

2019 CANDIDATE PROFILE
BLUE VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #232

Name: Brian Watts

Candidate for Board Seat #: 3

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Occupation/Work History - last 5 years (25 word limit):

Financial Advisor/Wealth Manager

Most Recent Political/Community Experience (25 word limit):

School Bond Task Force

As a candidate, what are your top three policy issues (25 words per line)

1. Continued District Unity
2. Fiscal Stewardship/Advocacy
3. Providing an environment where students feel safe and supported

The KS Supreme Court recently ruled the current school funding formula is both equitable and adequate, however, the Court retained jurisdiction over the case to assure the funding is maintained. Briefly, what are your thoughts on the new formula and the additional dollars that have been added to K-12 school funding?

I believe that this is a step in the right direction, however, I am concerned that the lack of inflationary increase will cause educational funding shortfalls in the near future. This will need consistent oversight, and I will work with our legislators in Topeka to ensure our district's voice is heard.

With the recent ruling by the KS Supreme Court that the new funding formula and related funding are constitutional, it is likely the legislature will look closely at accountability measures for student performance. Please describe the accountability measures you support and believe are reflective of student achievement.

While a considerable amount of weight has, historically, been placed on test scores alone, I believe that there are a number of factors that should be considered when measuring student performance. This should also include GPA, graduation rates, and a measure representative of acceptance into higher education (both university and vocational training).

Kansas is experiencing all time low unemployment rates and employers are struggling to find qualified workers, especially in technical and skilled trades. How do you see the Blue Valley School District helping to meet our business community's future workforce needs through technical education and training?

The Blue Valley Schools have a history of forward thinking. The district provides educational experiences other states have adopted because of this. The district also provided opportunity for students to pair with local business while still in school to solve real world problems. Preparing students for whatever lie ahead and providing education to build the workforce of tomorrow must continue to evolve.

Other than funding, what do you see as the greatest challenge facing the district?

I believe that the district is in danger splintering as we have seen in neighboring districts. Should this happened we run the risk of decreased student learning as well as increased cost to the district. I will provide the necessary oversight to ensure that the district remains of the highest quality as a whole.

Why are you seeking public office?

A valuable educational experience is one of the greatest assets we can provide to students. The Blue Valley School district has a rich history of success and I want to ensure this continues. Second, it is the duty of the school board to be a good steward of public tax dollars. I do not take this role lightly and will ensure the integrity of the strict remains high, while providing value to the students served.