

Gardner Edgerton USD #231 Board of Education 2021

Response ID:6 Data

1. Candidate Information

1. Candidate Name

Lana Sutton

2. Candidate for Board Seat

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3. Address

Street Address/Apt/Suite : 215 W PARK ST

City/State/Zip : GARDNER

4. Phone Number

9137078408

5. Email Address

LANASUTTON99@GMAIL.COM

6. Campaign Website

None

2. Candidate Background

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

Executive Assistant to the Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, Commerce Bank - Kansas City.

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.

None.

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

I currently serve on the USD 231 School Board and am a founding member of the Gardner Edgerton Republican Party. Recently served as a panelist for candidate training with the Starlight Republican Women's Group. Founding member of a food drive program to support Gardner and Edgerton food pantries.

3. Issues and Policy

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

The 2020 - 2021 school year was like no other in our history and many call it the lost year of education. Our teachers did their very best in horrible circumstances and I am proud to support them. The very top priorities for the 2021 - 2022 school year has got to be our general student education "catch up", fixing our SPED program and providing adequate mental health resources.

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)

Public education is absolutely critical to our society and funding now reflects that priority. The K-12 Education Budget is over half of Kansas's entire State General Fund. I am satisfied with the level of funding as it stands, however, my concern is that not enough money makes it into the classrooms for true educational purposes.

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)

I am guessing that you are referring to NAEP scores and if so, Federal and State testing has been a tool used in public education for as long as I can remember. Testing is not a perfect measure of student accomplishment but it does provide indicators from which student plans can be formed. In addition, we have seen that the NAEP score improvements have flatlined over the last few years and the solution to this not to deemphasize the testing, but to learn from it as educators and boards and provide the education that our children deserve.

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)

Thank you so much for asking this question! The Gardner Edgerton School District currently has an amazing Advanced Technical Center which I have been very proud to support with votes for expanded services. Trade and technical jobs are essential and will never be without need. I fully support expanding our offerings at the ATC and partnerships with local and Kansas City business for new opportunities.

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

Currently our Special Education "SPED" program is not meeting the public's or my expectations. This must be fixed and communication and transparency with the community needs to be restored. I am confident that with our buildings opening back up to all citizens this will improve. A huge concern of mine thru the shutdown of our schools was the mental health of our students and staff. Resources need to be re-established to address this critical issue.

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

I have been honored to serve the past three years and ask for your trust and support for my re-election. I believe that every child deserves a quality education and will continue to work to ensure that this is the case. I firmly believe that parents know what is in the best interest of their children and will never lose sight of that. While the past year was very tough, I believe good things are ahead for USD231 and that there is more work to do!

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)

I'm not unique. I am a mother of three amazing graduates of the USD231 school district who simply wanted what was best for her children and that is in no way unique. That is what parents do. What sets me apart from many others is that I served during the pandemic. I listened to the parents and staff and stood alone, or in the minority on many occasions. Even after the trials of last year I continue to want to serve my community.