



# Jefferson County 509-J school board candidates

There are three positions up for election on the five-member board of directors of the Jefferson County 509-J school district.

The vote is coming up on Tuesday, May 16. Ballots are due by 8 p.m. on that day.

There is an official ballot box in Warm Springs across the street from the Post Office, by the old fire

station.

If you vote on election, instead of by mail, you can also drop your ballot off at the county clerk's office by 8 p.m. on May 16.

Candidates who are running in-clude:

**Position no. 1:** Brian Crow of Madras, and incumbent Laurie Danzuka of Warm Springs.

**Position no. 2:** Jamie Hurd of Madras; Sue Matters of Warm Springs; and Gary Sisk of Madras.

**Position no. 3:** Alyssa Macy of Warm Springs, and incumbent Tom Norton Jr. of Madras.

Here are brief statements from each of the candidates.

## Position no. 1: Brian Crow

My name is Brian Crow and I am running as a candidate for school board.

I am asked regularly why I am running for this position. Honestly, it's the question that keeps me up at night.

Why would I want to become the recipient of the ire of some of our community? Why would I want to sacrifice a lot of my time as a volunteer?

The answer is simple: The future of Jefferson County is directly tied to the quality of the workforce.

We need to be delivering graduates who are capable and qualified to work.

The previous board has done a good job of increasing the graduation prospects for students in our community, and I want to see that continue to improve.



As we improve our school system, it will become more attractive to new families and in turn will help Jefferson County.

When we moved to Madras almost a year ago, it took about two weeks to completely fall in love with Jefferson County. We could not be more thrilled about digging in like ticks!

Here are some of the is-

ssues that I am concerned about:

- Improving student performance from Early Child Education to Career Technology Education.
- Grow Technology Education to give kids a career path, even if they don't intend to attend university.
- Continue to improve graduation rates.
- Appropriately sizing classrooms.
- Meal programs that are nourishing and interesting.
- Providing a safe environment for teachers and students alike.
- Restoring our community's faith in the financial operation of the district.
- Our district should be teaching kids how to think, not what to think.

**Brian Crow**

## Position no. 1: Laurie Danzuka

Greetings family, friends and community members,

My name is Laurie Danzuka. My parents are the late Gerald Danzuka Sr. and Kathleen Heath. My maternal grandparents are the late Chief Nathan Heath and Lillie McBride Heath.

I have four children. Three are school age and my youngest grand-nephew is in Warm Springs Early Head Start.

I am a Warm Springs, Wasco and Paiute tribal descendant. I am a proud graduate from Warm Springs Head Start, Warm Springs Elementary, Madras Junior High School and Madras High School.

It has been a privilege to serve on the board for the past eight years.

There has been positive change and continued growth through our curriculum and expanded options, such as Bridges career and technical high school, and the Madras High School futures program to name a few.

In Warm Springs the Rise and Shine program—in partnership with the Culture and Heritage Department and Committee—provides language instruction, dance, and a variety of cultural projects for kids.

This will continue to expand as the American In-



dian/Alaska Native state plan is rolled out next year.

There has also been slow but measured growth in math, reading, and attendance at all grade levels.

I chose to run for re-election to continue the work that is starting to address big-picture items such as graduation rates, professional development and budget/program sustainability.

The support systems put in place need to be sustained to achieve upward movement. I will continue to support the expansion programs that address the different learning styles through the arts, career and technical, and partnerships with the Confederated Tribes for job shadowing and internships.

At the same time we will continue partnerships with colleges to challenge higher end learners on their learning path.

It is important to con-

tinue to provide appropriate development programs and tools for staff to continue to see their own success in the classroom as well as in the learners.

I am fortunate to have been raised in a family that promotes all education, whether it is formal, or oral history from my parents and grandparents.

I believe kids will learn in an environment they are comfortable in, and that providing options for those families will bring more success to the families and learners in the district.

In order to continue the forward progress it will important to build upon what we have started; and continue to lead the district forward, putting us in a position where people are looking to us as an example of how to do it right.

I believe all these things can happen by gaining parental support, trust and involvement at all grade levels, and build the partnership with each child's teacher and school.

I am a committed advocate for learners and their families, and I ask for your support. I have grown professionally and will serve the community to the best of my ability.

Thank you,

**Laurie S. Danzuka**

## Position no. 2: Jamie Hurd

My husband and I moved to Madras five years ago. He is the Public Works director for the City of Madras.

We have three young boys: Lucas, 8, Jacob, 6, and Nolan, 2.

I grew up in Colorado and attended Colorado State University, where I graduated with two degrees: Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology and Bachelor of Science in Fishery Biology.

I worked professionally as a biologist for many organizations, but most recently the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

I stepped away from wildlife management to manage a different kind of wildlife, my three energetic boys. I am grateful for my time at home with my children because it has allowed me to both spend more time in their classrooms and help serve our community.

I am devoted to the positive growth of our community because I cherish and respect it.

I am currently serving on the Madras Aquatic Center (MAC) Recreation District board. During my time on the board I have been part of taking a failing district to a balanced budget with rapidly growing programs.

We have developed employee manuals, policies, cost recovery plans and a strategic plan. My time with MAC district has helped to develop board member skills and knowledge of ethics and regulations.

I started a non-profit organization called MADras Runners that has raised thousands of dollars for youth and athletic programs, as well as hosted multiple community health activities.

I have coordinated several events, fundraisers and volunteers for several groups.

Parent Teacher Organizations, Our Community



Event, Community Clean Up, Canyon Rumble Frozen Half, Cycle Oregon and political action committees are just a few of the groups I have served in a leadership role.

I am a big believer that actions speak louder than words. That is why I have spent time in all eight of our schools.

I have meet with administration, staff, teachers, parents and students. I have had meetings with all of the board members. I did this so I could have an understanding of the entire district. It is important to me that I understand the strengths and weaknesses of our district.

I want to be on the school board because I am passionate about seeing our students thrive. I want them to feel inspired, motivated and ready for life outside of our schools.

As a member of this community, everything I have been a part of has a direct relationship to the success of our school district. I've seen the need for community support of our schools.

Here is what I am most passionate about focusing on in our schools:

- Let's celebrate student and staff achievement. We have a lot of amazing things going on in this district, and we need to give the people behind them proper recognition and support.

We live in a world of negativity, and I believe if we embrace our successes, it will make our staff and students feel valued and inspired.

We need robust, proactive programs to capture our children's unique gifts. If they are motivated, they will perform.

We have a lot of good electives, extracurricular, and upper learning opportunities. Let's work on strengthening them. If our students are connected to something, they will have the drive to perform in school.

Our children need to be emotionally, educationally and physically healthy. Supporting our staff will be key in helping them to take advantage of individual learning opportunities, recognizing trials and dangers, and inspiring them to bring in creative options and resources for our students.

Our students need to be ready for life outside of school. Our students need an education and not a certificate.

Their parents need to be engaged, informed and play an active role in their student's education.

If we do all of the above they will be ready. The health of our community is directly related to the success of our students. If our students are thriving, so will our community.

As a school board member I will take into account the community's goals and visions and hold the district accountable.

I will take my unique talents and gifts, and work cooperatively with the board and the superintendent to ensure we are making the best decision for the entire district.

I am grateful for your time and support, and I encourage you all to vote! Vote for our children, staff and community.

**Jamie Hurd**

## Position no. 2: Sue Matters

My name is Sue Matters and I'm asking for your vote. I am a candidate for the 509-J school board seat #2.

I ran for school board two years ago and I'm running again because I believe I have what it takes to make informed decisions that benefit the students and families of the 509-J school district.

I've lived in Warm Springs for more than 30 years. I'm married to Kenman Miller, and we have two adult children who went through 509-J schools—Carina Miller and Dylan Miller.

I served on School Site Councils for Warm Springs Elementary, the Jefferson County Middle School, and at Madras High School during the time each of my kids attended.

That gave me insight into school issues and access to amazing teachers and principals. I've also participated in various school district opportunities over the past 25 years.

I have experience serving on boards and committees—from national non-profit work like the National Federation of Community Broadcasters and Native Public Media, to local community service including Johnson O'Malley, Collage of Culture, Warm Springs Cultural Trust and the Boys & Girls Club.

I understand the role of a board and the importance of process, planning and protocol.

I have worked at KWSO



radio 91.9FM (and kwso.org) or the past 14 years.

I have the ability to understand information, ask questions, learn from others and summarize information.

Through my work I communicate information daily, verbally and in writing, in person, over the radio and online.

We need to learn to communicate more effectively and genuinely with one another. The district needs to improve information sharing and to listen and consider input from teachers, students, families and the community.

Previously, I worked at Warm Springs Early Childhood Education for 12 years—in Head Start, the School Age Care Program, and in Support Services.

That allowed me to better understand families, child development, and the positive impact of early learning.

I believe good things happen in our school district all the time, and many students go on to do amazing things in the world.

What I'd like to see is a

higher success rate for all our youth by ensuring all students get the skills they need to pursue their interests beyond 509-J. And I'd like to see teachers supported in helping to make that happen.

In the Jefferson County 509-J School District, we have a vision of what we want students, teachers and families to demonstrate in an effective learning community. To achieve that vision, 509-J needs to have a strategic plan with short- and long-term goals, measurable objectives, strategies and tasks. All the schools need to be working toward the same goals.

I believe initiatives, beyond just academics, need to be included in that plan. Improving academic performance is absolutely a goal—but I believe it is critical to also increase understanding of issues like trauma-informed and culturally relevant practices, wrap-around services, and educational equity.

It's an exciting time for 509-J with three positions being voted on for school board and a new superintendent.

I want to be part of the ongoing effort to raise-up the 509-J school district to meet the needs of all our youth. Meeting their needs not only will change their lives, but will boost their contributions to our community and we will all benefit! Our kids deserve the very best.

**Sue Matters**