



Board Member PROFILE

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School District #271

How long have you been a board member?

I have served on the Coeur d'Alene School District's board for four years, the past three as board chair. I spent two years on the District's long-range planning committee prior to becoming a member of the board.

What is a success story from your district you would like to share?

Last year was a challenging year with the publicly acknowledged suicide death of an administrator, two students, and a retired teacher/coach in a two month span. In the aftermath, our community and district rallied around each other with a goal to provide more mental health supports to our community. Since that time, we have:

- Provided Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) training to over 2,500 students, staff, and community members with the intent to train all future high school students;
- Certified two dozen staff members as QPR instructors;
- Implemented the Sources of Strength program in our secondary schools;
- Added a school-based health care option at our alternative school;
- Initiated a process to train all staff in Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI).

Additionally, the district has strengthened relationships with area health professionals and organizations to increase access to quality care. Next year, the district will use voter-approved increased M&O Levy funds to add a Mental Health Coordinator and additional school counselors. While we are early into the process, the response and feedback has been extremely positive.

What inspired you to become a trustee?

I have a long history with the district as a graduate, community member, and parent; and I was not satisfied with the way decisions were being made at the board level. I felt there were too many personal agendas and recognized that individuals serving for single issues or personal agendas lacked the commitment to serve long-term. This lack of commitment led to excessive board turnover (16 different trustees in 4.5 years) which created instability and uncertainty. In my opinion, the district needed trustees without hidden agendas, who cared about our youth, believed in public education, were business minded, and were willing to collaborate and listen for the benefit of the community. After consulting with family, friends, and community members I decided to seek an open position, and I've enjoyed almost every moment of it.

Who was your favorite teacher and why?

I have so many who helped me along the way; I'm not sure I could pick just one teacher, staff member, or administrator as my favorite, but I know what made them important to me. My favorites always found a way to connect with me and make learning fun. They helped, encouraged, and guided me along the way, but also demanded more from me and forced me outside my comfort zone. With their support I accomplish things I thought I couldn't, and I found confidence in myself.

Any advice to pass along to future board members?

Serve for the right reasons, enjoy what you do, and always remember to make decisions that are in the best interest of students.