



# Know Your School Board Candidates

## May 2017 Primary

# Cumberland Valley School District

## Voter Guide

### Hampden Township

Michael Gossert	Participated
Nicole C. Miller	Participated
John Scioli	Participated
Bud Shaffner	Did Not Participate

### Middlesex/Monroe Twps.

Greg R. Rausch	Participated
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### Silver Spring Township

Brian Drapp	Did Not Participate
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AAUW is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Since our founding in 1881, members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day — educational, social, economic, and political at the local, state, national levels. AAUW is nonpartisan and committed to working in collaboration with diverse allies to break through educational and economic barriers for women and girls.

## Michael Gossert

<b>School District</b>	Cumberland Valley – Hampden Township
<b>Ballot</b>	Both Democratic and Republican
<b>Term</b>	4 year
<b>Where can voters go for more information about you?</b>	Facebook      Michael Gossert for Cumberland Valley School Board
<b>Biographical statement</b>	<i>Not provided</i>

**1. Why are you running for the school board? Provide the qualifications you have that will enable you to be an effective school board member.**

I am pursuing a second four-year term for a number of reasons. First and foremost, I have two children in the Cumberland Valley School District who I want to ensure receive the quality education and experience that is unique to Cumberland Valley.

Having completed a first term, I have a solid understanding of student enrollment trends and its impact on increasing budget requirements. Healthcare, pensions and teacher salaries are the major cost drivers of the school district’s budget that require keen oversight in addition to managing growth and maintaining existing infrastructure.

My extensive experience in local government management, budgeting, construction and financial market accumen served the district well as I participated as Finance Committee Chair and Facilities Committee Chair.

There is much more to accomplish over the next four years and I can be an effective leader and trusted member of the board working for the taxpayers, students, faculty and staff.

**2. What are your priorities for the school district? Speak to the strengths and weaknesses in your school district.**

The main priority for the district is completion of the \$87 million school facility construction project currently underway. Once constructed, the schools will accommodate the ongoing issue of increasing student enrollment.

Cumberland Valley’s strengths are the community itself, the current board of directors, administrative team and faculty in no particular order of importance. These strengths function as one unified team; without them, our students and constituents would not experience a strong, progressive school district that it is today.

Weakness is suffered by all school districts in the state relative to lack of common sense pension reform. Until the pension reform issue is resolved, current budget stresses will not be alleviated. Today, revenues can’t keep pace with major budgetary costs: pensions, healthcare and salaries.

**3. ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) calls for K-12 to provide well-rounded education. What do you think well-rounded education looks like at the elementary grades? Middle school? High School?**

A well-rounded education is achieved when all grades succeed in consistently outpacing a significant majority of districts in the state in academics. A well-rounded education should also be measured as to how students adjust to their future after they graduate from Cumberland Valley. It’s important they become successful at whatever they choose to do or be.

**4. It is the responsibility of the school board to serve the best interests of the students. How would you fulfill that responsibility?**

It is the responsibility of the school board to serve the best interest of all stakeholders in the district not just students. Perhaps the greatest responsibility is that of ensuring the right superintendent is leading the efforts of the board and serving the best interest of all stakeholders.

**5. What is appropriate relationship between the school district and charter schools, including cyber schools, in its boundaries?**

Charter schools serve a purpose. They in some cases offer flexibility to nontraditional students and offer last chance opportunities to students who may have fallen out of the main stream education environment. We must look at a better way of funding these schools that don not rely entirely on tax dollars that somehow become quasi tax dollars when they are given to the charter school. While the charter schools can be more flexible with class sizes and infrastructure the traditional public schools aren't so much. The funding formula should be universal and consistent throughout Pennsylvania and the formula should not have an infrastructure component.

**6. Given the realities of state support for K-12 and the prospect of not seeing big increases in state funding, what is the appropriate response for the school district?**

Just as you face a lack of funds in your household budget, you have to prioritize. This is no different when it comes to state support for K-12. One has to ask the question, "What must we be doing to achieve our goal and what can we do without?" Once you have the baseline, you compare that to budget revenues and determine whether the bottom line is red or black.

**7. What is the role of the school board as it relates to the role of the superintendent and administration?**

As previously mentioned, the school board must hire the proper leader that is the right fit for the school district. It is then, in the school board's best interest to allow that superintendent to implement the strategic plan set forth by the board. The school board must periodically review the plan to evaluate implementation and effectiveness against its goals. The superintendent is held accountable for implementation but also with evaluating the plans effectiveness. This allows the board to either offer additional requirements or remove some requirements as it deems necessary.

**8. How do you measure success in the district?**

I measure success simply. We have the lowest property tax rate in our region and we are in the top 5% of academic achievement in the state. That is the core driver of our enrollment growth that translates into elevated home values for our residents because of parental desire for their children to attend the Cumberland Valley School District.

**9. How is school board accountable to the public?**

The school board is accountable to the public by ensuring tax dollars are spent effectively and achieving education goals. The board should ensure transparency to the public and conduct an engagement process so residents have the information they need to make informed decisions about their children's education or the use of their tax dollars.

## Nicole C Miller

<b>School District</b>	Cumberland Valley – Hampden Township
<b>Ballot</b>	Both Democratic and Republican
<b>Term</b>	4 year
<b>Where can voters go for more information about you?</b>	Facebook      Nicole Miller CV School Board Candidate
<b>Biographical statement</b>	<i>Not provided</i>

**1. Why are you running for the school board? Provide the qualifications you have that will enable you to be an effective school board member.**

I have decided to run for school board because I feel that as parents and members of our community our voices need to be heard. I am approachable, compassionate and will put in the time to ensure that if given the opportunity, my vote on the board will represent what the families and residents in the district feel is needed. I graduated from Honesdale High School in 1994 and went on to attend Mansfield University, where I studied psychology and criminal justice. I feel that many people can learn the rules of the board, adapt to the laws and regulations that are handed down, and provide a viable option for the budget. Integrity is the most important qualification I feel a school board member can have. Anyone that knows me in my everyday life I hope would say that I do not and will not jeopardize my integrity by not standing up for what is best for the youth today and our community.

**2. What are your priorities for the school district? Speak to the strengths and weaknesses in your school district.**

My priorities for the school district is to make sure every child gets the most from their experience at Cumberland Valley. I know Cumberland Valley is a great school that provides a wonderful education. Just like in every district, there is always room for improvement. I would like to see our district continue to be one of the leading districts in the area. To continue this legacy I look forward to serving the community by making recommendations for enacting proactive policies and ensuring each child entrusted in our care receives a top notch education and experience. At times we attempt to treat children like they are all the same and we know they are not. Each one has a gift, different ways they learn and different life situations. It is important that the educators continue to work with the students and know their needs. I believe our teachers play a very important role in life the of the students and they should be given the resources they need to help our children succeed. The last thing we should be doing is cutting down on the staff that work with students daily and we must provide any training necessary to help them in their influential role in our children's lives.

**3. ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) calls for K-12 to provide well-rounded education. What do you think well-rounded education looks like at the elementary grades? Middle school? High School?**

I think that a well-rounded education looks pretty similar from elementary up through high school, with the exception of added responsibility throughout the years. I believe that a well-rounded education is when every parent or guardian gets to watch their child graduate with the best education, the motivation and drive needed to take on the future, honesty, humility and an understanding of their self-worth in order to make good choices throughout their lives. That each child feels they are supported and cared for while at school and parents know they live in a district that will help protect and guide their children in the best way possible. I feel as though we remove staff and supervision as students get older and that is when they need the most guidance and adult interaction and support.

**4. It is the responsibility of the school board to serve the best interests of the students. How would you fulfill that responsibility?**

I would fulfill that responsibility by researching the concerns brought up by the parents and students, while working closely with the other board members and also the superintendent to make sure what is being decided by the board is in the best interests of the students, families and residents.

**5. What is appropriate relationship between the school district and charter schools, including cyber schools, in its boundaries?**

I believe the appropriate relationship between all schools should be a relationship that improves the education and growth of each individual student. Some students might not feel they get what is needed from the school district and that they get more from a charter or cyber school. Each student has a different and personal experience. It is important to figure out what is missing for these students in their home district that would lead them to the alternatives. We need to try to incorporate those needs into our home district and meet our students where they are. Our students today have many challenges and I believe we need to look at these challenges in order to improve all aspects of the school district, including cyber schools, and charter schools. It ultimately comes down to what the best placement is for each student and family.

**6. Given the realities of state support for K-12 and the prospect of not seeing big increases in state funding, what is the appropriate response for the school district?**

I think as a district we would have to find a way to do whatever it takes to make sure our children have what they need, even with the prospect of not seeing big increases in state funding. I feel cutting out any unnecessary expenditures would be first.

**7. What is the role of the school board as it relates to the role of the superintendent and administration?**

The school board creates and updates policies that are in the best interest of the students, families, and staff while ensuring the districts compliance with the laws and following the regulations by PDE. Also, being advised by and working with the solicitor. It is also the role of the board to balance the district budget, building projects, approving the calendar for the year, among duties pertaining to administrative functions. The superintendent and administration make sure the policies are implemented throughout the school, and bring concerns to the boards attention. They oversee the educators and support staff to make sure all aspects of the individual schools within the district are running smoothly and at their optimal potential.

**8. How do you measure success in the district?**

I measure the success in the district by the students. Are all of our students maintaining good grades? Are we as a district providing the resources needed for students and staff? Are the educators stretched too thin and do they have the help they need to really enhance the student's experience throughout their years in Cumberland Valley? The graduation rate is one thing, and test scores are important, but are we helping these students prepare for the world ahead of them after graduation? When they go off to college will they not only study and work hard, but will they also stand firm against peer pressure and know who they are as individuals. When all of our students in the district graduate as well balanced young adults, that is when we are a successful district.

**9. How is school board accountable to the public?**

Members of the school board are elected officials and that makes them accountable to the public. As representatives of our township, they have a responsibility to hear what the people in the community are bringing to their attention and do their best to bring it before the rest of the members of the board to see how and what can be done to improve our district.

## John Scioli

<b>School District</b>	Cumberland Valley – Hampden Township
<b>Ballot</b>	Both Democratic and Republican
<b>Term</b>	2 year
<b>Where can voters go for more information about you?</b>	<i>Not provided</i>
<b>Biographical statement</b>	<a href="http://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/files/2017/04/John-Scioli.pdf">http://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/files/2017/04/John-Scioli.pdf</a>

**1. Why are you running for the school board? Provide the qualifications you have that will enable you to be an effective school board member.**

To serve public education, which has done so much for my children, parents and grandparents. I have worked in all areas and levels of education: teaching, administrating, and organizing and mentoring teachers.

**2. What are your priorities for the school district? Speak to the strengths and weaknesses in your school district.**

We have a very large district. We need to make full use of community resources. We have to make our needs and our strengths known to the people we serve. We are a generous community largely understated and underserved.

**3. ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) calls for K-12 to provide well-rounded education. What do you think well-rounded education looks like at the elementary grades? Middle school? High School?**

The Arts, co-curricular clubs, Foreign Languages, sports, etc. are often undervalued in the dispersion of finite resources. Everyone must be involved creatively to ensure the best education for the next generation.

**4. It is the responsibility of the school board to serve the best interests of the students. How would you fulfill that responsibility?**

Strive to balance competing interests with the goal of best educating our children.

**5. What is appropriate relationship between the school district and charter schools, including cyber schools, in its boundaries?**

The school district has an obligation to ensure that alternative schools are held to the same standards as traditional schools. Public school has been valued American tradition and should be kept strong.

**6. Given the realities of state support for K-12 and the prospect of not seeing big increases in state funding, what is the appropriate response for the school district?**

Engage people in volunteering, use community businesses and resources to augment.

**7. What is the role of the school board as it relates to the role of the superintendent and administration?**

School board should work to ensure that superintendent and administrators are striving to best meet the needs of our children.

**8. How do you measure success in the district?**

That we graduate people that prosper, and take their place in society, and support the schools that produced them.

**9. How is school board accountable to the public?**

School board should always be aware the community bears the tax burden. The board should work to ensure the best value for the community's investment.

## Greg R Rausch

<b>School District</b>	Cumberland Valley – Middlesex/Monroe Twps.
<b>Ballot</b>	Both Democratic and Republican
<b>Term</b>	4 year
<b>Where can voters go for more information about you?</b>	<i>Not provided</i>
<b>Biographical statement</b>	<i>Not provided</i>

**1. Why are you running for the school board? Provide the qualifications you have that will enable you to be an effective school board member.**

To provide a voice for all students, staff and citizens of both Middlesex and Monroe Townships. I believe a school board and all its members have an obligation to all citizens of the district to plan, manage and conduct the affairs of the district in a manner that includes, quality education for all of its students, a safe and professional environment for all staff. Maintain fiscal management to assure the district is run in a responsible manner.

I am a 1981 graduate of the Cumberland Valley School District. I hold a Bachelor of Science degree in Behavioral Sciences from Penn State University. I have served as the Vice President of the Middlesex PTO and Cumberland Valley Strategic Planning Committee.

**2. What are your priorities for the school district? Speak to the strengths and weaknesses in your school district.**

To assure the district provides educational programs to allow all students to achieve their full learning potential. To provide staff with professional development, tools and programs to promote quality learning. To assure all students and staff have an educational environment safe from harassment, violence and intimidation. Currently the Cumberland Valley School District provides opportunities for upper grade students to pursue further college level studies during their time at Cumberland Valley. The CV district needs to provide professional counselors to work with teachers, administrators, students and family members. Together they can address the needs and provide support to those students who have educational, developmental, and emotional difficulties.

**3. ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) calls for K-12 to provide well-rounded education. What do you think well-rounded education looks like at the elementary grades? Middle school? High School?**

I believe a well-rounded education builds upon itself as a child goes from elementary thru to high school. I think it is paramount that a school provides a variety of programs, techniques and experiences at an early age and builds upon those fundamentals throughout the student's education. For a child to receive a well-rounded education, they should have access to varied educational methods and processes to provide an optimal learning experience. Educational programs should be tailored to the individual students needs and abilities.

**4. It is the responsibility of the school board to serve the best interests of the students. How would you fulfill that responsibility?**

It is the responsibility of the school board to govern the district in the best interest of all students. I would strive to assure the school board develops and promotes instructional and extracurricular programs that provides fair and equal opportunities to all students. Promote an a environment free from harassment, intimidation, violence.

**5. What is appropriate relationship between the school district and charter schools, including cyber schools, in its boundaries?**

I believe that school districts, charter and cyber schools can work together to address the educational needs of all students. Blended learning programs can be developed to allow students to mix time in a classroom and online to achieve educational

goals and interpersonal development. Comprehensive educational programs can be developed to allow students to utilize both venues to obtain a quality education.

**6. Given the realities of state support for K-12 and the prospect of not seeing big increases in state funding, what is the appropriate response for the school district?**

With the uncertainty of state funding, schools need to develop short and long term plans to address financial, staffing and student population growth. School Districts need to work closely with local, county, state and federal officials to address short and long term population growth and financial needs and obligations. Districts need to maintain a conservative spending plan to assure financial stability for future growth. Districts should search and consider non-conventional funding sources through Public to Private partnerships and Corporate and business support.

**7. What is the role of the school board as it relates to the role of the superintendent and administration?**

It is the school board that assures the superintendent and administration manages the district in the best interest of all students, staff, and citizens. The board is responsible to see the superintendent and administration establishes and maintains a fiscally responsible budget and keeping focus on education and the safety of all students.

**8. How do you measure success in the district?**

A school districts success should be measured more on the quality of education and less on standardized tests. By providing a quality education to all students based on their individual capabilities and understanding. The districts success can also be measured by maintaining reasonable spending by investing in educational programs, and capital projects that provide the best benefit to both the students and citizens. Providing a high quality education at a low per student cost.

**9. How is school board accountable to the public?**

The school board is accountable to the public by providing the best educational programs and addressing the needs of all students. Maintaining fiscal responsibility through proper and reasonable budgeting, investing and capital improvements. Maintaining full transparency to all residents and governing itself in the best interest of the community. The board is also responsible to provide a safe environment to all students and staff.