

Gardner Edgerton USD #231 Board of Education 2021

Response ID:2 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

John Brandon Parks

2. Candidate for Board Seat

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3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 18533 Juniper St.

City/State/Zip : GARDNER

4. Phone Number

9135305478

5. Email Address

kcroyals21@gmail.com

6. Campaign Website

<https://www.facebook.com/ParksUSD231>

2. Candidate Background

7. Occupation/Work History (last 5 years - 25 words or less)

High School History Teacher

Stay at Home Dad

8. If you are or have been affiliated with a chamber of commerce or other business organization, please list which organization(s) and any leadership positions you have held.

N/A

9. Other recent political/community experience (50 words or less)

Interim School Board Member 2020-Present

3. Issues and Policy

10. As a candidate, what are your top three education policy issues? (100 words or less)

1. Promoting 21st Century Skills (i.e. critical thinking, problem-solving, technology, etc.)

2. Retaining/Training High-quality Educators

3. Maintaining Effective and Efficient Class Sizes (ideally somewhere between 16-24 students per teacher)

11. The Kansas Supreme Court ruled the current K-12 education funding formula is both equitable and adequate. The Court, however, has retained jurisdiction over the case to assure funding is maintained. What are your thoughts on the formula and additional funding that has been added? (100 words or less)

Unabashedly, I am always in favor of more funding for K-12 education, so in that regard, I'm happy with the new formula and

the Court's effort to maintain that funding.

12. The K-12 education system requires accountability measures for student performance, which have sometimes been a source of debate. Please describe the accountability measures you support and believe are accurately reflective of student achievement. (100 words or less)

This is tricky because no matter how you do accountability in education the incentives are all out of whack. I think State Testing, ACT, and SAT scores can be used, but with the understanding that they are massively flawed and must be taken with a grain of salt. I think the graduation rate is a fair metric, but it is limited in its scope. I do believe some form of post-graduation survey could be useful if done correctly. In other words, find out where students are 5 years after graduation to see how well education has served them.

13. Kansas is experiencing low unemployment rates and employers are struggling to find qualified workers, especially in technical and skilled trades. How do you see the school district helping to meet the business community's future workforce needs through technical education and training? (100 words or less)

The various career paths (i.e. Auto-Tech Center at GEHS) are helping educate students with technical career skills which will help fill these roles in the future. Continued efforts to implement technology in the classroom also allows teachers to make education more and more student-driven which will help develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills which are imperative for the future workforce.

14. Other than funding, what do you see as the greatest challenge facing the school district? (100 words or less)

Managing our growth effectively. We have several elementary schools which have been operating overcapacity in recent years and our high school continues to grow. Obviously, 2020 halted that growth, but I anticipate numbers to pick back up relatively quickly. This means we will likely have to build a new elementary school and redraw boundaries in the next few years. As the high school grows we will also have to figure out a way to accommodate our student body in a way that is not cost-prohibitive.

15. Why are you seeking this public office? (100 words or less)

I believe in public education and this district. I want to be involved in shaping the future of the district for the benefit of our students, staff, and community.

16. What makes you uniquely qualified to serve on the Board and most distinguishes you from your opponent(s) in this race? (100 words or less)

As a former educator, I have a deep understanding of how decisions made at the district level impact students and educators directly. I can see the decisions made from the perspective of both a parent and a teacher, so I have a unique grasp on the consequences (both intended and unintended) of the decisions facing the board.
