



WINONA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2022 CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

School Board

Ted Hazelton

1. What is your background:

I'm a lifelong area resident. I lived in Minnesota City for 33 years before moving to Winona in 2001. My 3 kids were, or are enrolled in WAPS.

a. What is your employment history?

I currently work for J&M Displays, Inc. as a pyrotechnic operator and driver. I also do fill in and substitute driving with First Student and Rochester City Lines. I previously worked at WinCraft, DJ Johnson Transfer, RTP, Pamida stores and Papa John's.

b. What is your educational background?

I went to Winona Area Public Schools from K-12 and graduated in the class of 1986. I never pursued any higher education, as I became a father a week after I graduated.

c. Why are you running/what is your motivation for candidacy?

I am running to restore public trust, accountability, and transparency back to our schools. I want to improve communication to the public and have more parental involvement in our schools. I want improve safety in our schools and employee morale. Also, we need to do a better job on budgetary issues and deferred maintenance as well.

2. What is the most pressing issue facing the Winona School Board after this election? How should this be addressed?

Restoring public trust, declining enrollment, and deferred maintenance.

3. What is the School Board member's role in the daily operation of the district?

To listen to constituents, do what's best for the district, and students, set policy, and have a balanced budget. The board hires a superintendent to oversee the daily operation of the district and gives direction to that person, not to micromanage.

4. What role does the school district have to setting students on a path to career/work exploration?

The school district has a huge role in setting up students for success in careers and work exploration! Classes and programs like AVID are extremely beneficial in getting students ready to join the workforce. I will continue to support these classes/programs if elected.

5. What is your opinion about state mandated testing for measuring student success? How should WAPS respond to these tests and scores?

State mandated testing is a necessary evil in education. The state controls the purse strings and provides a vast majority of school funding. That being said, we need to do the testing to measure student performance and success. The results help the district improve the delivery of the educational curriculum and the state can make recommendations on how to improve and make grants available for funding them.

6. According to the MN School Board Association, 95% of school districts in Minnesota are led by school boards elected under district-wide at-large seats. What are your thoughts regarding WAPS moving to an all at-large school board seat election process and away from the current system of election by wards?

I would oppose this! I don't like the "one size fits all" logic. Just because "everyone else does it" doesn't mean it's for us. We already have 2 "at-large" positions on the board to satisfy that need. The nice thing about having 5 specific wards or districts is there is district wide representation on the board. Theoretically, if we did all 7 seats as at-large, you could get 7 people from Rollingstone on the board representing the entire district, for example. How is that fair to folks in Winona, Pickwick, Homer Dakota, Ridgeway, Minnesota City, Goodview, etc?

7. Winona's school district has had significant turnover of staff and leadership and many students have transferred into the private sector. Furthermore, in recent years, the district has not received the most positive press in the media. This has had a negative effect on our community's ability to attract qualified workforce talent as other communities may have better public-school systems for their families. What steps do you believe need to be taken to create a healthy culture of leadership and unity within the district?

We need to be honest and upfront with the public. I'm running on a platform of transparency, credibility, accountability, accessibility, and restoring public trust. I want to improve public relations and perception of our school district. I want to improve employee morale and make them feel they are valued. This will go a long way to improve this situation.

8. Questions regarding the Winona School District's methods of discipline and safety of students have often appeared in the media. How would you, as a school board member, promote and encourage a healthy atmosphere of discipline while balancing the safety needs of the students?

Again, this ties in with question 7 and I would echo what was said in that response. Additionally, I want to find out why these discipline problems are happening. What are the circumstances leading up to the problem? A district task force would be an option on this topic. Students and staff need to be respected so things don't escalate. I believe in prevention of a problem. You can discipline someone, but that's after the fact. As the adage goes: "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"