



MEET THE CANDIDATES

MARK RICHTER

2022 SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE PROFILE

JENISON RESIDENT FOR 12 YEARS

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION?

As a parent of one JPS graduate and another still in the district, I have enjoyed my first term on the board and the opportunities it has given me to be hands on with the education of kids. In seeking this second term, please note that I will not seek a third term. As President/CEO of First United Credit Union, I was humbled when the BOE elected me to be the board treasurer these last few years too. We have more work to do and I'm hoping to continue that work in a second term. We have a new superintendent and are actively working on a detailed and robust strategic plan that prioritizes character, people, education, and improving our already incredible district.

IF ELECTED, WHAT WILL BE YOUR PRIORITIES?

To continue upholding the values and standards of excellence our surveys and studies show Jenison is known for. We must continue to look for ways to improve and grow on our foundation to be the very best for our community and students. I want to see successful completion of the incredible construction projects the community approved and improving our facilities. I'd also put greater focus on the strategic planning process Dr. Graham has started. Through this process we have gotten lots of great feedback from all the stakeholders in the community. While the survey showed many parents are very satisfied with our district, facilities, teachers, administrators, and employees they also pointed out areas of improvement that we can work on through the strategic planning process.

HOW ARE YOU CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN THE JENISON SCHOOL COMMUNITY?

I have volunteered at countless swim meets and track meets. I also volunteer with the DECA program and Business Advisory programs at the High School. When our daughters were younger, my wife and I were also very involved volunteering at many events at Bursley Elementary and Jenison Junior High. Through my role as President/CEO of First United Credit Union we have also sponsored many events including many JPEF Fundraisers, JPS Thespians, Athletics Boosters Hall of Fame Dinner, Jenison Robotics, DECA Fundraisers and Wildcat Way festival. I also volunteer my time in the community at my church and on the Grand Rapids YMCA Board of Directors where I currently serve as its board chair.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE PRIMARY WORK/FUNCTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION?

To partner with the Superintendent and leadership staff to provide accountability, direction, and community voice into the greater decisions of the school district. One of the biggest reasons I am running again is to continue to work with Dr. Graham to grow and evolve his role for the betterment of our district. The board sets policies for the district while also overseeing and empowering Dr. Graham, and the administration.

WHAT ATTRIBUTES & BEHAVIORS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS?

Knowing the boards' role, duties and responsibilities is a big factor. Knowing when and where to provide input and feedback. As President/CEO of First United CU I also report to a board of directors. Having a good positive relationship and communication between all the board and Superintendent is critical to maintaining the focus on doing what is best for the kids in JPS.

The statements and opinions expressed in this profile are solely those of the candidate's and do not represent those of Jenison Public Schools. The primary purpose of this profile is to educate and inform and does not constitute any endorsement or support of a particular candidate or initiative. Each candidate was given identical questions and the same opportunity to provide responses and a photo.

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WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR EDUCATION IN OUR COMMUNITY?

That JPS continues to be a destination district of excellence with many successful programs and opportunities for students and families to participate in.

WHAT PARTICULAR EXPERIENCES OR SKILLS HAVE PREPARED YOU TO SERVE AS A BOARD MEMBER?

Having served in a 6-year term I have experienced having to make several difficult decisions as we navigated the most recent pandemic. Also, since I serve on other boards and report to a board myself, I have experience that absolutely prepares me to serve as a JPS BOE member

WHAT DIFFERENTIATES YOU FROM OTHER CANDIDATES AND/OR BOARD MEMBERS?

As President/CEO of First United CU I lead and grow a financial institution. This gives me great insight into financials and and financial experience. Being in my leadership role I know what it takes to lead and grow a successful organization. Serving on other boards also gives me experience as a board member in other industries.

WHAT FOCUS AREA OF OUR STRATEGIC VISION EXCITES YOU MOST?

I am very proud of the work we have done in living the Wildcat Way! As it is our job to educate our students, the Wildcat Way provides a framework for many life skills and a foundation for character building in our students futures.

WHAT IS YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE CURRENT WORKING AND LEARNING CLIMATE IN OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT?

JPS has a great climate of excellence. In academics, athletics, orchestra, band, choir drama, robotics and so many other areas where JPS is a leader.

I FEEL MOST PASSIONATELY ABOUT:

Maintaining and growing JPS as a district of academic excellence and destination district.