

Morrow County School Board Candidate Forum

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Lexington office was to save \$28,000. Moving the office and opening a new building will not accomplish this goal and makes a sham of the original argument. A true and complete financial study of all options must be requested before any such move occurs. It may be very well be that the study will indicate that the district office should temporarily remain where it is. I am also concerned of the negative effect on morale that this will have on current district office employees who will be forced to make an almost 100 mile daily commute. If the superintendent believes that he should have an office in the north end, it would seem logical to save money by having available to him an office in Riverside High, with access to its current office staff, as well as have an office in Lexington."

Pos. 5 candidates:

Pat McNamee, 51,

along with wife, Vickie, have three grown children, and live in Irrigon. McNamee graduated from Madras High School and studied for two years at Lane Community College.



McNamee is a member of the Catholic Church as well as Knights of Columbus. He has also served four years on the Morrow County School Board and worked for some years on the local advisory board.

Q1- "I have tried to represent the whole county in any decisions I have made while on the board. I think this is what voters should be looking for."

Q2- "Trying to keep each school functioning as well as possible with the available funding."

Q3- "I think they will have a tough time surviving on their own, but I support their decision to secede."

Q4- "People will not approve new taxes, so we must figure out how to stretch the available dollars. I wish we could return to the tax system we used to have, where local taxpayers could vote to give additional support to their own schools."

Q5- "This may not be totally fair, but we have to use something as a baseline, or it is just a continual fight for dollars."

Q6- "I support moving it [district office] to the north end, which is what has been done, not necessarily Irrigon, since over 80 percent of the students and the majority of the staff are located in the north, that seems like the right place for the superintendent and his staff."

William J. Kuhn,

52, lives in Heppner, with wife, Annetta L. Spicer. The couple has two grown children. Kuhn graduated from Cameron County High School in Emporium, PA, and graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1973 with



degrees in pre-law and history and then graduated from Lewis and Clark Law School in Portland in 1976. Kuhn came to Morrow County in 1977.

Kuhn is a member St. Patrick's Catholic Church, where he was a past member of St. Patrick's Parish Council and a current member of St. Patrick's Finance Committee, as well as a Sunday school teacher. He is the past president and past board member of Heppner Chamber of Commerce; past president and secretary of Heppner Lions Club; and a former scoutmaster in Heppner. He has been a member of the Heppner High School Site Council for six years; on the current board of the Heppner Adopt-a-Teacher. Kuhn is a current member of the Oregon State Bar Elder Law Executive Committee; and past member of the Oregon State Bar Local Professional Responsibility Committee. Currently he is a member of the Oregon State Bar; United States District Court for the District of Oregon; United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

He is also a past and founding board member of the Oregon Trail Library District; former attorney for the Morrow County School District; current attorney for the cities of Heppner, Lexington and Irrigon.

Q1- "My opponent has consistently voted to cut school programs and curriculum without understanding the impact of the cuts and without a vision on building programs or replacing what was lost. I will promote district wide use of teachers and other educational resources through the use of V-Tel, distance education and flexible scheduling. The current board, with my opponent's support, has not been active enough with the legislature in promoting school funding and the raising of additional education revenues. I will promote a much more active role for the board in legislative interaction."

Q2- "1. Getting the district to work together and use available resources on a district wide basis. Inability to react to funding crisis and community divisions have crippled our district. 2. Motivating our citizens to become more civically and politically involved with our school system. Until we as a community become committed to changing the crisis in our educational system, it will remain. 3. Motivating our legislature to stabilize and increase school funding. 60 percent to 70 percent of school funding is from the state. Our children will not receive an adequate education until the state-funding crisis is adequately corrected."

Q3- "The secession of the Ione is harmful to both the district and the Ione community. However, the strong determination of the Ione community has made the board's decision to accept the secession a reasonable one. I am concerned that the rest of the district not carry the indebtedness attributable to the new Ione school and that fiscal arrangements for the separation are becoming protracted and unworkable. The district must put this matter behind it by immediately developing final value figures for the property and indebtedness and implementing a payment plan with payment guarantees."

Q4- "The only methods for handling budget constraints are cutting programs, making more

efficient use of resources or obtaining more money. Funding priority must be given to maintenance of teaching staff. The district must make more efficient use of district teaching resources through V-Tel, distance education and other methods, which allow the use of district teaching resources in more than one school. The district must more zealously advocate for additional state funding and educate the public on the devastation caused by an inadequate state budget."

Q5- "Equity funding has not led to equity of education. The district has not adequately examined educational impacts when implementing budget cuts nor has the board implemented programs allowing use of resources on a district-wide level to alleviate program losses. A more balanced approach by the board is necessary. Equity funding has resulted in a divided school district with communities unable to work together for the common benefit. While more resources need to be applied to larger student populations, efficiencies of scale and equal educational opportunity must play a larger role in board funding decisions."

Q6- "The board's decision to move the district office to Irrigon was premature. At the April board meeting, figures comparing the cost of moving the district office from Lexington to either Heppner or Irrigon were unavailable as were the costs of keeping the office in either place compared to Lexington. At a minimum, in a time when every penny spent on education is important, the board should have examined moving costs and office maintenance and operating costs before making a decision. I hope the decision will be reviewed when the board has the figures it needs."

Pos. 6 candidates:

Dwayne M. Carroll,

64, lives in Irrigon with wife, Geraldine, and they have two grown children. Carroll moved to Morrow County in 1960 and graduated from high school in Wasco. He also served in the U.S. Air Force from 1956-1960.



Carroll had been a member of the Morrow County School Board Board of Directors for 17 years.

Q1- "I believe that the economic times, reflected in school funding, can benefit from past experience. I can provide that experience."

Q2- "The current state school funding needs to be addressed to minimize the acute swing experienced when the state's economy slows. I believe school board members need to be involved in the legislative process to formulate change."

Q3- "Patrons in the Ione area propose a severe departure based on a perceived concept of mandated consolidation. The legislature seemingly agrees. I am hopeful that at the end of the day, the students in Ione aren't required to bear the burden of an error on someone else's part."

Q4- "I believe that funding must be stabilized at the state level. Local control may be the answer to this

problem, but educationally this has the burden of the statewide proof. It is obvious that being tied to the state's economy will make this problem reoccur. The stability of private property needs to have a larger role in school funding. The alternative is the situation as it now exists."

Q5- "I shall assume the above statement is regarding Morrow County schools. To accept the idea that schools should expend only the funds generated at that location is to deny the need for the board in budgeting and programs. The need for a county-wide school district is minimized and indicates that as the state decides how funding should be distributed, the schools are in perfect alignment with that concept. I disagree with that premise and suggest that board discretion be included."

Q6- "The decision of the district are increasingly driven by funding and along those lines it appears that money can be saved by eliminating the expense of a "stand alone" facility. The student population in Boardman/Irrigon is also a consideration. If a move is a certainty then the logical answer is Boardman/Irrigon."

Barney Lindsay and

his wife, Kimberly, and their two children, Kaelyn, five, and Alex, three, live on a farm north of Lexington. A life-long resident of Morrow County, Lindsay graduated from Heppner High School and received an associate degree from Blue Mountain Community College and a bachelor of science degree in agriculture education from the University of Idaho. He is employed as a farmer on a family-owned ranch.



Lindsay is a member and Parish Council member of St. Patrick's Catholic Church. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and is a former chair of the Holy Name Society.

He has been a member of the Morrow Soil and Water Board since 1996, a Morrow County School Board member from 1997-2001 and has been the Morrow County Grain Growers Board secretary from 1997 to the present. He is a former teacher in the Morrow County School District and the Hermiston School District and served on the Heppner Agriculture Education Advisory Committee.

Q1- "I have the education, experience, background and desire to be an effective board member. I have seen the district from a number of vantage points-I have been a student, teacher, board member and parent in the district."

Q2- "Providing quality education to all students throughout the district with the limited funding available."

Q3- "The process is almost already complete. Ione is leaving the MCSD to form its own district. My position is every community needs to have a positive reason to stay in the district or other communities will follow the path which Ione has chosen."

Q4- "Before taking action, I would look at all options available. I would consider a local option levy. I would work with legislators to draft legislation to make

changes to local property tax rules for education funding. I would also consider using more distance education to offer elective courses for students."

Q5- "The Morrow county School District has an obligation to educate all children equally regardless of their location within the county. District resources should be put to all our children's needs, wherever and whenever they are needed."

Q6- "I am not supportive of this move because I do not believe it will bring cost savings to the district. I believe in a few years, the school district will want to move the district office to Boardman, once again costing a lot of resources to keep moving and remodeling to a new location."

Denise Riddle, 38,

along with husband, Charlie, and three children live in Heppner. Riddle also has three stepchildren who live in Athena. Riddle graduated from Heppner High and attended Central Oregon Community College, as well as Blue Mountain Community College.



Riddle has worked in the Morrow County Clerk's Office/Justice Court as a deputy clerk/court clerk. She has also worked for the Umatilla School District and Baker School District as an administrative/board secretary. She is also a member of the Morrow County Fair Committee, the Heppner First Christian Church, the Grass Roots Committee, and the Adopt-a-Teacher committee.

Q1- "I feel my opponents are qualified since they were past board members. I think I would be just as or more qualified since I worked for two school districts as an administrative/board secretary. I understand the importance of a good relationship between the administrators and the board is crucial to help a district run efficiently. I have also been involved in contract negotiations with the certified and classified staff."

Q2- "The biggest challenge facing the new board

is to: 1. Create a positive relationship among themselves, the superintendent, staff and, most importantly, the communities. 2. To make sure all students receive a quality education and not let money be the total factor on accomplishing that goal. 3. To educate the communities about the needs of the students at each school. 4. To open the new schools. 5. To listen to the tax payers and not have personal agendas."

Q3- "Ione is very supportive of the children in their community, so I wasn't surprised they chose to do this. I feel if the board had communicated with the south end communities better before any decisions were made, things could have been better solved for both. If Ione isn't successful, merging the schools could still be a possibility to ensure a good education for the south end students. But, if it becomes a possibility, I would hope the new school board would involve the communities in working out a solution keeping the students in mind."

Q4- "Enforce a budget spending freeze at the beginning of the school year and throughout the whole year. Work with both bargaining units on how they could contribute. The board and superintendent need to keep working closely with the state, since the budget crisis began with the lack of funding from the state."

Q5- "Since we are one district, all schools need to have the same quality of education. I don't think one school should be cut to the bare bones, while another school doesn't have to take any cuts. I think money should be distributed enough to keep all schools functioning without devastating effects on the students' education."

Q6- "I thought the reason why the district office was moving to Heppner was to save money. I think the move to Irrigon is for personal reasons, because the superintendent doesn't feel wanted at Heppner Elementary. The Grass Roots Committee was trying to come up with solutions, to help their budget, not to hurt the superintendent's feelings."

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