**TEN BOARD OF EDUCATION QUESTIONS**

**2023 Candidate Tina Baker**

**1, Why are you running for the Board of Education? If elected, what will be your priorities?** I’m seeking a second term on the Board of Education. During the first term we encountered new challenges due to COVID. While the policies and procedures developed were necessary, it took time away from our normal focus as board members. I would like the opportunity to continue serving on the BOE as we further our work to make this the district of choice. My priorities are to help the district and our community realize the goals set forth in the strategic plan, to support the district as we overcome the targeted school designation in the Middle School and to face any new obstacles we encounter along the way.

**2, What particular experiences or skills have prepared you to serve as a board member?** My work experience has helped me with the financial aspect of serving on the board and as a member of the Finance and Audit Committees. I take time to analyze data and listen to all information provided before making major decisions, especially where financial resources are involved. I am detail-oriented and an analytical thinker, always trying to look at things from multiple perspectives. It is my opinion that these traits make me an asset to the Board of Education and therefore to the community.

**3, What is a school board member’s role and responsibility? How does that differ from the role of the superintendent or administration?**

The role of the superintendent and administration is to oversee the day-to-day activities of the district, whereas the board evaluates the superintendent, oversees the creation of school policies, and sets the direction of the school district to achieve the highest student performance.

**4, What is the best way to address differences of opinion on the board or between the board and administration?** In my opinion, this is something we do well. We understand the importance of treating each other with respect and dignity. We acknowledge that everyone has a right to their own opinion and listen when those opinions are expressed, even if they differ from our own.

**5, What should your school district do to better prepare students as citizens?** The education I received at Sherburne-Earlville contributed to my successful career path. I understand that the challenges faced today are different than those faced 30 years ago, but believe the foundation is the same. We need to provide a safe environment to inspire and empower each student to reach their full potential. Creating a safe environment which allows analysis of controversial issues, and respect for those who hold differing views lends itself to students having greater civic knowledge and commitment to community.

**6, What is the role of schools in teaching children about topics such as sex education, cyber-safety, wellness, and bullying?** I feel that knowledge is power, and it is our responsibility to foster conversations, both at home and at school, to educate our children.

**7, What are your thoughts on your school districts programs for special education students, English Language Learners (ELL), and gifted students?** In a recent board meeting, we were provided with an overview of current programs and future goals for special education. I would like to see us move toward these goals to better support the students in our district. We should continue to seek ways to support all students to allow them to reach their fullest potential.

**8, What do you see as the major issue(s) facing your school district? Public education?** I believe we are all still trying to navigate the effects of the COVID pandemic on our society, especially our children. The lack of social interaction, effects of inconsistent schooling and the impact on mental health have all had long-reaching effects. We are faced with issues surrounding student attitude and behavior, academic performance, and absenteeism, all of which need to be addressed.

**9, How would you determine your budget priorities?** We are very fortunate to have an administration with experience and expertise overseeing the budget. They are aware of the day-to-day needs of the district. I will continue to do my best to help achieve budgetary goals by drawing on my employment experience.

**10, Do you have specific suggestions for improvement in our district?** In my opinion, the creation of the strategic plan has laid the framework to help the district improve and to reach long-term goals. I will continue to support the district and the community as we continue toward the goal of becoming the district of choice.