

# Gardner Edgerton USD #231 Board of Education 2021

Response ID:7 Data

## 1. Candidate Information

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### 1. Candidate Name

Thomas (Tom) Reddin

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### 2. Candidate for Board Seat #

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### 3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 940 E Cottage Creek Dr

City/State/Zip : Gardner, KS 66030

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### 4. Phone Number

913-558-3704

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### 5. Email Address

tomreddin25@gmail.com

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### 6. Campaign Website

<https://www.facebook.com/Tom-Reddin-USD-231-School-Board-104942048469522>

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## 2. Candidate Background

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

I am recently retired from the Johnson County Sheriff's Office where I finished my career as a Patrol Watch Commander.

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### 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.

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

This is my first time seeking a political office; however, my life has been a career of community service. I served 5 years active duty as a Military Policeman in the United States Army followed by a career in Law Enforcement serving this community in the Johnson County Sheriff's Office.

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## 3. Issues and Policy

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

First and foremost is making our children and their educations a priority. It is our duty to promptly and safely implement a plan to keep children in the classroom. Second is the recent loss of teachers we have experienced (especially in the SPED program). We need a comprehensive staffing and pay analysis to determine the number of educators we need to recruit. We must compare our pay scale to neighboring districts so our district is attractive to quality educators to keep them here where they are needed. Finally, we must keep politics out of our schools and focus on education.

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### 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)

I fully support the ruling from the Kansas Supreme Court. The future of our state and our local communities lies with the quality of education we provide our children. Adequate funding is the cornerstone for providing that education. Underpaid educators create a staffing loss due to them leaving our district. A lack of educators leads to overcrowded classrooms which creates less focus on our children and their individual needs.

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**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)**

The MAP scores are a good measure of academic progress and the data provided to parents is easily comprehensible. The standard grading system and GPA used in the upper levels of our district provides an easily understandable reflection of our children's academic achievements. The system used in the lower elementary levels does not reflect where the children's academic level truly is.

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**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)**

Our district currently provides exceptional technical education training. Not every kid is destined for college and not every career choice requires higher education. While I am a strong advocate of education, that does not necessarily mean a college degree. We need to identify those with a different calling in life and build on those skills. This in turn will aid our community in filling those areas in our local skilled trade workforce.

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

Staffing. We have experienced a recent loss of educators in our district. We need to address this and make our district the most attractive in the metro. Our teachers need a voice in what their children and classrooms require.

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

The simple answer is service. I have spoken to my wife often over the years of continuing my service to the community either through school board or city council. As it played out, my retirement from the Sheriff's Office fell in line with this election. I witnessed the division and turmoil in our town that carried out over the last year. The district was thrown a curveball with the Covid pandemic. I feel through my years of experience responding to, handling and leading the processing of critical incidents I bring an extraordinary skill set to this position.

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**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)**

My life has been one of service. From my youth as an altar boy at church, to serving in the Army, to a career at the Sheriff's Office. In addition to those, I spent 6 years as a youth softball coach with Gardner Parks and Rec, 2 years as a youth Blazer football coach and 5 years as a Cub Scout Den Leader. Since moving to Gardner 18 years ago, I have embraced THIS community and served it in various ways. I have held various leadership positions and am well trained in critical thinking and decision making.

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