



*Question 4: What will you do to improve coordination between the district and the business community?*

4-Year Candidates

**Ruthina Malone:**

"The Iowa City Community School District is fortunate to be located in a growing area with a vibrant business community. We can do much more to create stronger collaboration between schools and businesses. As a board member, I'll be charged with setting policies that govern the work of the district. I'll be looking for new ways to leverage local resources in support of our schools and students, and the business community can take a strong leadership role in those efforts.

As employers, the business community can also provide valuable insight to our schools in the development of career and technical training programs, mentorship, job-shadowing, and other opportunities. I look forward to hearing your ideas and working within my role to support a stronger relationship."

**Janet Godwin:**

"There is significant need in our community but also significant opportunity. I would like to see the district collaborate with the business community, municipalities, and postsecondary institutions to create a shared vision of our community success and then define a set of goals to achieve that success. As a board member, I will encourage the administration to focus on this collaboration. I look forward to being an active participant in joint entities meetings, and I would also like to consider the creation of other collaboration venues where established businesses, start-ups, postsecondary institutions, local not-for-profits, and groups like the Chamber of Commerce and ICAD come together for joint planning, communication, and coordination. Working together, we can tackle issues of equity and access, academic achievement and business development, and ensure our entire community grows together. "

**JP Claussen:**

"I want to help bring a renewed sense of trust between the entire community and the Board and the Administration. I personally will be sure to listen to ALL concerns, and to actively seek to understand the perspectives of different stakeholders. I will look for opportunities to partner with local businesses in ways that are mutually beneficial for the business community as well as the students of the ICCSD. I think that there are more opportunities to work together, other than the District only asking for money. I would like to see ICCSD students positively representing their schools and themselves through job shadows, internships, volunteer work in the community, etc. I think the more we can partner, not only with the business community, but also with the University of Iowa and Kirkwood Community College, the stronger our entire community will be."

**Karen Woltman:**

"Listening to the concerns of the business community and working with district administration will be critical to improving coordination between the district and the business community."

**Laura Westemeyer:**



"Being a previous business owner, the spouse of a local business owner, and a former Chamber member, I feel my pragmatic approach will be beneficial to our district. I'd love to see more service learning opportunities provided for our students in this district, similar to how Iowa BIG functions (a high school in Cedar Rapids). I think there are many opportunities in which the school district, our students, and our business community could find to collaborate with project learning. I also feel we could find larger corporations to partner with our higher SES elementary schools to help provide these schools, students and staff with some of the needed resources to help our students succeed and also to help bridge the gap between the current inequities in our schools."

#### 2-Year Candidates

##### **Shawn Eyestone:**

"Using those in the local business community to create internships or apprenticeships will strengthen the bond between them and our public schools. A strong public school system yields a strong workforce and an attractive place for new businesses to open. Communication is always key in partnerships of this type. We need to ask questions of our local businesses to find out what would benefit them while letting them know what kind of opportunities we are seeking for our students."

##### **Charlie Eastham:**

"A first step in improving coordination between the district and the business community will be to arrange for conversations with Chamber and local business leaders to hear and understand their viewpoints and ideas as to how they may best support the core educational mission of the district. Those conversations should involve the full board if a board majority is interested in pursuing this matter. Specific action steps that could be taken by both the district and parts of the business community can emerge from those initial conversations. As a board member I would be quite interested in what the business community would have to say and the action steps brought to the board for adoption."