

Shawn Clark

Candidate for Board of Education

1. Why did you decide to run for the Board of Education? What perspective do you feel you would bring to the board?

I decided to run for the Board of Education because I love APW. I attended APW for all of my schooling from Kindergarten - 12th grade. Throughout that time core teachings were learned that have enabled me to be successful in life. I want to ensure that those same opportunities and so much more are available for my son, Noah, who is currently in 5th grade at APW Elementary as well as all the other children in our district. My desire is to see us implement even more programs via shared networking that will enable us to offer even more career choices and pathways for all of our children. The perspective I would bring to the board is one in which I would use my prior management skills and my currently analytical skills to ensure that our district is doing what it is supposed to do both legally and ethically. I wish to offer a positive approach while ensuring that we are doing everything we can to take care of our students, employees and community. My sense of pride in APW will resonate throughout all my decisions.

2. What do you view as the greatest challenges that our school district faces?

There are so many challenges that our district faces everyday. From ensuring proper funding to the ever constant changing laws and regulations from both the state and federal government. However, I do believe there are a few issues that stand out to be the greatest that the APW district faces. While we have done a great job moving our academics in the right direction and offering many more opportunities for our students I have heard from a number of staff that there is a morale issue in our schools. They feel underappreciated and micro managed. This is a challenge that needs to be addressed and taken care of right away. When our staff feels that they can't do their job the correct way this then moves down to the students. We need to make sure that we are listening to our staff and make every reasonable effort to ensure that they have all the things that they need in order to make our children successful. Micro managing and over evaluating only causes undo pressure and creates a burden and distraction to the education of our children. The last thing we want is highly qualified teachers leaving our district for another one because of not feeling appreciated. Second, I have heard from parents in the district that the constant changing of administration is burdensome on them as they struggle to figure out who

it is that they should contact with concerns regarding their children and grandchildren. We need to make sure that we are better communicating these changes to parents and family. There are multiple ways to communicate readily available to us and we need to utilize all of these methods to ensure that all of our community members know who to contact regarding their children and grandchildren.

3. What do you view as our district's greatest assets?

The greatest asset the APW School District has is our children/students. They are the future generations and contributors to society. What better asset could we have. We need to ensure that they have the best education and all opportunities that are out there available to them. Our second greatest asset is our staff. From the initial pick up in the morning from a bus driver, to the mechanic and aid that make sure everything functions safely on the bus, to the arrival at a clean and maintained school, to the teachers who educate, the staff who make sure everything functions, the lunch staff who ensure healthy eating habits, to the administrators who set goals and ensure they are achieved, to the coaches and advisers who help build character and life skills through sports and extra curricular activities. They all are a huge asset and need to feel as though they are appreciated each and every day. It costs a lot of money to invest in our employees but it costs a lot more to invest in them to have them leave and then to have to invest in someone else. Not only is it a cost monetarily but it is a cost in morale and quality of teaching as well. Our third greatest asset would be our parents and community members. We have a lot of knowledgeable and passionate people in our district. We need to ensure that we are tapping into that and learning from it. There are many great ideas and innovative thinkers in our district. We need to do more to encourage that they participate in a healthy discussion to make APW better.

4. The Board of Education will be working to hire a new superintendent in the immediate future. What qualities and qualifications do you think this person must have?

In searching for a new superintendent there are many qualities and qualifications that we should search for. The person should obviously hold all the mandated degrees to hold the administrative position, but I believe we need to look much deeper than that. We need a superintendent who places our children first in every decision that they make. They need to be fiscally responsible to ensure that taxes remain balanced. They should portray high moral and ethical standards to set an example for all staff and students they represent. They must be a

team player and bring that approach to our district ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and that they are all taken into consideration. The superintendent should recognize that we are a small rural district but should also recognize that we should not be held back because of that. They need to continue to push for excellency from our students and staff while not micro managing every decision that is made. They need to continue to seek out opportunities to collaborate with local businesses and other institutes of learning to offer many different opportunities to our children. They need to be APW. By that I mean that they need to have a pride in our school district and the things that we do. I would also like to see us go back to having the superintendent reside in the district so that they are able to participate in local community activities and school functions.

5. Thinking about the budget, what do you think the District's priorities ought to be?

The districts first and main priorities should always be academics. We need to ensure that we are utilizing the money that we have through state funding and the tax levy to offer a variety of educational pathways to our students. Utilization of shared programs through CITI, OCC and CCC will allow us to continue these avenues while maintaining fiscal responsibility. We need to ensure that we have the funds available to make sure that we have accurate staffing to ensure that these academics are fulfilled. After academics would come athletics and extra-curricular activities. These activities play a vital role in a learning environment. It allows our students to learn skills such as leadership, how to work together as a team, and how to overcome known and unknown obstacles. These are lessons that are learned in a classroom setting but through these various activities they are able to be practiced. These are essential life skills that will be utilized everyday of our children's lives.