

Olathe USD #233 Board of Education 2021

Response ID:6 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

Julie Steele

2. Candidate for Board Seat

District 3, Seat 3

3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : PO Box 1

City/State/Zip : Olathe, KS 66051

4. Phone Number

913-485-5540

5. Email Address

julie@votejuliesteele.com

6. Campaign Website

votejuliesteele.com

2. Candidate Background

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

Director of Operations and Owner

Associated Audiologists, Inc.

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.

Olathe Chamber of Commerce - business member

The Society for Human Resource Management - member

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

Advisory Board Boys and Girls Club-Olathe

Olathe Civic Academy

\$2 Million Capital Campaign Chair-Old Mission UMC

Infant Toddler Services Board

Portrait of a Graduate

Site Council - Olathe Northwest & Prairie Trail M.S.

Special Education Site Council-Olathe

3. Issues and Policy

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

1. Implement Strategic Plan - Portrait of a Graduate

- 2. Improve communication
- 3. Safety/Social Emotional & Mental Health

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 am optimistic that we are finally headed in the right direction with adequately funding schools in Kansas. The Kansas Supreme Court wisely retained jurisdiction in this matter because many in the Kansas Legislature have a history of routinely working to underfund (and at times undermine) our public schools for the past two decades. The Constitution of the State of Kansas is clear about the role of the State in providing adequate and equitable public education. We can afford what we prioritize. Our community members realize that strong public schools drive strong local economies.

12. The K-12 education system requires accountability measures for student performance, focused on post-secondary success and career-readiness. Do you believe the District is meeting expectations for student achievement? (100 words or less)

Here in Olathe, we have a history of setting high expectations to prepare each student for their future. Teachers meet every student where they are & strive to personalize learning. The district has a 92.1% graduation rate (compared to 87.2% statewide). There are many methods to measure student achievement. While standardized test data is one piece of the puzzle, it is an incomplete picture of the whole learner. Our Portrait of a Graduate initiative helps to begin with the end in mind. This new approach emphasizing a variety of competencies is an excellent way to approach teaching and learning.

13. Kansas is experiencing low unemployment rates and employers are struggling to find qualified workers. How do you see the school district helping to meet the business community's future workforce needs through work-based learning such as internships, training, and other career exploration opportunities? (100 words or less)

Olathe School District does a great job of fostering a climate of involvement, interaction and respect between the City Council and school leaders, as well as business partners in the community. We have career and technical programs as well as 21st Century Academies to provide specialized instruction and learning opportunities designed to prepare students to enter specialized fields. Partnerships with local businesses result in innovative opportunities for students to work in our community. Prioritizing a healthy relationship with the Chamber enables the District to better meet the changing needs of our local businesses.

14. What do you believe the takeaways for the District should be, if any, from the COVID-19 pandemic experience? (100 words or less)

The past year has been a challenging time for society as a whole and public schools were given an impossible task, yet teachers rose to the occasion to make the best of the situation. The resiliency of our students, parents, teachers and administrators was put to the test. I am proud of the way our community came together in so many ways. Our teachers went above and beyond to provide high quality lessons in a variety of formats. However, an honest reflection is necessary to address specific challenges & to adjust for the future.

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

Our community is currently divided. One key remedy for this situation is to focus on re-establishing trust. This can be accomplished by improving communication across the board. By beginning each conversation assuming that the person we are speaking with harbors no ill intent, we can be open and active listeners, which helps to gain perspectives of others. Also, we should be open to new ideas and change. Instead of always doing things one way simply because they've always been done that way, we should continually modify and adjust our approaches to pivot when better ways are found.

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

I have had a interest in civic involvement for many years. As I raised my children and watched family members serve locally, I became more intrigued and began to analyze my 'why'. I believe in public schools and our Olathe district. After being a graduate of Olathe North and choosing to raise my four children in the Olathe District, I came to the conclusion that my contribution is best realized by being a part of the future of our great public school asset and contribute to the future of our community through the education of our youth.

17. 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)

First and foremost, I am interested in working with, not against, the current board and our new superintendent to not only continue the stellar programming our district offers, but to analyze and advance our district into new spaces. In addition, my life experiences and commitments, both personally and professionally, combine like no other candidate in the race for District 3, Seat 3 to bring measured, solid leadership to the Olathe BOE.