

Please provide a short bio (500 characters).



An Ellington resident for 20 years, I am a professor of Philosophy at Eastern CT State University. I have been teaching college students for over 25 years, and being in the classroom is a source of joy and inspiration. I am happily married to my wife Lori for now 27 years, and have two amazing children, one of whom is a Junior at the University of Delaware, and one who is a 6th-grader at Windermere Elementary. I've never run for public office before but felt that the time called for it.

What qualities and qualifications make you best suited to be a member of the Board of Education? (700 characters)



I believe having an educator on the Board of Education just makes sense. I have what I call a "360-degree view" of the Ellington school system: I've put one child through Ellington schools from K-12, and have another currently in elementary school; I have been involved as a parent throughout that time, serving as PTO Treasurer, VP, and President at the various district PTOs, and have chaired or volunteered for more school events than I can count; I've been a regular attendee at Board of Education meetings for several years and have served as a citizen representative on Board projects; finally, as a college professor, I have a perspective on what our students can do after they graduate.

What are your top 3 priorities for the Board of Education, and how would you address them? (900 characters)



From talking with residents there are several themes I've heard:

First, people think that our teachers are the gems of the system, but that they need additional support to reach their potential. From our paraeducators to counseling to nursing to behavior interventions, there are a lot of unmet needs holding our schools back. Those concerns need to be heard and addressed.

Second, a school system can only truly thrive with active buy-in from the community. I'd like to see the Board do more to give all citizens of Ellington a voice and a reason to support the schools, starting with changes to the Board meetings themselves to make them better avenues for community input.

Lastly, we need to be more innovative about funding, particularly with pursuing grants. Our schools need investment, and I don't think we've been as aggressive as we could be in securing available alternative funding.

Describe your approach to working with people that have opposing points of view. (700 characters)



If there is one thing I've learned from teaching Philosophy it is the value of intellectual humility. This is a core principle of mine – a person cannot grow unless they take seriously the possibility of being wrong, even if they believe they have a clear view of the issue. This forces one to keep an open mind and to be receptive to good ideas and reasons no matter what the source, particularly when that source has a different perspective than you. As much as possible I try to approach decisions without preconceptions and allow myself to be driven to the most reasonable answer by the best information and argument.