already have laws which protect against discrimination. If they are failing us, then the problem is in the enforcement of them. I believe we should enforce currently existing laws against discrimination in instances where it is proven to have taken place. This isn't currently happening. The law should protect all people equally, and no one should be considered above the law.

Auditor of Public Accounts

Larry Anderson (R): Education: *MBA - University of Nebraska*; Military Experience: *15 years Nebraska National Guard*; Volunteer Experience: *HOA Board and Finance Officer*

Mike Foley (R): No response received.

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

Gene Siadek (L): No response received.

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

Larry Anderson: An important aspect this office is responsible for is ensuring financial processes are conducted according to the law. Accountability of State funds is vital for keeping a watchful eye the tax payers’ hard earned money. This is why this office is so important within the State government. Ensuring the reliability of estimates of money available for State spending would be no exception to upholding it to the letter of the law.

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

Larry Anderson: This question is interesting as it tries to elude to the possibility that the State Auditor might favor an audit firm from unfavorable action as he or she has received a donation from said audit firm. I just don’t see that scenario being possible. This office is full of 50+ auditors, all of whom are independent on their given audits, attestation, and reviews. A donation certainly wouldn’t sway their independent opinions or questions the integrity of the office. In my personal opinion, election donations as whole tend to poison the intended spirit of elections where the best qualified candidate is selected for the position. Instead, it’s often the candidate who raises the most money.

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

Larry Anderson: The State Auditor’s office reviews county, city, and village independent audit reports on an annually basis. In addition, the office conducts county audits on a rotational basis.

COUNTY TICKET

Douglas County Assessor/Register of Deeds

Kay Carne (R): Education: *Omaha North High School, Georgetown University - Bachelor of Science (Accounting & Economics), University of Michigan - Master of Science;* Volunteer Experience: *Numerous volunteer positions at my children’s schools, our church and other community organizations*

Website: www.KayCarne.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/KayCarneForAssessor

Brian H. Grimm (R): Education: *Bachelor of Science Management of Information Systems*

Website: briangrimmforassessor.com

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

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?

Kay Carne: Has your budget ever been surprised when your taxes go up significantly in one year after not changing for many years? Mine has. My goal is to bring honesty, fairness, and accuracy to the valuations, which result in the collection of \$1.2 billion each year from Douglas County property owners.

With my more than decade of experience working across the country at a Big 4 accounting firm, I will evaluate the current systems and process, then make the necessary changes. Douglas County does not need someone with close ties to real estate and government in this important office, it needs someone who will serve all property owners equally. We need an honest, independent woman to improve this office.

Brian H. Grimm: In the first year, I would continue with the plan that was set in motion about six years ago. The elected official, our staff, and I made a plan that would realistically take about six to eight years to fully implement. There was a considerable amount of detail work involved to fix a broken system, and it has taken many years to get to where we are today. We are careful in what we do, as a slow systematic approach is the only way to solve the problems that were presented. We are now in the final stages of our plan, and the results can be readily seen with our end of year values. We will continue to work hard on the Register of Deeds side of the office as it is already running efficiently.

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?

Kay Carne: The accuracy and frequency of property valuations is an issue. Leading this office requires much more

than knowing how to put a price on a single property or how a government office was run thirty years ago. My accounting degree from Georgetown University and more than decade experience working with financial services businesses across the country gives me the experience needed to improve this office. The Assessor's office needs a modern computer-assisted appraisal modeling system that focuses more on actual comparable sales of homes in Douglas County, rather than the current system focused on the replacement cost. I will evaluate and address this issue, and make property valuations more fair, accurate and up-to-date.

Brian H. Grimm: I believe that one of the most compelling issues within our office is the balance of technology and human interaction. We live in a world where technology seems to be the predominate force in everything that we do. We utilize technology and a Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal system for the valuation of 225,000 parcels each year. The balance act of that is where does technology fail where humans excel. I think that our society as a whole needs to have more human interaction to rebuild the relationships that have faltered during the pandemic. The Douglas County Assessor/Register of Deeds office continues to foster relationships with homeowners during our regular inspection cycle. Technology can't build relationships, but people can.

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?

Kay Carne: Property valuation and the process of contesting those valuations should be better understood by the public, so that anyone can use their important citizen check on this office and contest a valuation. The process to contest, or the valuation protest process, is a process dictated by state law. Beyond the requirements of the process, more public education will increase transparency and open programs, like the Homestead Exemption and protest process to more owners, who will benefit from them. I will hold multiple town hall meetings across the County to present information on property valuations and how to protest. I will listen to YOU, take YOUR feedback, and work to improve this process for all.

Brian H. Grimm: Property valuations themselves are always set based on current market sales and trends and are completed by following all state statutes that may apply. We currently have a success rate of over 97% of our valuations being correct each year. This has been a measurable difference from the previous administration, and we will continue to improve

upon these numbers each and every year. Unless legislation passes to move market value or actual value to something less, we are bound to follow state statutes. We currently do a very good job of explaining the process of protesting valuations, and there are many publications that go into details. But I would encourage anyone that may need more information to either call our office or email us.

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

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

Douglas County Clerk of the District Court

Pamela Cardenas (D): Education: *Immaculate Conception School, South High School, University of Nebraska Omaha*; Volunteer Experience: *Holy Ghost Church, Holy Ghost School*
Website: <http://www.voteformcardenas.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/voteforcardenas>

Thomas Flynn (R): This candidate will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

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?

Pamela Cardenas: I have four top priorities while in office. 1) To continue providing the excellent customer service, trust and transparency in our office that citizens have become accustomed to when interacting with the Clerk of the District Court. 2) To continue streamlining processes to keep the office both effective and efficient for all Douglas County residents and litigants. 3) To continue evolving with new technology initiatives to keep customers on-line versus in-line at the courthouse. 4) To continue keeping the fiscal management of the office within the fiscal restraints while keeping Douglas County residents first.

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?

Pamela Cardenas: 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. Also, the new technology offers alternative processes for jury check-in which can save time and money.

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
Districts 2 and 4**

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

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

John McCann (R): No response received

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 the 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

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

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>

Wayne Hudson (D): Education: *Bachelor of Science Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement Wayne State College-Masters of Public Administration (MPA), Local Government University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO)*; Current Office held: *Chief Deputy Sheriff, Douglas County Sheriff's Office 2020-Present*; Military Experience: *United States Air Force 1986-1992 • Honorable Discharge*; Volunteer Experience: *Metropolitan Chiefs Association (President 2018); Women Center for Advancement (Board Member); Coalition RX (Board Member); National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (Board Member); Many others* Website: <https://www.hudsonfordsheriff.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Hudson4DCSheriff>

George Merithew (R): Education: *Creighton University School of Law (JD); Hastings College (BA); US Army Command and General Staff College (MS equivalent); Judge Advocate Officer Basic and Advanced Courses; NCO Development Courses Graduates thru Advanced NCO Course*; Military Experience: *37 Year member of US Army Reserve, Activated 5 times, Current Rank: Lt. Col. - Civil Affairs & Judge Advocate General Corp; Previous Enlisted Rank: Sergeant First Class - Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Defense NCO*; Volunteer Experience: *Reservists of America (ROA), President, NE Dept; PACE volunteer coach; Police Ball Committee founding member; NE Assoc of Women in Policing; Black Police Officers Assoc; Latino Police Officers Assoc; Florence Historical Society; American Legion; +* Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Merithew-for-Sheriff-102061249097960>
Twitter: @George4Sheriff

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.

Wayne Hudson: Ensuring the safety and trust of our community is the core philosophy of the Douglas County Sheriff's Office (DCSO). I know that the residents in Douglas County feel that the DCSO is excelling in keeping them safe and that we are a trusted agency. I know this because the community recently told us so in a citizen satisfaction survey conducted by UNO. 96% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that deputies care about the people in their community. 94% of the sample feels somewhat or very safe being alone outside in their neighborhood at night. As Sheriff, I assist other law enforcement agencies to ensure ALL residents of Douglas County are afforded the opportunity to live in a safe and harmonious community.

George Merithew: I will make myself available to all community groups in order to form strong partnerships that foster trust and understanding of the Sheriff Dept.'s role in the community. Conversely, I will train Sheriff Office employees on the unique heritage and diversity that makes up Douglas County. I am extremely familiar with Dept. of Justice requirements for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as I implemented the policy for the Omaha Police Dept. I worked hard to ensure every OPD officer has the ability to communicate with non-English speaking members of the public and will ensure that Sheriff Deputies have the same tools and that every employee understands the needs of those we serve. I will encourage Deputies to volunteer in the community.

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.

Wayne Hudson: Law enforcement officers have very limited mental health response training; therefore we MUST rely on the experts to assist in this area. As Sheriff, I will continue to utilize the professional services of the Crisis Response Team from Lutheran Family Services to assist with these calls for service. In addition, I will expand our embedded therapist program to ensure that we have 24 hr. coverage, 7 days a week. The therapist will be responsible for following up on all mental health calls. They will ensure the person in crisis is receiving the necessary services they need to live productive lives. This will also allow deputies to concentrate on criminal calls for service and not mental health calls for service from the same location.

George Merithew: I will make myself available to all community groups in order to form strong partnerships that foster trust and understanding of the Sheriff Dept.'s role in the community. Conversely, I will train Sheriff Office employees on the unique heritage and diversity that makes up Douglas County. I am extremely familiar with Dept. of Justice requirements for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as I implemented the policy for the Omaha Police Dept. I worked hard to ensure every OPD officer has the ability to communicate with non-English speaking members of the public and will ensure that Sheriff Deputies have the same tools and that every employee understands the needs of those we serve. I will encourage Deputies to volunteer in the community.

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.

Wayne Hudson: Community policing/community engagement is an intentional effort on the part of the Douglas County Sheriff's Office (DCSO) to build professional relationships/trust and work closely with members of our community. This is done through positive interactions, creating partnerships and strategies for reducing crime/disorder and increasing the quality of life for all our residents. Staff from the DCSO volunteer hundreds of hours each year interacting with our community through different programs. These programs include: Cuts & Conversations, Shop with a Cop, Teen Summit, Community & Law Enforcement Forums, Operation NETS, Explorers, and many others. Each of these is designed to break down barriers between our agency and the community.

George Merithew: The Sheriff is the moral guide and compass of the office and department. Community Policing is the map used to achieve goals and interact with the community in a moral and ethical manner. Interaction is the key. Only through partnerships with the community can a Sheriff receive the needed feedback to guide and allocate resources. There must be an emphasis on shared problem solving to ensure buy-in from community partners. The Community Policing philosophy must be part of the entire department to achieve trust from the community while decreasing crime, disorder and fear. I will encourage Deputies to participate in community meetings and events. I will emphasize relevant training and learning and ensure appropriate course corrects are made.

Douglas County Treasurer

This candidate will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

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

Elizabeth Hallgren: Education: *Masters in Business Administration, BA in Political Science*; Military Experience: *none- but I am a military spouse, my husband was in the US Air Force for 30 years*; Volunteer Experience: *Omaha West Rotary, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Boy Scouts, Westside and Creighton Prep schools and sports, Offutt Key Spouse Program*
Website: <https://votehallgren.com/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VoteHallgren>

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: Nebraska MUST address prison overcrowding using multiple approaches. The first is major sentencing reform. Next is addressing the severe lack of mental health access across the state. Our law enforcement needs increased investment in identify mental illness and specialized de-escalation techniques. Finally, we do need to build a new prison, but we can not build our way out of this problem. So with out approaching

Elizabeth Hallgren: Nebraska's prison overcrowding needs to be addressed on several fronts. We need to implement community-based programing for non-violent, low level offenders that focuses on career training and skills development to reduce recidivism by preparing them for a career after they serve their time. We also need to examine our sentencing guidelines and bail policies to further reduce incarceration rates for nonviolent offenders to ensure that prison space is available for violent offenders thereby saving tax dollars and increasing public safety.

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.

Elizabeth Hallgren: The federal infrastructure bill funding in addition to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars that have been allocated to Nebraska need to be directed to our

most critical infrastructure needs including roads, bridges, and transit needs. I have a particular interest in investing in high speed broadband access across the state to pave the way to attract remote workers and education opportunities to rural communities and open market opportunities for Nebraska businesses that will increase our tax base and lower the tax burden for all of us.

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 begin 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: State general funds.

Elizabeth Hallgren: High quality education that prepares our students for high skilled, high pay, and high demand jobs is paramount to Nebraska's economic growth and sustainability. It is time to address our antiquated tax system by developing a model that appropriately funds our schools and spreads the responsibility for the tax revenue generation equitably in a way that doesn't punish property ownership or hinder business competitiveness.

Now is the time for the leadership, collaboration, innovation and hard decisions that are required to create the tax system we need to fund our education system into the future. As the only business person running for LD 6 I will bring my unique experience with budgeting and negotiation to this perpetual problem.

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

Katie Opitz: No response received

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);* Offices 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

Bob Borgeson: Education: *UNO BGS;* Military Experience: *Nebraska National Guard;* Volunteer Experience: *Youth baseball and basketball coach+8*

Website: bobborgeson.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bob-Borgeson-for-Legislature>

Haile Kucera: No response received

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: *II 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?

Bob Borgeson: While our state facilities need to be modernized, we cannot build our way out of this situation. The measures I believe we need to look at are: 1) We need to look at programs for nonviolent offenders that will transform their lives to return to becoming a productive law-abiding citizen. 2) We need to reduce recidivism in our penitentiary system. One way to address this issue is to increase the utilization of evidence-based reentry programs. 3) Staffing issues have recently been helped with pay increases for the men and women who serve the public as employees of the penal system. Their safety is a paramount concern for me as they provide a service few would care to undertake.

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 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?

Bob Borgeson: As a Rail industry Safety advocate for decades, I want to ensure that the railroad operations in our state are safe for the general public, as well as, the railroads operating here. We have thousands of grade crossings in Nebraska, and we need to improve them for the safety of the public, as well as, the railroaders operating trains. We can also do more on trespassing on railroad property. Our state highway system can always use improvement. I would be an advocate of looking into another Interstate belt to the west and north of the Metro. In my job, I traveled the state and know of the need for the expansion and improvement of broadband.

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, broadband 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?

Bob Borgeson: Currently the state's funding of education is from the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA). This funding source was adopted to address the inadequate funding from the state and reduce the reliance on property taxes for local funding. I believe the state was on the right path, but I would revisit the current TEEOSA funding formula and see where tweaks can be made to increase state aid and further reduce reliance on property taxes.

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

Clarice Jackson: No response received

Michael Young: Education: *Metropolitan Community College and University of Nebraska at Omaha*; 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

Julie Fredrickson: No response received

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 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

John Sieler: Education: *Graduate: Spencer (NE) Public High School Graduate: University of Nebraska, Bachelor of Science Degree*; Past Offices held: *Nebraska State Board of Education, 2010-2014. Served as Vice-President of the State Board of Education for one year*; Military Experience: *Reserve Officer Training Corps*; Volunteer Experience: *Open Door Mission, Capital Campaign Program, Board Member Good News Jail and Prison Ministry, Board Member Member, Board of Directors, Westroads Merchants Association Adult Sunday School Teacher, Christ Community Church Awana Youth Group Leader*

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

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.

John Sieler: Elected officials are responsible to Nebraska voters. Appointed officials are responsible to the individual who appoints them. Nebraska voters may decide this question, if it is placed on the ballot as a Constitutional Amendment. I believe in a responsible and informed electorate. I support and trust the decision of voters.

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.

John Sieler: I believe in local control of schools in accordance with Nebraska Law. However, the Nebraska State Board of Education has an important supervisory and checks-and-balances role.

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.

John Sieler: In accordance with Nebraska Law, the State Board of Education sets minimum Mandated Academic Standards in selected academic studies. Each school district is expected to meet or exceed minimum state standards. Individual school districts may set their own minimum requirements/standards as long as their standards meet or exceed minimum standards established by the State Board of Education.

I oppose The "Health Standards" that have been proposed by the current board. These standards are neither needed nor required by law. The proposed standards call for teaching explicit sexual activities, such as oral, anal, and vaginal sex, to seventh grade boys and girls. The proposed standards also encourage younger students to question their

Board of Governors Metropolitan Community College

Districts 1, 3 and 4

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

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](https://www.facebook.com/erinformetro)
Twitter: @erinformetro

Jon Tucker: No response received

Tammy L. Wright: No response received

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

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.

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

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.

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 Horsechief:

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

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: www.mccarthyformetro.com

Cornelius F. Williams: Education: *PhD in Physics from Michigan State; BS Stanford University; Omaha Central High School*; Past Office held: *Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties - Subcouncil 2 from 2017-2020*
Website: www.voteforcorn.com

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

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 Horsechief: As someone who was once homeless, I have personally seen the transformation and freedom that can be found in a well equipped community college. I have worked with the homeless and those in deep poverty and have seen lives transformed by simply having an affordable education and a chance to learn at our metro community college. It gives every individual a chance at different opportunities to start, restart, or advance in their career. From our liberal arts programs to our trade schools, it makes our community a better place by investing into our students as well as future community leaders and members.

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.

Cornelius F. Williams: MCC provides a chance for people to get a good start at these things at a low price and it is the boards job to look toward the future to provide the opportunities for the jobs of the future and what the community will need.

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 Horsechief: I believe that student success is measured by many factors. A metric that I consider is the professional opportunities that are available after a journey through MCC. From our trade, technical, agriculture, liberal arts and many other programs, it is necessary that our students are well equipped with a quality education to succeed and advance in their field of studies. I also believe that student success can be considered by the amount higher education, certifications and post graduate work is completed after MCC.

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.

Cornelius F. Williams: Student success comes when they active or move closer to their goals, whether that is academically or personal.

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

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 Horsechief: In my past, I dropped out of two colleges due to addiction which eventually led me into a life of homelessness. I was able to find recovery through a substance abuse program and after, MCC gave me another chance to pursue my higher education. I absolutely enjoyed my time at

MCC and I want to give back through public service. For incoming students, no matter their education path or trade, I want to see them succeed and to have all the resources necessary to ensure this can happen. For adult learners, I have understood the barriers which can hinder them and hope to see a bridge formed for them to find success. Overall, the hope and success I found at MCC and wanting to see this for others is what compelled me to run for the board.

John M. 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'S IN OMAHA, EARN'S A GREAT LIVING, AND COLLECT THE STRONG BENEFITS FROM OUR COMPANIES.

Cornelius F. Williams: As a long time teacher and having been a member of the learning community, I know how import it is for the complete learning experience that everyone has a chance to advance academically. This means that MCC should have programs that are open to help and advance careers and people personal life. As the largest academic body in the area MCC offers lots of programs to do these things. So as a Board member I would see it as my job to continue these things so the community would continue to grow.
MCC, Pipeline from Education to Living the Good Life

Learning Community Coordinating Council

Vote for up to TWO

District 1

Brenda Banks: No response received

Ryan Cohagan: No response received

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 or 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.erikserver.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.

Erik 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 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.

Erik 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, 4, 6 and 8

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

Board of Directors Omaha Public Power District Subdivision 5

David Goldsmith: No response received

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
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 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*;

Dan Ryberg: Education: *JD*; Past Office held: *Dep Douglas County Attorney 1974-77*; Military Experience: *US Army*; Volunteer Experience: *President Nebraska Korean Veterans Assn (DMZ 1968) President of St Robert Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society*

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 reliable water and natural gas service at reasonable and the lowest cost possible!

- Dan Ryberg:**
1. Increase of transparency of meetings and operations so customers have data to properly judge the Mud Board and operations.
 2. Review all security protocols, both physical and cyber, to assure customer and plant protection against both domestic and foreign interference.
 3. Assure that MUD remains a public, and not a for profit business so that customer's do not pay extra for a company's profit margin.
 4. Increase clean fuel, i.e. natural gas, usage along with integrating renewable energy sources so as to reduce MUD's carbon footprint.
 5. Carefully review any and all proposals for water usage by other utilities that REQUIRE MUD to provide water from any of the 3 well fields of MUD. Presently, MUD can switch fields.

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

Dan Ryberg: 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!

Dan Ryberg: During the present economic conditions, continuation of financial assistance, vis-a-vis the Heat Aid Fund through the Salvation Army is paramount for MUD customers. We need to look for additional methods of identifying and providing extension of payments for those in need. If necessary, other programs of MUD may have to be adjusted in order to maintain customer costs.

The reliability of outside energy sources presently governs present conditions, but, again, MUD may have to adjust its internal operations to accommodate these outside influences and maintain the customer as the primary concern.

The protection of the environment comes with the responsibility of evaluating all plus and minus issues, including, but not limited to soil, agr

Bennington City Council

Wards 1 and 2

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

Ralston City Council

Wards 3, 4 and 5

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

Valley City Council

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

Board of Education Arlington Public Schools #24

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

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/>

Marcy Clark: No response received

Jeremy Dick: Education: *B.S. Business Administration-Banking and Financial Markets*

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jdick2022>

Quintin Erdman: Education: *Masters Degree*

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/277408107878109>

Jason W. Holling-Karas: Education: *Iowa State University (Industrial Engineering, BS); Bellevue University (MBA); Bellevue University (Master Management Information Systems)*; Volunteer Experience: *Anchor Pointe Elementary PTO (Secretary); FUMC Foundation (Secretary, Former Treasurer); Metcalfe-Harrison Neighborhood Association; First United Methodist Church Finance Committee*

Website: www.votejasonhollingkaras.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/VoteJasonHollingKaras

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>

Tyler McGlade: No response received

Chris Niles: No response received

Eric Preissler: Education: *Bachelor of Sciences*; Volunteer Experience: *UNMC, Boys and Girls Club of Nebraska*

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 children's 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.

Quintin Erdman: I want the highest standards for all students. I disagree with the equity approach towards education as this takes away from the learning experience for high ability learners. Ultimately, there is so much any teacher can do in their day, and it is not fair to the educators or students to devote more time towards one student over the other. My expectation is that teachers communicate deficiencies with parents. Those parents should then work with their children to improve in the areas they need improvement.

Jason W. Holling-Karas: A recent study predicted the average student is 5 months behind in reading and math over the last two years. Physical and mental toll from online learning, missing in-person events (graduation, etc), and in general missing social interaction has many parents concerned about children's mental health.

There is not a straightforward solution to solve these deficits, it will take educators, parents, and the board working together.

Ways I would address:

- 1) Support mental health initiatives put forward to help our students and educators.
- 2) Continue to assess test scores to look for areas of deficits. Support catch-up courses as needed to help students close the gaps.
- 3) Evaluate metrics on absenteeism and drop-outs and act if trends occur.

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.

Eric Preissler: As a public school this needs to be a high priority for the school. I have a personal relationship with the Superintendent, Principal, and many tenured teachers in the district, which gives me the ability to work closely with them on these type of issues they see on a daily basis. At the end of the day, they are the closest ones to the issues and we need to look at their advice as professionals closely. Things like Hot Lunch assistance, or technology assistance can be leveraged to allow a level playing field for all students. No student should be inhibited from the Bennington Learning Experience because of circumstances.

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.

Quintin Erdman: Bennington doesn't seem to lack in funding - just look at the high tax burden. I want to keep limit administrative oversight and empower educators to do their jobs. Further, I want to limit frivolous spending and focus on learning first. I will always default to what is in the best interest of the students but be mindful of the tax burden placed on the community. More money is not the solution to education. Better allocation of resources is the better approach.

Jason W. Holling-Karas: We will be faced with difficult decisions as a school board as we are in a period of rapid expansion in our district. A few thoughts on determining the best course of action: 1) Get the facts. Listen to our educators in terms of what they need and has the best chance of succeeding. We cannot make decisions in a silo or from a board room. By talking to those impacted by the decision we can determine creative ways to solve issues. 2) Address the needs of all students. I do not want to make decisions for a

single group of students, we need to do what's right for all students across the district. 3) Look every year for creative ways to reduce or eliminate unnecessary spending so that resources can be reallocated to value-added programs.

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.

Eric Preissler: We need to ensure 3 things: #1 parents who desired a voice get the proper platform, #2 teachers have a strong voice in the process #3 we are accountable to the decision with transparency. One thing leaders miss is to truly listen to concerns. People show up and speak because they have passion about a topic, while everyone else glazes over. My role should be to listen intently to each concern and make a decision based on what is best for the community as a whole. Sometimes my opinion will be swayed by good arguments and people showing me that the majority of the community wants to move in a certain direction. This is important to have a humble, flexible leader who wants to represent Bennington, and not dictate with only their opinion in mind

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/commerciate 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.

Quintin Erdman: I am the spouse of an educator, and value her feedback. Further, I hope I have made it clear that any educator can contact me with their concerns, and I will address them as a board member. I want to do what is right by the students, and any educator that can provide insight without increasing the tax burden, is welcomed.

Jason W. Holling-Karas: A key tool I want to implement is holding small sessions with our educators to listen and hear what their needs are so I can make the right decisions to better serve the needs of educators, students, and community. This year, sitting at PTO meetings and hearing first-hand the concerns of the educators has helped drive me to want to run. There are so many challenges facing educators and hearing the needs firsthand has helped me understand what they need to continue to deliver quality education. Some of the key issues facing educators daily are burn out with volume of work, addressing growing class sizes, lack of substitute teachers availability, and teacher shortages from others exiting the profession.

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.

Eric Preissler: I have been a part of the Benning School

District for over 20 years. I graduated from BHS when we were class C and attended when K-12 was the small brick building on the corner of 156th. Both my parents have been educators in the Omaha-area my whole life. This gives me a unique relationship with teachers and the school leadership. I will work closely with Dr. Haack (a family friend) to ensure the needs of teachers and students are at the heart of every decision. Having a personal connection to teachers makes me extremely accountable to my decisions because they will follow me into my personal life. No decision will be made without consulting that group personally, and understanding all the consequences, both on students and teachers.

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

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

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: No response received

Lisa Pitts: No response received

Saleh Qulagi: No response received

Nancy Rogic-Greufe: No response received

Patrick Roy: Education: *Bachelor's Degree in History and Political Science*; Current Office held: *Sanitary Improvement District Board, September 2021-present*; Volunteer Experience: *Omaha West Rotary, Omaha Chamber Young Professional Council*
Website: patrickroy4eps.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/patrickroy4eps>

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

Kara Teri: Volunteer Experience: *Human Resources Association of the Midlands, Secretary, (current), Theatre Arts Guild, Secretary (past)*
Website: votekaraforelkhorn.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/karateriforelkhorn>

Jerid Tingelhoff: No response received

Mark Wortman: No response received

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.

Patrick Roy: Learning and well-being deficits are going to vary by grade and other situations. My goal will be to work closely with teachers, parents, and administrators to learn what areas need the most attention and then make decisions off of that data. It is critically important to rely on the teachers and parents because they will best be able to identify the issues groups of students and individual students are facing.

As someone who has dealt with dyslexia and fell behind in elementary school, I understand how important it is to make sure no child falls behind.

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

Kara Teri: Addressing student educational, emotional, and overall well-being deficits as a result of the pandemic is best handled by the professionals- our district's educators. EPS board members must actively seek information from our front-line educators and support staff to determine pain points, and then assist in investigating and implementing possible solutions. To presume that the Board or the administration is best equipped to address the student education experience is short-sighted and under-values the expertise of our teaching staff. I have no doubt that our educators have ideas about how to guide the district's efforts to right the student experience and maintain academic excellence. They must be consulted.

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.

Patrick Roy: To determine the best course of action when it comes to any school board issue I will do several things. I will do research on the issue and reach out to subject matter experts to see what different groups feel is necessary to address concerns. I will also use my years of public policy background and community connections to see what has worked in the past and what has worked for other districts similar to Elkhorn.

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

Kara Teri: One of the biggest concerns for EPS (and many other districts across the nation) is staffing. This is going to become a monumental issue at every level. Another major concern involves updates to the curriculum. In public education, curriculum should be fact based and age appropriate. Families which are uncomfortable with particular material can and should exercise their parental right to remove their student from the course/class of concern. To solve these and other difficult issues, it is imperative to have both short term and long term strategic and tactical plans. With goals in place, the Board can draw on its various areas of expertise, including our educators and administrators to help guide the district in executing these plans.

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.

Patrick Roy: The two groups that are the most important for the school board to engage are educators and parents.

I will engage with teachers by reaching out to them to ask their opinions on issues. I will also ensure I have an open door policy so that educators feel comfortable coming to me with suggestions and ideas.

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

Kara Teri: It is my personal goal to put our educators back in the driver's seat. Educators should be consulted regularly via engagement surveys and other methods to ensure they have opportunities to be heard regarding district decisions and goals. Most importantly, the Board must work to ensure that educator feedback is genuinely considered. Administration should practice full and open communication about decisions and the decision-making process so that our teachers can be fully informed about the "why" behind choices.

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

Unable to obtain contact information. Vote for up to THREE

**Jon Genoways
Cassie Kelly
John Pane
Amanda Schrum**

**Ryan J. Sevcik
Kevin Shultz
Ted Welchert**

Board of Education Fremont Public Schools #1

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

Board of Education Gretna Public Schools #37

Unable to obtain contact information. Vote for up to THREE

**Greg Beach
Gabriel Garcia
Jenny L. Garcia
Mark Hauptman
Ronald R. Johns**

**Lori Lowry
Lance R. Molina
Steve Rogers
Ann Sackett Wright
Blake Turpen**

Board of Education Millard Public Schools #17

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

**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

Melvin Muhammad: No response received

Sharnelle Shelton: Volunteer Experience: *Empowerment Network, Avenue Scholars, Boys & Girls Club, Girls Inc., Sacred Heart School, Salvation Army, Omaha United For Youth, Omaha 360, NAACP, Powerhouse Youth Association, Step Up Omaha, Spark, Women's Center for Advancement, Survivors Rising*
Website: www.sheltonforops.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/sheltonforops
Twitter: @sheltonforops

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.

Sharnelle Shelton: I will assess student to identify their needs. Once the results from the assessment are returned, I will focus on concentrating on what needs each student has and address them as such. I will then integrate an individualized route for each student to assist them with reaching our goals for them. It is important to address the areas that the students are currently lacking before going further so that they will be equipped with a solid foundation. I would also frequent the schools to assess the school climate and work environment. I would include teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents throughout the process to allow them the opportunity to be involved in their child's educational pathway.

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.

Sharnelle Shelton: When faced with difficult decisions regarding budget, staffing, and curriculum I will first identify the problem that we are facing. I then would collect data of how the problem has been addressed previously and determine what worked in the past and what did not work. I would then develop a plan and start the process of implementation. I would then track the effectiveness of the plan to ensure that it was the best decision to correct the problem, if not then would make necessary adjustments as needed.

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.

Sharnelle Shelton: I'd develop a working relationship with the Omaha Education Association's president, teachers,

paraprofessional, and support staff. I would frequently visit the schools allowing me to be accessible to the staff in the building. After evaluating which school would need the most support, I would prioritize my efforts with building leadership and executive leaders. Then I would meet with the superintendent to address their immediate needs and concerns and strategize for solutions. I would also share these concerns with other board members in efforts to identify any other trends in the district.

Subdistrict 4

This candidate will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

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

Jeanne Jones: Education: *Master of Arts, North Central College Naperville, Illinois. Bachelor of Science, University Nebraska Omaha;* Volunteer Experience: *Board Member American Red Cross Nebraska Chapter*

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*

Brian M. Parizek: Education: *UNO 1991, BS in Criminal Justice and Minor in Philosophy;* Volunteer Experience: *Soccer coach with Sporting Omaha FC from 2005-2019. At Joslyn Elementary, I coached YMCA basketball 2006-2010 and was the PTO Basketball Committee Chair 2010-2013. Since 2018, president of the Douglas County Deputy Sheriffs Foundation.*

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.

Jeanne Jones: I have children in middle school and high school who have been impacted over the past two years, this is a topic that is important for me personally. The impacts are evolving and not yet fully understood, it is imperative to support additional research and identify new ways for the schools to closely monitor and measure. If it can be measured, it can be improved with a focus on foundational needs, being willing to consider new and innovative approaches to learning, and invest in mental health resources and support mechanisms.

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.

Brian M. Parizek: Keeping the students in the classroom, in-person with no restrictions on interaction, and engaged with their teachers should be the focus going forward. The district has received a large amount of funding from the CARES and ARP Acts; teachers should be offered wage premiums for conducting before and after school tutoring sessions, working with students that need assistance with educational performance and learning issues. Additionally, using the funds to increase the numbers of paraprofessionals into the classroom would also be an important part of bringing student support back to the classroom.

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.

Jeanne Jones: Spending two decades with Fortune 500 companies in leadership roles, decision making and managing staffing, budgets, and organizational support structures has been a consistent responsibility and one that I have never taken lightly. Treating the budget as if it was my own is a good place to start, coupled with being able to evaluate scenarios strategically and proactively seeking to understand potential unintended consequences or impacts. Analyzing cost

to benefits considering as many inputs as possible and consulting with subject matter experts and stakeholders. Return on investments at times will be qualitative, not quantitative, and these impacts should also be considered.

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.

Brian M. Parizek: The students' educational needs come first, but the school board must also be transparent in its review process and responsive to the concerns of parents and taxpayers. As a school board we have duty to ensure that students are receiving a core curriculum, personal development, and the external learning opportunities they need to advance through K-12 and into their careers, whether it be seeking an advanced degree, or going directly into a trade or the service industry and becoming a skilled professional.

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.

Jeanne Jones: My friends and family members who are educators have consistently inspired me. Listening to educators is critical, understanding root causes and the day to day reality of what is happening in the schools starts with them.

I envision creating opportunities for this through hosting facilitated forums at hours that are conducive to educators schedules, offering opportunities to connect one on one (hosting "office hours" whether that be virtual or in person), and soliciting feedback via surveys.

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.

Brian M. Parizek: Educators' ongoing input should be an integral part of enhancing the K-12 educational system. First-hand knowledge and classroom experiences, beyond the summarized views in an institutional performance review, would be a useful method to gain an understanding of teachers and students essential instructional needs; this input should be used by the school board to enhance outcomes for students as they advance through their primary and secondary educational experience.

Subdistrict 8

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

Board of Education Ralston Public Schools #54

These candidates will auto-advance to the General Election and will not appear on Primary ballots.

Board of Education Westside Public Schools #66

Vote for up to THREE

Terry Buckman: Education: *Doctor of Education (Interdisciplinary Leadership, Creighton University), Master of Science in Education (Teaching and Learning, Old Dominion University)*; Military Experience: *Retired/Disabled US Navy Veteran (30 years of service)*; Volunteer Experience: *School Advisory Committees, School Safety Committees, Public Speaker, Disabled Veterans Advocate, Education Advocate, Mentor, Coach*

Website: terrybuckman.com

Facebook:

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

Kris Karnes: Education: *B.A. in Political Science, Phi Beta Kappa, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (1995); Juris Doctor, Creighton University (1998)*; Current Office held: *Westside Board of Education, 2016-Present; Omaha Airport Authority Board of Directors, 2020-Present*; Past Office held: *City of Omaha Planning Board, 2015-2020*; Volunteer Experience: *Kicks for a Cure Advisory Board (2021-Present), Scottish Rite Foundation Board (2021-Present), Westside Bond Oversight Committee (2015-2016), Westside Facilities Task Force (2014-2016), Omaha Children's Museum Board of Directors (2014-2016)*

Jessica Powell: No response received

Adam Yale: Education: *Master of Accountancy- University of Denver, Bachelor of Arts- University of Michigan*; Current Office held: *Westside Board of Education 2016-Present*; Volunteer Experience: *Methodist Health System - Vice President, Bellevue University Investment Committee, NorthStar Foundation Treasurer*

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/adamyale66>

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

Terry Buckman: The most significant challenge teachers, parents, and administrators are talking to me about is the mental health of our kids. This has only been exacerbated since the pandemic. I propose we immediately gain more mental health counselors and other resources to help our students. This will help in the classroom to curb behavior problems and bolster learning. This is the first and fundamental step in regaining our faltering academic excellence.

Kris Karnes: I've been concerned throughout the pandemic about the impact on our children and their learning outcomes and have intentionally focused on preserving in-person learning as much as possible. In 2021 we expanded the availability of our summer school programming to address learning gaps and received positive feedback; those efforts will be repeated in 2022. I also support the use of formative assessments to focus on data-driven instruction and targeted interventions for kids as soon as possible, particularly in younger grades and core subjects. Equally important, we should balance academic success with our children's mental health by increasing focus on early interventions and increased access to mental health professionals.

Adam Yale: We are always in pursuit of academic excellence. The best thing we can do is make sure that we are recruiting, developing and retaining amazing teachers. We provide them tools to succeed. These tools include a viable curriculum, research-based strategies for academic achievement, strong administrative leadership, behavioral supports and proper material and technological resources. We've enhanced our summer programming and intervention programs for students in need of extra support.

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

Terry Buckman: We have a broad and diverse school district. As such, it takes input from diverse groups of parents, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders to discern the best courses of action. One person cannot solve our problems. I plan to establish committees that venture out into the community and seek input, especially from marginalized groups, rather than meet in some district office when single and dual working folks can't be there anyway.

Kris Karnes: I take my responsibility to be fiscally responsible and transparent very seriously. I have ensured we have stabilized our budget in order to provide consistency and predictability for our students, staff and taxpayers. Being

forced to make budget cuts is heart-wrenching, and I have been diligent about focusing on long-term budgeting, improving facilities oversight and maintenance, increasing cash reserves, and not using our full levy authority. When setting budgets, I prioritize cuts away from the classroom and staff wherever possible to minimize the impact on our students, and I also refer to our Strategic Plan which, through community feedback, set our district goals and funding priorities.

Adam Yale: The critical approach that we always bring is making sure that we are spending on core needs, first and foremost. If we have to cut budget, we try to keep those cuts as far away from the classroom as possible. Finally, we advocate regularly in Lincoln for predictable and inflation-indexed state funding. Our District spending growth over the last decade is less than K-12 education in the state overall on a percentage basis and lower than overall State of Nebraska spending growth, too.

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

Terry Buckman: Educators are crucial stakeholders and solutions must include their input as well as parents and administrators. We are all on the same team. We all want our kids to be happy and healthy and excel academically and in life. We must find innovative ways to make sure everyone is able to be heard and is represented.

Kris Karnes: Just as parental and community feedback is critically important to the success of our schools, so too is the input and professional guidance from those who have made the education of our children their life's work. We have been fortunate at Westside to maintain a strong and mutually respectful relationship with our teacher's union. While we may not always agree, we work hard to maintain an open dialogue with our staff through regular meetings and the inclusion of educators on various committees addressing curriculum, strategic planning, mental health initiatives and major hiring decisions, among other topics. I also try to be accessible and accountable to our building leadership and teachers to hear their feedback directly.

Adam Yale: We have a number of Board advisory organizations and structures. Every board member meets with educators, building leaders and students to gauge both District effectiveness and climate. I was proud to be the Board President when we instituted First Friday informational sessions and informal gatherings with educators, students and community members at the high school and our Student Advisory Board.

Special Issues Ticket

All Bond Issues are answered **Yes – for the Bond** or **No – against the Bond**.

Special City Of Omaha Election

\$24,100,000 Environment Sewer Bonds

Shall the city of Omaha be authorized to issue and sell general obligation bonds in the amount of twenty-four million one hundred thousand and no/100 dollars (\$24,100,000) for the purpose of providing funds for payment of the cost of constructing, reconstructing, improving, extending and equipping of storm sewers, sanitary sewers, interceptor sewers, combined sewers, relief sewers, or a combination thereof, or any other related sewer construction, the approximate cost to the taxpayers of the city of Omaha if this proposal is approved to be twenty-four million one hundred thousand and no/100 dollars (\$24,100,000) plus interest payable on said bonds to be paid from the fund for principal and interest payments on the indebtedness of the city of Omaha as proposed in the notice of election which also provides that the approval of this bond issue will not incur any increases in the debt services tax levy rate of the city of Omaha over the levy increase approved in 2020?

\$15,400,000 Park & Recreation Bonds

Shall the city of Omaha be authorized to issue and sell general obligation bonds in the amount of fifteen million four hundred thousand and no/100 dollars (\$15,400,000) for the purpose of providing funds for payment of the cost of various park and recreation improvement projects of city of Omaha, the approximate cost to the taxpayers of the city of Omaha if this proposal is approved to be fifteen million four hundred thousand and no/100 dollars (\$15,400,000) plus interest payable on said bonds to be paid from the fund for principal and interest payments on the indebtedness of the city of Omaha as proposed in the notice of election which also provides that the approval of this bond issue will not incur any increases in the debt services tax levy rate of the city of Omaha over the levy increase approved in 2020?

\$6,100,000 Public Safety Bonds

Shall the city of Omaha be authorized to issue and sell general obligation bonds in the amount of six million one hundred thousand and no/100 dollars (\$6,100,000) for the purpose of providing funds for payment of the cost of various capital expenditures of the city fire department, including fire vehicles and equipment, the approximate cost to the taxpayers of the city of Omaha if this proposal is approved to be six million one hundred thousand and no/100 dollars (\$6,100,000) plus interest payable on said bonds to be paid from the fund for principal and interest payments on the indebtedness of the city of Omaha as proposed in the notice of election which also provides that the approval of this bond issue will not incur any increases in the debt services tax levy rate of the city of Omaha over the levy increase approved in 2020?

\$120,000,000 Street Preservation Bonds

Shall the city of Omaha be authorized to issue and sell general obligation bonds in the amount of one hundred twenty million and no/100 dollars (\$120,000,000) for the purpose of providing funds for payment of the cost of streets, highways, including neighborhood, collector, and arterial streets in all seven (7) city council districts and bridges, the approximate cost to the taxpayers of the city of Omaha if this proposal is approved to be one hundred twenty million and no/100 dollars (\$120,000,000) plus interest payable on said bonds to be paid from the fund for principal and interest payments on the indebtedness of the city of Omaha as proposed in the notice of election which also provides that the approval of this bond issue will not incur any increases in the debt services tax levy rate of the city of Omaha over the levy increase approved in 2020?

\$79,600,000 Street And Highway Transportation Bonds

Shall the city of Omaha be authorized to issue and sell general obligation bonds in the amount of seventy-nine million, six hundred thousand and no/100 dollars (\$79,300,000) for the purpose of providing funds for payment of the cost of streets, highways and bridges, the approximate cost to the taxpayers of the city of Omaha if this proposal is approved to be seventy-nine million, six hundred thousand and no/100 dollars (\$79,300,000) plus interest payable on said bonds to be paid from the fund for principal and interest payments on the indebtedness of the city of Omaha as proposed in the notice of election which also provides that the approval of this bond issue will not incur any increases in the debt services tax levy rate of the city of Omaha over the levy increase approved in 2020?

Many voters ask, “Why don’t I see [candidate name] on my ballot?”

1. It might be because the candidate is running unopposed, or the office has too few candidates to appear on the Primary ballot. Those candidates will appear on the General Election ballot in November.
2. It might be because Nebraska has Closed Primary Elections. A detailed explanation of that follows.

Statewide Primary Elections are Closed Primary Elections*

Voters who are registered with a political party affiliation may vote only for that party's candidates for partisan offices. So, registered Republicans can only get a Republican ballot, registered Democrats can only get a Democratic ballot and so on.

All voters, regardless of political party affiliation, may vote for nonpartisan offices and for measures based on their registered address and are up for election in the current election cycle.

Voting Options for Nonpartisans.

In Statewide Primary Elections, voters registered as Nonpartisan:

- May vote for candidates for nonpartisan offices (Legislature, Utilities (MUD and OPPD), Board of Education, Learning Community, Natural Resources District, etc.)
- **Upon request**, may vote for representatives in Congress (Senate and House of Representatives) from **only one** political party of their choice.

OR

- **Upon request**, may vote for candidates for partisan offices (Senate, House of Representatives, President, Governor, State Treasurer, Secretary of State, County Board, County Attorney, County Clerk, etc.) from **only one** political party of their choice **that opened its full partisan ballot** to Nonpartisan voters.
 - The Republican primary is a closed race
 - The Democratic primary is an open race
 - The Libertarian primary is an open race
 - The Legal Marijuana NOW primary is an open race

*Information courtesy of the Douglas County Election Commission.

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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