



Know Your School Board Candidates

May 2017 Primary

Carlisle Area School District Voter Guide

Fred Baldwin	Did Not Participate
Kitzi Chappelle	Participated
Rick Coplen	Participated
Brian J. Guillaume	Did Not Participate
Anne H. Lauritzen	Participated
Julie W. Lesman	Participated
Deborah L. Sweaney	Participated

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.

Kitzi Chappelle

School District	Carlisle Area
Ballot	Democratic
Term	4 year
Where can voters go for more information about you?	<i>Not provided</i>
Biographical statement	<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 running on the Carlisle Area School Board to serve as an advocate of education for my community. I was born and raised in Carlisle. I was a student in the Vocational Program, and I graduated from Carlisle High School. I have been serving as Board President of Hope Station for the past two years, and I also serve as a board member of Safe Harbour. As a former student, and current community leader and business owner, I believe that school boards must be proactive in the day to day operations of a school district, and they must also be responsive to the input of stakeholders while building trust, and a willingness to collaborate with those that live outside of the community.

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

I feel the first priority of a school board is to be proactive rather than reactive to issues facing our students and the community.

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?

Better test scores, quality education for everyone regardless of economic status. The education system should be a part of what helps a student make good ethical, social, and moral decisions as they continue to move through the educational system as well as through their lives. A well rounded education includes, but is not limited to the arts, diversity, college prep, and career planning for those who do not plan on attending college.

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

My qualifications will allow me to take a multi-pronged approach in my service to the school board. As a school board member, I will work closely with the community to ensure that students are meeting their potential with the resources provided by the school district. The students in our district come from diverse backgrounds and a one size fits all approach is not always best. Thinking outside of the box will help to attract a diverse workforce.

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

I do not know enough about the relationship between the Charter, and Cyber schools in connection with the public school system, however it is my belief that public schools are a reflection of our communities, workforce, and education system. If elected, I will strive to keep the lines of communication open between charter, cyber, and the public school systems so that all of our children will have the support they need to succeed.

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?

We must work to find alternative resources without compromising education and student achievements, while simultaneously using the funds that are available efficiently.

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

Creating a balanced relationship and making sure that both sides respect the others opinions, and ideas. Both the board and administration must be open to new ideas, constructive criticism from the community and students while maintaining a healthy working environment.

8. How do you measure success in the district?

The biggest measure of success would be the readiness of our student population to advance to the next grade level and pursue higher education. in order to achieve this goal we must be able to attract high quality teachers and administrators to our district. Another measurement of success is the growth of our district. Families should feel proud to have children attending our district rather than choose to send their children outside of the district or leave our community in search of better education options.

9. How is school board accountable to the public?

The local school board is a critical link to public schools and the community in which it serves. Part of the school boards' responsibility is to provide a healthy, and safe environment where children can express ideas and concerns so they can thrive and be successful after they're K-12 educational experience. School boards should be accessible and accountable for the performance of students and the way tax dollars are spent in their districts.

Rick Coplen

School District	Carlisle Area
Ballot	Both Democratic and Republican
Term	4 year
Where can voters go for more information about you?	https://www.rickcoplencasdboard.com/ Facebook Rick Coplen Carlisle School Board Twitter @rick_coplen
Biographical statement	http://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/files/2017/04/Rick-Coplen-bio_April-2017.pdf

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.

“Putting ALL our Children First” is my core guiding principle and reason for seeking to continue my service on the Carlisle School Board!

I am running to ensure that all our public school children get a high quality education that prepares them to be successful and well-informed citizens. This requires collaboration amongst teachers, administrators, and parents to ensure that our students graduate with the skill sets, mindsets, and knowledge needed to become lifetime learners and creative problem solvers. My qualifications, life experiences, strong working relationships with current Board members and Administrators, and record of service on our Carlisle School Board demonstrate my effectiveness at helping ensure that all public school children in the Carlisle Area School District (CASD) have the opportunity to get a high quality education.

One of the most important examples is my vote in June 2016 to approve the annual CASD budget in the midst of a commonwealth-level budget stalemate. The Sentinel newspaper quoted me as saying, “Most importantly I refuse to follow the example set by our legislators who are evidently satisfied with mediocrity and the status quo for all of our children across the Commonwealth. Therefore, I will vote to invest in educational excellence for all of our children.

” Putting ALL our Children First” means putting all our public school children at the very top of our societal priority list. As educators, administrators, parents, and as a community, we should allocate our time, effort, energy and financial resources to that highest priority of educating our children.

Putting ALL our Children First” means putting all our public school children first regardless of their gender, race, creed, sexual orientation and identification, ethnicity, family income/wealth level, previous academic performance, or life and career aspirations. That means not only providing genuine equal opportunity across all our academic and extracurricular programs but also providing the financial resources needed to strongly support all those programs.

Putting ALL our Children First” means making decisions as if all Carlisle Area public schoolchildren were my own children. Please see many other examples of my commitment to putting all our children first on my website: www.rickcoplencasdboard.com--- click on “ABOUT” and then “PUTTING ALL OUR CHILDREN FIRST!”

My qualifications, life experiences, strong working relationships with current School Board members and Administrators, and record of service will enable me to be continue to be an effective school board member. Those qualifications and life experiences include:

- Father of two CASD graduates (Jacqueline, class of 2011, second year law student at the University of Virginia Law School; Michaela, class of 2014, junior at Vassar College, currently studying abroad at Pembroke College in Cambridge, England)
- Husband: Married to COL (R) Lorelei Coplen since 1987
- Service as the Board representative to Harrisburg Area Community College and on these CASD Board Committees since Dec. 2015: o Education o Community and Intergovernmental Relations

- Professor, Economic Development, Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2010-Present (Wrote and teach course on facilitating community collaboration to support economic development in fragile and post-conflict states globally)
- Adjunct Professor, Elizabethtown College (Teach graduate courses in economics, ethics, and business)
- U.S. Army Combat/Peacekeeping Veteran (Includes service in Panama, Bosnia, Germany and Korea) • Past President: Rotary Club of Carlisle (Led Rotary District 7390 recovery and relief efforts after Superstorm Sandy in 2012)
- Chairman, Rotary Veterans Initiative (Supporting veterans education, training and job searches)
- Board of Directors, Employment Skills Center in Carlisle (Supporting adult literacy and workforce development; chair, Board Development and Community Outreach Committee)
- Graduate, United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, 1981
- Graduate, Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy, Princeton University, 1992
- Assistant Professor, Social Sciences Department, USMA, 1992-95 (Taught Economics, International Relations, and International Political Economy)
- Griller of pretty good hamburgers at Carlisle High School Sports events!

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

My priorities for our Carlisle Area School District revolve around the key principle of “Putting ALL our Children First.” Therefore, I will continue to:

- Advocate and vote for our investment in high quality public education, ensuring all our CASD children have:
 - Outstanding teachers and administrators in all our schools
 - 21st Century classroom learning environments, teaching techniques, materials, technology, and facilities
 - Curriculum that prepares them fully for college and/or careers upon graduation
 - Safe and secure learning environments that foster creative and innovative thinking and collaborative problem solving
 - Access to superb extracurricular programs: sports, arts, academic, and others
 - Whatever special attention they need to succeed
- Provide fiscally responsible financial management that ensures the long term sustainability of our facilities and programs
- Conduct comprehensive community engagement, recognizing that everyone has a stake in our students
- Ensure compliance with the U.S. Constitution and federal/state laws

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?

Well rounded education at every level looks like:

- Equal access and opportunities for all our children; no limitations due to family income or circumstances • Individualized learning enabled by outstanding teachers and administrators
 - 21st Century classrooms, libraries, technologies, facilities, and teaching techniques that prompt student imagination and creativity and collaborative group problem solving, not rote memorization; teachers that function as learning facilitators, not lecturers
 - Broad and deep curriculum content (language arts, humanities, music and arts, history, math, science, etc.) and extracurricular activities (music and arts, sports, academic, clubs, access to volunteer activities, and others)
 - The opportunity for all students to sing, dance, perform onstage, play a musical instrument, laugh and play
 - Exposure to career days (elementary school), career days and career interest inventories (middle school), and career days and pathways (high school)
 - Age appropriate financial literacy classes / training
 - Solid foundation for lifetime health and physical fitness for all students, not just student athletes; equal access to athletic fields and training facilities/equipment
 - Special attention as needed---Gifted and special education
- Elementary school:
- All aspects described above as applicable at every level
- Middle School:
- All aspects described above as applicable at every level
- High School:

- All aspects described above as applicable at every level
- Access to outstanding career and technical training which is supplemented by internships and support from community partners
- Students that are ready for college and/or careers immediately upon graduation

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

I will fulfill this critically important responsibility by continuing to “Put ALL our Children First” as described extensively in my responses to the questions above and on my website: www.rickcoplencasboard.com

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

By current Pennsylvania law, public school districts must financially support students from their district that enroll in charter schools, including cyber schools. Thankfully, the percentage of students in the Carlisle School District that opt for such Charter Schools is miniscule compared to that experienced in large urban school districts, particularly those in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The recent track record of Central Pennsylvania cyber schools suggests that the overwhelming majority of students in our area are best served by daily attendance in the traditional educational program offered by our public schools. Additionally, some students are well served by our internal Carlisle Virtual Academy, which enables students to complete their high school degree online, but also affords all enrolled students access to activities and services offered students in the traditional educational program.

Those who espouse vouchers or other incentives labeled as “school choice” are actually offering false choices because these financial incentives are inadequate by themselves to ensure that all our students, regardless of family income and circumstances, are actually able to turn those choices into reality. Furthermore, on balance, the charter school movement undermines public education by removing students and funding from our public schools (without providing demonstrably better academic results for those students). Privatization of public services, especially in the context of public-private partnerships, is appropriate in the provision of public infrastructure such as roads and bridges; however, it is not appropriate in the area of education. It has the potential to dramatically undermine our long tradition of public education in Pennsylvania and across America----where public schools remain a cornerstone in the fabric of our communities and a key part of our American identity.

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?

First, as an eternal optimist, I remain hopeful that someday soon the majority of our Pennsylvania legislators will recognize the critical importance of fully investing in all our public school children and will actually increase state education funding significantly. Additionally, I also remain optimistic that our state government will someday soon approve real pension reform. I will continue to publicly advocate for these critically important outcomes.

Meanwhile, since we cannot plan on increased budgetary wisdom from our state legislators, I will continue to act in accordance with my guiding principle, “Putting ALL our Children First.” Accordingly, I will continue to advocate and vote for a District budget strategy that fully invests in and ensures high quality public education while carefully balancing expenditures with tax revenues, and, if necessary, withdrawals from existing reserve funds. Thankfully, the historically fiscally prudent management of the CASD produced these reserve funds. We must be careful not to completely deplete these reserves, and add to them if and when possible.

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

The role of the Superintendent and the Administration is to run the day-to-day operations of the CASD. The role of the School Board is to ensure that the CASD is well run by the Superintendent and Administration and to provide the resources and policy guidance needed. The Superintendent is the policy implementer; the School Board is the policy approval authority and resource provider.

The Superintendent and the School Board are jointly accountable to the children, their parents, and all the people of the District. Accordingly, a collaborative and professional working relationship between the Superintendent and the School Board is essential

to consistently delivering high quality education to all our public school children. Thankfully, we currently have such a working relationship in Carlisle. The School Board develops and approves district policy and the annual budget, authorizes expenditures to provide and maintain 21st Century classrooms and facilities, authorizes the appointment of teachers and other staff members, and approves curriculum updates and textbooks.

8. How do you measure success in the district?

Success in the Carlisle Area School district should be measured holistically, starting with student academic achievement, growth, preparation for college and careers, and graduation rates.

Standardized test scores remain one useful metric of student success, but only one amongst the many we should evaluate. I strongly support the PA Department of Education's ongoing effort to develop and implement the "Future Ready PA" metrics, which is a comprehensive and holistic approach that aspires to, "Establish a system of school performance measures that moves beyond point-in-time achievement and values schools' efforts to help all students learn, grow, and succeed in the classroom and beyond." This includes:

- State Assessment Measures
 - o Percent Proficient and Advanced on Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)/Keystone Exams
 - o Meeting Annual Academic Growth Expectations (Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System)
 - o Students with Disabilities - Meeting Annual Academic Growth Expectations
- On-Track Measures
 - o Grade 3 Reading Indicators of Success
 - o Grade 7 Mathematics Indicators of Success
 - o English Language Proficiency
 - o Attendance
 - o Closing the Achievement Gap
- College and Career Measures
 - o Career Standards Benchmark
 - o Industry Standards-Based Competency Assessments and/or Industry Recognized Credentials
 - o AP/IB/College Courses/Career Pathways
 - o Graduation Rate
 - o Postsecondary Transition to School, Military, or Work

Additionally, we should add student health and physical fitness to our measures of school success. Admittedly, student health and fitness are directly impacted by many factors external to the school; nevertheless, our schools' curriculum, food service, and physical environment contribute to students' potential for lifetime health and fitness.

Additionally, teacher professional development is a key metric of school success---given the clear evidence that student success is a function of teachers' capabilities, parental involvement, and the child's environment. Correspondingly, the degree of parental involvement in our schools is an important measure of student and school success.

9. How is school board accountable to the public?

Our Carlisle Area School Board is accountable to the children, their parents, and all the people of the District! We are accountable to ensure the consistent delivery of high quality education to all our public school children. We are accountable in everything we do and say regarding Carlisle Area School District business. Our Board deliberations and votes, which are appropriately subject to Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act (Open Meetings Law), are all conducted in committee and voting meetings that are open to the public. Board meeting agendas and schedules, with supporting documents, are posted for public viewing on the CASD website (Agenda Manager).

As Board members, we are also accountable to the public by being ready and willing to simply listen to student and parent concerns and curriculum preferences, regardless of whether they are expressed to us during Board meetings or while cheering our teams to victory on the athletic fields.

As Board members, we are also accountable to be fiscally responsible and prudent stewards of public monies, investing taxpayers' hard-earned dollars wisely in our students and teachers. Additionally, we are also accountable to ensure the long term fiscal sustainability of our School District.

Anne H. Lauritzen

School District	Carlisle Area
Ballot	Both Democratic and Republican
Term	4 year
Where can voters go for more information about you?	<i>Not provided</i>
Biographical statement	http://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/files/2017/04/ANNE-LAURITZEN-Bio.pdf

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.

While a newly elected school board member may jump into the first term with lofty ideas, I have discovered that to be truly effective, what is really required is a humble recognition that there is a lot to learn! During my first term I spent a great deal of time and effort learning the myriad aspects of operating an effective school district. The wealth of knowledge I have gained, along with a healthy and productive relationship with administrators and fellow board members, will ensure an effective second term for me. While a newly elected school board member may jump into the first term with lofty ideas, I have discovered that to be truly effective, what is really required is a humble recognition that there is a lot to learn! During my first term I spent a great deal of time and effort learning the myriad aspects of operating an effective school district. The wealth of knowledge I have gained, along with a healthy and productive relationship with administrators and fellow board members, will ensure an effective second term for me.

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

As a former military family, we experienced several different school districts while my children were growing up, and chose the Carlisle Area School District above them all upon my husband’s retirement from the Army. The district melds a small-town community with a diverse and international population, resulting in a student body that resembles no other district around us. Our diversity is our strength – and we embrace the gifts of each student’s background and experience. Such a wide range of demographics can also present challenges in ensuring we are recognizing and addressing the educational needs of every child. My priority is and will continue to be constant self-reflection and assessment as to how we can better serve ALL our students within our resources.

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?

“Well-rounded” is a subjective description, and unique to every student and his/her background and abilities. The job of the school is to introduce as many opportunities as possible within its financial means to maximize exposure to all aspects of education – academic, athletic, the arts, the trades, leadership, intercommunication, teamwork...the list goes on and on. For elementary students, this looks like an age-appropriate study of a variety of academic areas, as well as introductions to art, music, PE and after-school clubs to develop the individual students’ interests and abilities. During Middle School, students should continue a more in-depth exploration of core subject matters, electives, and extracurricular activities with a focus on what they may wish to pursue in high school. Emphasis should be placed on how every activity – whether strictly academic or in the arts/music/athletics/trades – relates to future career options. By High School, students are beginning to narrow down and discover where their interests lie. While students should continue to be exposed to as many subject areas as possible, high school should be offering and encouraging students to pursue courses and activities that will help them in their post-secondary lives, be it immediate jobs or 2 or 4 year college.

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

With every decision I made during my first term, the first question I asked myself was “is this in the best interest of the students?” It is a nuanced and difficult priority, as “best interest” doesn’t always mean “most popular.” In this current budget climate, we wrestle each year with how to best serve our students within limited means, and have had to make gut-wrenching choices such as outsourcing food service personnel and substitutes to keep dollars and teachers in the classrooms. We must also consider and weigh what “best interest” means in our socio-economically diverse community and educate ourselves on what that truly means for the individual student.

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

Unfortunately, Pennsylvania’s model has created a somewhat antagonistic relationship between the school districts and cyber/charter programs. While parents and students certainly have every right to choose a cyber/charter program, the public must understand that their taxpayer dollars are following that student to the charter school, and in some cases there is little to no accountability for that money (when was the last time you could attend a cyber school board meeting to air your concerns?). For some students, cyber/charter schools are a wonderful option and can tailor curriculum and classes to fit their needs. However, until PA reforms the model, it will be difficult for school districts and the cyber/charter schools within (and outside of) its boundaries to develop a productive working relationship.

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?

School districts across the state have been lobbying for funding formula reform, and will continue to do so in hopes of a solution. Lack of a viable funding formula, coupled with astronomical increases in pension contributions the last several years, have forced districts to drastically tighten budgets. CASD has scrutinized each budget cut to minimize impact on students; therefore actions affecting long time district employees such as outsourcing food service, custodial, and substitutes while not taken lightly, have dramatically reduced our pension costs. However, to effect change at the state level, we must do a better job of educating the community on the challenges we face through town hall-type meetings and other outreach sessions. We need to think outside the box to educate the public and help taxpayers truly understand the crisis – in turn, taxpayers can speak to lawmakers with their voices and votes.

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

The school board governs – the superintendent and administrators run the operations of the district. It is a difficult lesson to learn and remember at times, but board members must stay out of the “nitty gritty” details of daily operations. The board’s job is to hold the superintendent and administrators accountable for upholding plans, decisions and policies we have set together. Mutual respect and open lines of communication are vital to a healthy relationship between board members and the administration.

8. How do you measure success in the district?

Today, there is tremendous emphasis put on test scores to measure success in schools. While a standard measure of achievement is necessary, there are many other elements to a successful school district. Less measurable factors are equally as important, such as student engagement in activities outside the classroom, teacher involvement in student activities, and parent engagement at the younger grade levels. Finally, perhaps the most important measure is whether we are sending productive, contributing citizens out into our community and our world. Do they have the skills sets to find solid employment? If they choose continuing education, are they attending and succeeding at 2 or 4 year colleges? Have we properly prepared them for their unique path, be it a skilled trade or profession?

9. How is school board accountable to the public?

The public is welcome at any board committee or regular meeting, and we certainly encourage your attendance to voice concerns or simply to learn more about what we do. I view each taxpayer penny as precious, and am ever mindful that I am responsible for putting your money to its best use in educating our community’s children.

Julie Lesman

School District	Carlisle Area
Ballot	Both Democratic and Republican
Term	4 year
Where can voters go for more information about you?	https://www.facebook.com/Julie-Lesman-for-School-Board
Biographical statement	http://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/files/2017/04/Julie-Lesman.pdf

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.

Primarily, I am running for school board to contribute in a meaningful way to my community. As a product of public schools and the first in my family to graduate from college, I have a deep appreciation for the schools and teachers that nurtured me as a young student. Now that my own children are out of the toddler years, I have a bit more time and a strong desire to give back to my community. I have been an educator for 15 years; I have also edited textbooks and standardized tests. I care deeply about the success of my students, and I see how their K-12 education can be a springboard for their success or a hindrance. I feel I can relate to our students and to our teachers. I know how hard it is to be in front of the class, grade papers, and manage the varied needs of students. I am a good team player. I firmly believe that the best decisions are made after deliberation within a group. I have experienced this at every job I've ever had. Finally, I am a parent to two children that attend CASD schools. So far, their experience has been overwhelmingly positive and I would like to ensure that all students in the district have a positive experience as well.

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

As I am not currently serving on the board, I do not know what its priorities are at this time. I believe it is a strong district; according to the numbers, it has a graduation rate of 89%, a student teacher ratio of 13:1, and its standardized test scores exceed the state average. However, like most districts, it does have areas to address. As 26% of its student body is economically disadvantaged, it must strive to include these students in its cultural life, assure that they graduate, and prepare them for meaningful work or continued education. We have a very diverse district that includes students

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?

Schooling at every level from K-12 should include, minimally: English, Math, Social Studies and Science. Health and physical education are also important- a healthy mind must have a healthy body. While I believe academics should be first priority in schools, I also value participation in sports, the arts, and other extracurricular programs. As a student, I played soccer, tennis and swam for my high school swim team. I also participated in music, theatre, and debate. As a language teacher, I believe exposure to other cultures is very important for our students; and I believe studying a language is part of being a well-rounded student. I know the district offers language in middle school and high school, but I would love to see more language exposure in the elementary schools. Right now, both of my sons play musical instruments and it is a joy for me to see them progress in that area. One of my sons wants to participate in the culinary program when he gets to high school and I hope he does!

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 do my best to read all materials carefully, listen to my fellow board members (as they are all experienced) and weigh decisions carefully. As a teacher, I have learned to be patient and fair with my students. That attitude will serve me as I consider the needs of all students. I have seen that all students have something to contribute- as a teacher, my goal is to find it and encourage it. As a school board, we should provide the tools that teachers need and the environment that encourages success

for all students. I think we should give extra attention to students who are differently abled. I would work to make sure their needs are addressed.

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

Right now, as the State of Pennsylvania has structured the charter school/cyber school system, there is effectively no relationship between these entities and the school district. These schools exist apart from the Public School system, even though their funding is essentially from the same source. As they draw more public funding, the public schools have to make do with less.

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?

The school district has the important job of deciding how to increase or decrease the local taxes that fund the local schools. The appropriate response of the district is to be creative and proactive about this process, within the rules. As state funding decreases, the district must decide (1) how to increase local funding and (2) how to distribute those funds among its schools. Neither of these is easy to do, but they are a necessary part of dealing the current funding issue.

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

My current part time job is managing Farmers on the Square. I am the only employee, but I answer to a Board of Directors. I believe that the relationship between the School Board and the district administration is similar. While the administration holds tremendous power and responsibility, it ultimately answers to the Board. The Board should set the district's priorities and hold the administration accountable. It also has the tremendous responsibility of hiring the Superintendent, a non-voting member of the board.

8. How do you measure success in the district?

I think there are many ways to measure success. The obvious ones are graduation rates and test scores. This is what the greater public sees, but they do not tell the whole story. There are other questions we should ask; for example: how many of our students go on to graduate from college or complete an associate's degree? How many students participate in the life of the school (sports, arts, music, etc.)? How does the local community participate in the schools' events? Are parents happy with the quality of education their children receive?

9. How is school board accountable to the public?

As a teacher myself, I understand the importance of listening to my students. As a school board member, that responsibility to listen would extend to parents and community members as well. The school board posts its agenda for each meeting and gives the public time to comment at each meeting. I feel making the agendas for the various committee meetings available would further enhance the ability of the public to speak to the board.

Deborah L. Sweaney

School District	Carlisle Area
Ballot	Both Democratic and Republican
Term	4 year
Where can voters go for more information about you?	www.deborahsweaney.com
Biographical statement	http://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/files/2017/04/Deborah-Sweaney.pdf

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 running for re-election to the Carlisle Area School District Board for the same reason that I chose to run four years ago. I believe that our public schools belong to the community. Since this is my community, the Carlisle Area School District is my responsibility. I not only offer you my commitment to public service but I also bring management and leadership skills to the position. I am a retired manager from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. I understand financial issues and know the right questions to ask. I bring experience to the position having served four years as a school director and as a member of other non-profit boards. As a former adjunct instructor at Messiah College, I understand what it means to be in front of the classroom and know that teaching is hard work. I have helped developed educational programs as a consultant for National History Day. As a small business owner and a taxpayer in the district, I am always mindful that tax dollars must be spent wisely. In the last four years as your school director, I have gained an in-depth understanding of school governance policies and the issues facing education in our commonwealth. I ask you to return me to the CASD Board so that I can continue to put these skills and knowledge to work for you.

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

Our first and foremost priority must be to provide all students with educational programs to help them reach their full potential and become contributing members of our diverse society. We must do so in a fiscally responsible way remembering always that we are not spending our own money but that of the tax payers. Unfunded mandates from the State and Federal government challenge us. The ever-increasing pension costs dictated by our state legislature and rising health care costs continue to make up a large percentage of our expenses. We have no choice. We must pay our bills. Unlike most school districts in our country, the Carlisle Area School District is not made up of a homogenous student body. Our population of almost 6,000 students is truly a microcosm of America. We have students from all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds including recent immigrants. I believe that this diversity is one our strengths. Our children have the benefit of sitting in classrooms with people who do not look like them. However, it is also our challenge. Our teachers must be attuned to different perspectives, backgrounds, and values. It is in our belief statement that “Each student will have an educational experience that values and accepts diversity as an integral part of a global society.” We are blessed to have the Army War College in our district. We serve children whose parents come from all over the world to study here. We must be prepared to meet their needs even if they are only in Carlisle for a year. As the county seat, we serve another transient population drawn here by the availability of social services from the county government. We have students who may only be in our classrooms for a short time. The rising poverty rate in our district presents additional problems for CASD. Our district has three TITLE 1 elementary schools. These schools are so designated because of the large percentage of students receiving “free and reduced lunches” subsidized as part of a federal government program. CASD receives additional federal funds for special programming for these schools. However, all of our elementary schools have seen an increase in the number of students receiving free or reduce lunch. We must be mindful that these students may not have the same resources in their homes as children in more affluent situations. We also educate children who are homeless and are living in shelters. CASD engaged in a “Poverty Initiative” the last several years in an effort to understand children who are living in reduced circumstances. The school board joined with teachers, administrators, and community leaders in order to better comprehend the effect of poverty on students. We are fortunate that many organizations in our community are working with us to try to equalize the opportunities so that all our students can thrive.

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 would define a well-rounded education as follows: **ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:** Our students should leave elementary schools with reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. This phrase, the hallmark of American education since public schools were first founded, is still true. Technology offers new techniques to help teach these basics but they are the foundation of all learning. A well-rounded student also needs to be exposed to science, art, history, and music. They need physical education to develop strong and healthy bodies. And, they need to build social skills by playing together and learning to accept guidance and criticism. I also am in favor of programs such as Buck a Book that encourage our students to become engaged in their community. **MIDDLE SCHOOLS:** In the middle schools, well-rounded children increase their proficiency in the basic skills and are further exposed to science, art, history, and music. They may begin to specialize in certain areas and gifted students may branch out and take more advanced subjects. We must encourage, and in some cases, require our middle schoolers not just to take classes that they naturally gravitate toward but we must challenge them and expose them to new opportunities and experiences. We must provide extra-curricular opportunities to help them find their special interests and talents. **HIGH SCHOOL:** In order to graduate from CASD, we require students to have credits in a wide-range of subjects including language arts, social science, arts and humanities, and the STEM disciplines. In the 21st Century, high school graduates must have a basic understanding of how to use technology. But to be truly well-rounded, we want our students to develop not just academic knowledge but to think critically and creatively, to communicate effectively, and to be able to collaborate in a team environment. Well-rounded students develop personal responsibility and are engaged in their community. We work through our career development program to help our students develop the “soft” skills such as keeping commitments, fulfilling task assignments, and displaying courtesy toward others. These skills will serve our students well as they leave the Carlisle Area School District for that next stage in life. Well-rounded people display these traits.

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

All decisions of the Carlisle Area School are made by considering the best interest of our students. This philosophy is at the center of CASD long-range strategic plan adopted by the CASD Board three years ago. I served as a School Board representative on the committee of administrators, teachers, and community leaders who developed this plan. It includes Vision, Mission, and Belief Statements for the Carlisle Area School District. Our Vision Statement is “EMPOWERING EVERY LEARNER.” We believe by focusing on student achievement, community engagement, and financial stewardship we are moving toward our vision. We always list STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT first. We know that for our students to achieve we must have a highly qualified, innovative and compassionate staff. We encourage their continued professional development. We offer a wide-range of classes and are one of a few high schools in Pennsylvania to maintain a center for careers and technology within the school district. Our CTE curriculum offers the opportunity for students who may be on an academic track to engage in a wide-range of experiences not available in schools where VOTECH classes are held off campus. Not only does the CASD Board approve the curriculum for multiple disciplines, we are committed to providing an extensive array of extra-curricular opportunities for our students. We offer a full range of sports where students can develop their bodies physically and build leadership skills. Extra-curricular activities such as our music program, the Shakespeare troops, Model U.N., National History Day, to name a few, help students develop their own special gifts. At CASD, we promote our student achievements by beginning each Board meeting by recognizing special accomplishments. We develop partnerships with the community to enhance the learning and career opportunities of our students. We actively recruit businesses to provide internship opportunities. Our counselors work in the best interest of our students and ensure that they and their families are aware of the services in the community that they might require. Our counselors work closely with community and service organizations when appropriate. Through our advisory programs and mentoring opportunities, members of our community help our students grow. As we face financial challenges as a school district, we always develop our budget by putting the academic needs and interests of our students first. It is the guiding principle that CASD uses in all budget deliberations.

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

Charter schools and cyber charter schools are key issues in the school choice debate. I regret that this debate has become so polarized. We all struggle with the fact that the quality of children’s education is too often governed by their zip code. This is counter to the myth that public schools are the great equalizer. I believe that those who want school choice are trying to find a way to rectify this situation. However, we must not look just at the intent but the results of charter schools and cyber charter

schools. In Pennsylvania, both charter and cyber charter schools are billed as “public schools” but they are not held to the same standards as those in a traditional school district. The public school is obligated to pay the cost for children who choose to go to these schools. There is little accountability for this money and some charter schools use a portion of the money to pay for expensive and slick advertisements to recruit students. Since education funding is limited, public school advocates see money to charter schools as a threat to the traditional public schools. The decisions of the state legislature have pitted the traditional public school and charters against each other. While I do not believe that charters are the answer to poor public school performance, I do believe that we can learn from their experience. We need to evaluate programs based on results not ideology.

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?

Wise financial stewardship is a tenet of the Carlisle Area School District. As stewards of the taxpayers’ money, we must ensure that it is used in a fiscally responsible manner. The reality in Pennsylvania is that the state has become an unreliable funding partner. We cannot depend on legislators in Harrisburg to complete their required budget deliberations in a timely manner. We have to pay our obligations, many of which are dictated by the State. However, the state can change the rules for reimbursements and not keep previous commitments. Too many legislators base their budget decisions on political expediency instead of good financial management. They alone can fix the pension crisis that has driven the increase in property taxes throughout Pennsylvania. This is the reality that faces school districts in Pennsylvania. There is much that we cannot control but we have an obligation to control those things that we can control. I am proud of the fiscal management of the Carlisle Area School District. Our priority on all budget issues is that we first ensure that our instructional programs are funded. We have kept tax increases at the index or below without jeopardizing these programs. We are engaged in long term planning. Our reserves are not just savings accounts but we have plans on how and when we will need to spend them. We have long term building and maintenance plans. We have exercised wise management over our debt service thus saving money. These practices have resulted in a bond rating that allows us to borrow money at an advantageous rate if need be. In the future, we may be faced with reducing programs. If that time comes, we must evaluate decisions based on our vision, mission, and belief statements. Will a cut keep us from “empowering every learner?” If so, then we should look for other options.

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

The superintendent, the Chief Executive Officer of the school district, is the tenth person that sits on a school board in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Superintendent is hired by the board and the board evaluates the Superintendent’s performance. In a healthy school district, this relationship is not adversarial. Instead, each plays a different role to ensure that our children are educated. It is in the American tradition of “checks and balances.” The superintendent may recommend policies but the board approves them. The school administration ensures that the Board policies are implemented through their administrative guidelines. The board and Superintendent work together, holding each other accountable, to ensure that our children thrive.

8. How do you measure success in the district?

The Pennsylvania State legislature and the Federal government have both struggled with evaluating school success and performance. Unfortunately, these efforts have been problematic and have resulted in an emphasis on test scores. With the new Every Student Succeeds Act, school districts can re-imagine the concepts of accountability and success. We can develop measures that fit our unique profile. CASD is already talking about new potential measurements. I want this process to be open and responsive to community opinion and values. We need multiple accountability tools that promote best practices and award the most effective teachers. Educational theories must be evaluated by outcome-based measurements and judged on results not intent. We must be nimble. If a process is not working, we must be able to abandon it. I like the emphasis in the title of the new act on “every student.” We are educating individuals and preparing them for the next stage in their life. Our children are not just cookie cutter images of each other. There is not just one path to success. The ultimate judge of our success must be that students leave CASD ready for that next stage in their life. If a student is academically motivated, we must offer them a quality education that prepares them for the best university in the country. For students whose path leads to a local college, a vocational school, or entering the work force after graduation, we must make sure these students are empowered to follow their choice. The ultimate measure of success can be found in our students’ happiness and achievements.

9. How is school board accountable to the public?

There are nine people that serve on the CASD Board as your elected representatives. We are the liaison between the administration and the community. All board and committee meetings are open to the public. By law, the board must deliberate in public and listen to public comments on issues before we vote. Information that guides our decisions is available to the public through our website. The School Board is also governed by the Pennsylvania school code passed by elected representatives in the state legislature. At CASD, our strategic plans and vision was developed by a group composed of school board members, school administration, teachers, and community representatives. On issues of great concern to the public, we have formed discussion groups made up of community representatives from our diverse community and listened to their views. Ultimately, the Board members are accountable to you. As a voter, you can choose not to return us through your vote at the ballot box.