



*Question 1: What are your top three priorities if elected, and why they are important?*

4-Year Candidates

**Ruthina Malone:**

"1. Rebuild trust between the community, district administration and school board: As the parent of a current student, wife of a teacher, and candidate who has spent the last four months meeting with voters, I have had an opportunity to give this some extensive thought. The lack of trust is a common theme I have heard for several years, and it has been amplified as I have met with voters and school principals. They view this to be a damaged relationship and want to see it addressed. We need leaders, like me, who are willing to bring an open mind to every discussion and who are willing to hear from community members.

2: Invest in our teachers: In the wake of state-level changes to collective bargaining, I believe the Board needs to give concrete assurance to our teachers that they are invaluable components to our success as a district. Our Board and district must take all reasonable steps to ensure that we are able to retain stellar teachers, recognizing their dedication to our students and our community.

3. Create a welcoming climate in the ICCSD: I want our district to be open and welcoming to all students, families and staff. We have people from a variety of backgrounds attending and working within our schools, and we must make certain that they have the tools to be successful. We have taken steps to address some of these concerns for our student population by administering an annual climate survey and creating policy that addresses areas of concerns. As a board, we should work to ensure that this is also happening for our many employees—not just the teachers—because each employee is an important piece of ensuring that we are a successful district. In the wake of state-level changes to collective bargaining, I believe the board also needs to give concrete assurance to our teachers that they are invaluable components to our success as a district. Our board and district must take all reasonable steps to ensure that we are able to retain stellar teachers, recognizing their dedication to our students and our community. "

**Janet Godwin:**

"a) I want to establish a climate of trust and transparency on the school board. I will work with my colleagues on the board to revitalize the way the board functions by clarifying the role of the board and rebuilding trust between board members, the district, and the community. A well-functioning board working in conjunction with district administration, teachers and principals, the teacher's union, and community stakeholders is key to a district's success.

b) I want to oversee the completion of the facilities master plan (FMP). The FMP was developed with significant community input and planning. If the bond passes, the board's job will be to provide oversight and hold the administration accountable for delivering the projects outlined in the FMP. If the bond does not pass, completing the FMP will require the board to regroup and organize around another bond based on the priority and sequence of projects outlined in the FMP. Completing the FMP is important because it achieves equity between schools and creates environments conducive to teaching and learning.



c) I will work to advance plans and initiatives designed to close the achievement gap. As a nation, state, and community we leave far too many kids behind. By working together with a clear vision of success, we can, year after year, make progress on issues of equity, access, and achievement. By setting high standards and providing strong support to students and teachers we will help all of our students become confident, accomplished citizens prepared to lead successful lives after high school. The district is already using many tools to reduce the gap, including the weighted resource allocation model, focus on culture and climate, and innovative learning programs, but we must do more. The board must continue to set aggressive goals in this area and provide unwavering support in accomplishing them. "

**JP Claussen:**

"1. Improving the experience of GLBTQA students, students of color and students who struggle with mental health concerns. This is a priority because our recent climate survey's indicate that some of our marginalized students do not feel safe and supported in school, and it is important that ALL students feel safe and supported in school. It is difficult to learn and make progress if you do not feel safe or understood.

2. Providing vision and leadership to ensure that we are celebrating our successes and communicating that in an effective way to the public. I believe this is an important part of helping establish trust and accountability in our District. Our schools are a primary reason people are attracted to our community, and I want the ICCSD to be celebrated rather than criticized.

3. Seeing the FMP through to completion. Hopefully after passage of the GO Bond this becomes an oversight piece. If the GO Bond does not pass then work will need to be done to figure out how to move forward with the FMP., likely with a different GO Bond. "

**Karen Woltman:**

" (1) Renewed focus on curriculum, instruction, and school climate.

Facilities are important, but whether our children are learning, and whether they feel safe and supported at school is more important than the size of their gymnasiums. Curriculum, instruction, and school climate directly relate to the district's three main goals: increasing the percentage of students proficient in reading and math, with a focus on closing achievement gaps, and improving the educational experiences for all children through culturally inclusive and responsive school environments and classroom instruction.

Facilities issues have dominated much of the public debate in our district in recent years. Our children need a school board that can work on improving facilities and, at the same time, work on improving the programs that take place in those facilities.

(2) Improved relationships between Board members and between the Board and the community. Increased transparency in Board deliberations and decision making.

(3) Continuing the work of the FMP.

The district is growing and it is essential to keep moving forward on creating capacity to accommodate growth and to make much needed improvements in existing schools so that all students and teachers can study and work in safe, comfortable learning environments."



**Laura Westemeyer:**

"My first priority will initially be to ensure that: (i) teachers and their respective schools have what they need to be successful for the 2017-2018 school year, (ii) we as a district provide the requisite support children need to be successful students, and (iii) the opening of Liberty High School and all district schools proceed smoothly for everyone.

My short term priority is to work with my fellow board members to manage and eliminate ineffective processes that have resulted in government and state sanctions for our district. These ineffective processes have created a distrust amongst our community for its leadership. We must create better relationships between families, their schools, and our administration. A parent or guardian's involvement at their child's school is a key factor to the success of the student. It is vital parents feel their input is welcomed and that their child's care and education is being effectively provided and follows all state and government mandates. If needed or asked by staff, I would help by using my experience working with special needs and immigrant families in the community to help support their efforts to find a successful way to bridge the gaps in communication to help everyone feel connected to our common purpose of helping ALL children succeed.

Another top priority of mine would be to work respectfully with the next group of board members so we can all have an effective working relationship and keep our focus on helping students to be successful by resolving the issues of inequality and special needs, as well as continuing the many excellent programs provided by our amazing community of teachers and staff. "

2-Year Candidates

**Shawn Eyestone:**

"My number one priority is to work with the board and the rest of the community to put extreme pressure on the state legislature to significantly increase the amount of dollars being spent on education. More money simply means more flexibility. Not just more teachers to reduce class sizes, but adding teaching assistants, more instructional coaching or probably most important, getting the necessary resources to each school so all students can succeed.

Second, I am a supporter of the Facilities Master Plan and what it can offer to so many students across the district. I am hopeful that the bond passes on this ballot. If it does not, the needs do not go away. It will still be a priority of mine to determine how we can still affect changes to our learning environments across the district. This is critical for improving the learning environments for all students.

I want the Board to ensure that the environment is such that the new Director of Special Education is free to affect change. There are a lot of improvements that can be made in this area. Those improvements will be most successful with a collaboration between the Director, District Administration, the Board and the community. This will help rebuild trust that has been lost by an already marginalized population."

**Charlie Eastham:**

" 1. Addressing the long standing disparate educational results experienced by students of color in the district.



I am running for the two-year term on the school Board foremost because I want to address at the Board level the long standing disparate educational results experienced by students of color in the school district. The gaps in educational achievement between students of color and white students have been at 30%-35% for well over two decades. We need to and can reduce these gaps to 0%. In terms of achieving attainable academic proficiency, we are under instructing some 1,200 students of color throughout the district.

I have served on the District Equity Committee for the last 3 years. Two years ago the Equity Committee recommended and the board adopted the Comprehensive Equity Plan. The plan outlines specific objectives, action steps, time lines and assessments that will eliminate disproportionality in all areas, increase staff of color, incorporate multicultural/gender fair curriculum, and increase community engagement. With clear leadership from the Board we can implement the Comprehensive Equity Plan and have an educational system of teachers, support staff, and administrators that is free of gaps in any educational outcome for all students.

2. Completing the Facilities Master Plan whatever the bond referendum election result.

Completing the projects called for by the Facilities Master Plan will result in an equitable distribution of facility resources across the district.

3. Increasing vocational training opportunities and course offerings.

There a number of students who are particularly interested in extensive vocational training opportunities and course offerings. We can provide educational support for post high school career paths for all students."