



CRYSTAL LAKE ELEMENTARY DISTRICT #47

300 Commerce Drive, Crystal Lake, Illinois 60014 (815) 788-5000

www.d47.org

/D47schools @crystallakeSD47

August 4, 2022

Ms. Judy Maloney
181 Durango Dr.
Gilberts, IL. 60136

Re: Freedom of Information Request

Dear Ms. Maloney:

On August 2, 2022 Crystal Lake School District No. 47 received a Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") Request from you via email, in which you requested the following:

- Copies of the applications and responses to the survey questions posed by the Board of the 9 individuals who expressed interest in being appointed to the Board seat vacated by Betsy Les and the names of the applicants.
- The criteria the Board was looking for and how they chose to seat Ms. Devon Tessmer.
 - There are no documents responsive to this request and FOIA 5 ILCS 140/1 states the FOIA only requires that a public body provide existing non-exempt records in response to requests.

Attached are records responsive to your requests. The School District has redacted information pursuant to the following exemptions set forth in the Act:

5 ILCS 140/7(1)(b) – Private information as defined by the Act;

5 ILCS 140/7(1)(c) – Personal information contained within public records, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

5 ILCS 140/7(5)(r) - Information prohibited from being disclosed by the Illinois School Student Records Act.

The information provided fulfills our obligation to your FOIA. To the extent your request has been denied by the District FOI Officer, you may appeal this decision to the Illinois Attorney General - Public Access Counselor: 500 S. 2nd Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701, Phone: 1-877-299-FOIA or (1-877-299-3642), Fax: (217) 782-1396, E-mail: public.access@ilag.gov . You may also appeal this decision by filing suit for injunctive relief in the circuit court for McHenry County, Illinois.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me 815-788-5000.

Sincerely,

Clare F. Bourne
Freedom of Information Officer
Crystal Lake School District 47

Educational Excellence for All Students is Our Passion and Commitment.

**REQUEST FOR ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS
PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (5ILCS 140)**

Date of Request: 8/1/22 FOIA Record # _____
Name: Judy Maloney Organization: _____
Address: 181 Durango Dr. Phone Number: 847.987.7177
Gilberts, IL 60136

Pls. email response to: judymaloney.13@gmail.com

I HEREBY REQUEST ACCESS TO THE FOLLOWING RECORDS:

- ① *Copies of the applications & responses to the survey questions posed by the Board of the 9 individuals who expressed interest in being appointed to the Board seat vacated by Betsy Lee; and the names of the applicants.*
- ② *The criteria the Board was looking for, and how they chose to seat Ms. Devon Sessmer.*

Within 5 business days of the District receiving your request, you are entitled to a response, or notice that the district is in need of additional processing time (not to exceed an additional 5 business days). When our response is complete, we will contact you.

The District's response, including all supporting documents, and FOIA request with all submitted information, will be posted online under "Freedom of Information" on the District 47 website. District 47 provides this service as a public courtesy for no fee. Documents will be posted within 10 business days from our response to your request.

Fees will apply after the initial limited amount of black and white copies are provided. Actual cost of color or abnormal size copies will apply.

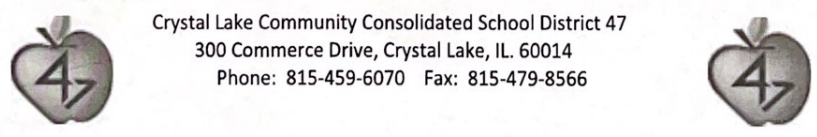
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:
The District's response and records were accessed by: In House Inspection Pick-up Mail Fax Email

Date: _____ Time: _____

AMT REC'D: _____ Check# _____ Cash _____

FOIA Officer: _____

Witness: _____



Timestamp	Email Address	First & Last Name, Address, phone number	Present Employment	Do you have children enrolled in D47 at the present time? What is your involvement in District 47 past or present?	Why are you applying for the Board seat?	What do you believe is the primary role of a school board member?	What experience do you have serving on other corporate or non-profit boards?	If appointed as a Board member could and would you support the district implementing a mandate or change that you personally disagree with but agreed to under the oath of office. Please explain.	How would you handle a disagreement with a fellow board member's opinion.	I meet all the requirements for service as a Board of Education Member for an Illinois public school district and certify that I have no information or know of any reason that would make me ineligible for a position on the Board of Education. By signing your name below you certify the above statement is correct and accurate.
6/24/2022 20:10:27	[REDACTED]	Melissa Katz Artega [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	I have been thrilled to integrate myself within our district, both as a parent, and as a professional. As a parent, I am a very proud Mom to an incoming kindergarten student and third grade student. I have been [REDACTED] volunteer for the past three years in my child's classrooms as well as a room parent for several parties. We have participated in volunteering and attending pie distribution fundraisers, Feet Meet, book fairs and many other events sponsored by the PTO. In addition, I was asked to serve as the school's parent representative for PBIS where I attend monthly meetings along with the PBIS team. As a [REDACTED] and community leader, I have initiated several partnerships with District 47. We have joined together for Open Books, Open Dialogues through the CLFL, presented on a panel discussion during the People in Need Forum (PIN) through the Youth Empowerment Consortium that I founded and volunteered clinical services during the SOS screeners at the Middle Schools.	We are embarking upon a mental health crisis and I believe that our school district may benefit from my area of expertise coupled with my drive for positive community impact. The newest CDC data suggests that almost 40% of students have experienced a mental health disturbance in the past few years. In our own communities, these kids are linked to poor mental health, lower academic performance and lifelong health risk behaviors. I work with these kids, their caregivers, their teachers and their loved ones on a daily basis. I also am a parent who raised very small children during these challenging times. I believe that my ability to listen patiently, generate information from empirically validated studies and manage very difficult situations would make me a good fit for the current climate. I also would be able to connect other community partners that align with the strategic plan to engage families and our community, increase social and emotional learning and facilitate an environment that provides diversity, equity and inclusion for all students and their families.	I believe that the role of a Board member is to represent and respond to the priorities, values and beliefs of our community as they pertain to the education of the whole child. As a leader in our district, Board members make decisions that will best serve all of the students in our schools.	Currently, I serve as Board Secretary for [REDACTED] for [REDACTED] for the [REDACTED] for the [REDACTED] the co-chair of the program committee and on the succession planning committee. As a director, I also attend [REDACTED] board meetings to report on organizational dynamics such as staffing, finances or programming developments. Finally, I serve on the [REDACTED] with [REDACTED] as well as [REDACTED].	A Board should be seated with members who are vulnerable, articulate and willing to engage in respectful conversations that inspire growth and learning. While I very much appreciate that I will not personally agree with all of the decisions made by the Board, I will act as a united front with my governance team, serving in the best interest of the children in our community.	I believe all healthy discussions come with many viewpoints and an openness to challenge assumptions and question biases. When my personal opinion differs from others, including fellow Board members, I find myself gathering, listening and thinking through all the relevant and factual data presented. With respect for others and a desire for my own personal growth, I am able to view the world from the lenses of others and truly try to understand their perspective. Even when I do not personally agree, I am able to respectfully work alongside others in our joint mission to best serve the community at large.	Melissa Katz Artega
6/26/2022 12:47:56	[REDACTED]	Lea Grover [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Yes, I have four children enrolled in D47 at this time. My involvement has been as an occasional volunteer parent.	As a [REDACTED] and a parent in the district, I believe that I have relevant skills to bring to the table that would help keep the school district running in a way that is fair, safe, and equitable to all students.	To help guide the school district's policies in a way that prioritizes and advances the needs of its students.	I have not served on a board, but I currently serve as an executive in a non-profit and work closely with the board.	Yes, I accept that the rules of a democratic managing body do not allow for any one person to have their way all the time, and that compromise is essential in governance.	With civil discussion. Never with ad hominem attacks.	Lea Grover
6/28/2022 9:03:25	[REDACTED]	Michael Mueller [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	2: 1 going into 3rd grade and 1 going into 8th grade. None	As a long-time Crystal Lake resident, local business owner, and parent to three daughters who have/are attending D47 schools, I feel called to give my time, experience and knowledge to help the kids, schools and the community.	I believe that the primary role of a board member is to help ensure the safety and success of all students, staff and parents by listening, engaging and making thoughtful decisions.	I was a member of our Homeowners Association for 10 years, serving as treasurer for four of those years. On the corporate side, I am the co-owner and President of a local engineering and manufacturing company in Lake in the Hills, IL. As a small business owner, I am involved with and responsible for all decisions encompassing accounting, human resources, sales, engineering and production.	I experienced this situation last year. My company staffs over 20 office and factory employees. We fall under local, state and federal mandates. During the COVID-19 pandemic, one of these mandates was for mask wearing, which was a divisive topic. I understood both sides of the issue, but did not agree with the Governor over-stepping his authority. Even though I did not agree, I enforced mask-wearing on site to comply with the mandate for all of our employees. One of my employees had very strong beliefs and opposed wearing a mask. I felt it was important to engage and reason with him as his views and concerns were important to him and we believe in open lines of communications. I wanted him to understand our desire to accommodate and work with him while still finding ways to meet the mandate. I met with him twice to discuss our position as an Illinois business following the mandate. I tried to give him options and ways to accommodate his concerns. He worked in our factory on a heavy machine. Much of the time, he was alone in his work space and very distanced from others. I offered that he could take his mask off at his machine, but when he came into the office, shipping, or communal areas of our building, he needed to mask. I made every effort to accommodate him. I let him have two weeks off to decide on my offer. He ultimately did not agree to our masking accommodations, so I had to terminate his employment. When implementing a mandate or change that causes strong reactions and disagreements, it is important to engage all sides and listen to all concerns and have conversations. Being inflexible and unaccommodating, and ignoring and dismissing concerns is damaging to relationships and the community being served.	I am co-owner of my company with my older brother, and both our parents work for us. Needless to say, I am well-versed in disagreement and conflict resolution. Mutual respect, empathy, and the ability to compromise are tools I use every day. At the end of the day, we all have the same goal, so we can always work through the disagreements to come up with the best solution to that day's problem. With regards to the Board, disagreements are inevitable and, in my opinion, welcome. Having seven people who agree on everything makes for an "undiverse" board and one I question would be in the best interests of the community. Differing opinions and healthy discussion can lead to productive outcomes. Once the vote is taken and a course of action decided, it's in everyone's best interests, especially those who lost the vote, to commit and support the decision.	Michael J Mueller
6/28/2022 15:53:22	[REDACTED]	Devon Hubbard Tessmer [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Yes, my [REDACTED] and going into [REDACTED]. I am currently on the PTO Board at [REDACTED].	I was approached by a couple current board members when they knew that there would be an opening this summer. Afterwards I gave it some thought, talked to my family, community members, teachers etc. I decided that it is something I would like to do because it checks all the boxes for me. 1. My kids are in d47 2. Public service is one of my core values. 3. I was born and raised in Crystal Lake and I want to give back as much as I was given by this amazing community.	I believe the primary role of a school board member is to do what is right for the kids. I think you do this by listening to the community, discussing ideas and researching options to determine the right path that will ultimately bring the best outcomes for the most kids possible.	I have served two terms on the CASA of McHenry County board. I am on the Exemplar boards for our business.	I would support the mandate or change as long as it was given the proper due diligence and the majority of the board voted in favor.	I believe that listening is the answer to resolving any disagreement. If I am able, I would try to do this in the least public way possible so that the board can continue to present as a unified group.	Devon Hubbard Tessmer
6/28/2022 21:03:07	[REDACTED]	Debbie Gorecki [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	I have [REDACTED] who will be in [REDACTED]. I have been PTA vice-president, parent volunteer, para-educator, teacher, mentor, served on multiple district and school committees, developed and presented continuing education for the district and served as CLETA president and grievance chair. Also, when working for [REDACTED], I used my former experience as a Reading Recovery teacher to volunteer weekly in the Palatine school district and at Indian Prairie to work with students who needed additional help and did not officially qualify for services.	I am applying for the Board seat because I would like the opportunity to serve my community and the school district. I believe my love for public education, twenty-one years as an educator, six years as a [REDACTED] as well as my life experiences make me uniquely qualified for this position.	The primary role of a school board member is to honor the oath of office by abiding by the six Foundational Principles and Code of Conduct set forth in the IASB School Board Governance Basics.	I have served multiple times on the United Way Allocation Board.	Yes, because taking an oath as a BOE member is a promise to honestly and faithfully represent the whole community, follow the laws, policies and procedures that apply to education and not to simply follow my own interests or personal preferences.	More often than not I believe that disagreements are a lack of understanding. My response is always to ask clarifying questions in order to better understand a colleague's opinion. Many times, further discussion will lead to a shared understanding and/or a mutual respect for one another's thought processes.	Debbie Gorecki
6/28/2022 21:10:59	[REDACTED]	Kathrine Georges [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Both of my children attended and graduated from District 47.	I have previously contemplated running for a school board position. However certain life experiences needed to take precedence. In last couple of years the thought of participating on the board continued and with this opportunity, it is time to walk through the door that has been opened. My daughter was influenced greatly by one of her elementary school teachers and since has had the aspiration to become a teacher and is her chosen major. School experience can have a major impact in a child's life including enjoyment of school, focusing on academics, well being, social interactions, conflict resolution, overcoming life circumstances and so much more. People who are educated are more apt to have opportunities whether its a degree, a trade or simply knowing at least the basics. I was a youth athletic coach and know first hand the impact of a positive mentor and ability to assist not only the star athlete but also the diamond in the rough. I may not be an educator but being a school board member provides the opportunity to work as a team to strive for the ultimate goal of providing the best education experience possible - stepping stone for all children.	To evaluate, implement and oversee the districts vision and goals. This would include discussion of policies, budget oversight and impact of such decisions on the children and the community.	I have not served on a "board". However I have served and continue to serve on committees for the corporation of which I am employed. Duties of serving on committees include review organizational goals and objectives, evaluation of client impact both externally and internally. Having open dialogue to question policies, determining communication, speculating on how clients will react to prepare for their potential questions and concerns. Ultimately working across multiple departments, personalities and level in organization to work together to meet the expectations and achieve best outcomes. Checks and balances are important.	I think this is a loaded question that based on answer already may exclude an applicant. I would not be able provide you with an answer, support or the lack of would definitely be dependent on the change or mandate. I would need to ask you what is meant by "but agreed to under the oath of office?" Is it in the policy of a board member to need to be in agreement with everything? I am willing to have open dialogue and by no means does it need to be my way or highway. To simply arbitrarily state I will be in agreement regardless of mandate or change, I think is ridiculous of anyone to commit too. If the board is simply to rubber stamp whatever the mandate is, then why have a board? I would hope that the Oath of the office is to promise to analyze, critique, discuss, potentially seek middle ground or pursue alternative solutions based on feedback and what overall is best for the children and community of which we serve.	Well, I wouldn't resort to insults or hostile conversation/interaction. I would be respectful and would engage in dialogue as to what is influencing their opinion and hopeful they would engage with me as well. So many events in life can shape one's opinion and its important when there is a disagreement to be able to have a discussion.	Kathrine Georges

Timestamp	Email Address	First & Last Name, Address, phone number	Present Employment	Do you have children enrolled in D47 at the present time? What is your involvement in District 47 past or present?	Why are you applying for the Board seat?	What do you believe is the primary role of a school board member?	What experience do you have serving on other corporate or non-profit boards?	If appointed as a Board member could and would you support the district implementing a mandate or change that you personally disagree with but agreed to under the oath of office. Please explain.	How would you handle a disagreement with a fellow board member's opinion.	I meet all the requirements for service as a Board of Education Member for an Illinois public school district and certify that I have no information or know of any reason that would make me ineligible for a position on the Board of Education. By signing your name below you certify the above statement is correct and accurate.
6/29/2022 0:12:17	[REDACTED]	Courtney Hand [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<p>1. Yes, three of my four children are enrolled in D47. In the fall [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are in 4th grade and [REDACTED] is in 3rd grade. As far as my involvement in D47, before the birth of my 4th child, which coincided with the beginning of the pandemic, I was a parent volunteer at [REDACTED]. I have also spoken on behalf of families at board meetings on a couple of occasions. On one such occasion, several years ago, I learned about the pushback from the community that the Glacier Ridge principal was receiving for wanting to build a fence to help prevent some of his students from escaping school grounds. I didn't know any of the students in the self-contained program at Glacier Ridge. [REDACTED] and I went to a board meeting in order to convey the importance of a fence for the children served by Glacier Ridge. If I'm not mistaken, [REDACTED] the Glacier Ridge principal thanked me for doing so.</p>	<p>2. I want to be a voice for the parents in our community. Specifically, I can provide a unique perspective as the parent of a child who has special needs.</p> <p>A behavior therapist once told me that she spent many years in a classroom setting with autistic children but that it wasn't until she served these children in their own homes that she finally understood the day to day struggles that they and their families faced. [REDACTED] I know these challenges first hand. Through [REDACTED] I know these particular consultants could be truly represented if I am selected. In order to promote equity in special education, I think it is crucial to include a parent of a child with special needs on the school board.</p> <p>Growing up in [REDACTED] I attended racially and socio-economically diverse schools. From 1st grade until 8th grade I received an excellent education through District 205's academically accelerated magnet program. I am very thankful for the public school education I received during those formative years. I developed such a love of learning which I hope to pass on to my children. I know that the educators in our community of Crystal Lake have that same goal in mind! As a school board member I want make sure that we are continuing to provide our students and teachers with school environments that are able to foster that love of learning for all.</p> <p>Beyond my experiences as a parent, I also have a background in accounting and finance which I think would be beneficial for budget review meetings.</p>	<p>4. I believe the primary role of a school board member is to work towards making an excellent education both accessible and equitable for all children in the community.</p> <p>3. I believe the primary role of a school board member is to provide oversight of the school district's budget and high-level policy decisions. But, more importantly, in performing this role, the school board (and its members) must work to make sure that our schools are the best schools they can be, meeting the needs of ALL of the students in the district.</p> <p>A board member is one of seven individuals who, acting together, serve the best interests of the parents and students in the district by advancing policies that reflect the values and academic goals of the community, and put forth budgets and enter into contracts that spend our hard earned tax dollars in as fiscally responsible manner possible.</p>	<p>4. I have served on several not-for-profit boards.</p> <p>Most recently I was the treasurer for my church's women's club. I maintained cash accounts, prepared budgets and presented financial updates at monthly board meetings.</p> <p>Before living in Crystal Lake, I lived in Chicago. I served on the board of The Dog and Pony Theater Company, a small theater company, and organized one of its annual fundraisers.</p> <p>From not long after graduating from college until I moved to the Northwest suburbs from Chicago, I served on the Athletic Advisory Council at DePaul University. I was the recipient of athletic and academic scholarships and serving on this council was one of the ways I could give back. My responsibilities included helping organize alumni events and encouraging fellow alumni from my sport to financially contribute to DePaul Athletics.</p>	<p>6. I know that everyone comes to the table with a lifetime of different experiences that have shaped their opinions. If we seek to understand a person's story we will be better equipped to understand their perspective. I will respectfully share my opinions with those who share opposing views. If we can't reach an agreement, my hope is that we will at least gain an understanding of how the other person arrived at their opinion.</p> <p>Could you please provide me with a copy of the oath of office? Without a copy of the oath of office I cannot give this question the proper consideration that it deserves.</p>	Courtney Hand	
6/29/2022 10:51:53	[REDACTED]	Dave Lowitzki [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<p>I currently have two children enrolled in District 47, both of which will be enrolled [REDACTED] this fall and who attend [REDACTED] in addition, I grew up in District 47 schools having attended [REDACTED] and participating in numerous District 47 athletics and extracurricular programs. My experience growing up in District 47 is one of the key reasons that, after having children, I returned to Crystal Lake so that my children would have a similar educational experience.</p>	<p>I believe in the power of public education. I come from a family of educators (my mother recently retired from District 47 and my sister currently works in [REDACTED]), and I believe that public schools are both the bedrock of our society and essential to a functioning democracy. It is our public schools that allow all students the opportunity to thrive. And as someone who has been actively involved in policy-making at the state level for the past 15 years, I know that the best way to get involved is at the local level, and I want to take an active role in continuing to make sure that our local schools are the best that they can be.</p>	<p>A school board member's primary role is to provide oversight of the school district's budget and high-level policy decisions. But, more importantly, in performing this role, the school board (and its members) must work to make sure that our schools are the best schools they can be, meeting the needs of ALL of the students in the district.</p> <p>A board member is one of seven individuals who, acting together, serve the best interests of the parents and students in the district by advancing policies that reflect the values and academic goals of the community, and put forth budgets and enter into contracts that spend our hard earned tax dollars in as fiscally responsible manner possible.</p> <p>I am founder and president of my own engineering firm. This appointment would be my first seat on this type of governance board.</p>	<p>I could and would support the district in implementing a mandate or change that I personally disagreed with. I understand that "majority rules" – and that it is our role as board members to make the best decisions (and votes) that we can, knowing that there are times where the majority of the board may disagree with me.</p> <p>Quite honestly, it depends upon the policy. For example, I would not support a policy that would marginalize persons or groups for characteristics that are immutable such as race, color, etc... even if a majority of the board were to somehow pass such a policy, legally notwithstanding. In the case of policies that do no such harm, but that I personally disagree with, I recognize the need for the board to provide unified support.</p>	<p>Quite simply, I would talk to them and try to better understand where they are coming from to form that opinion. I hope they too would be interested in better understanding how I am reaching my differing opinion. I have been actively involved in the policy-making process at the state level for 15 years – I know that the process of making decisions can be a messy and difficult one. But I also know that the best way to get through the "difficult mess" is to maintain my own integrity and treat my fellow board members with respect.</p> <p>My philosophy is to try to find common ground, if it exists. To understand where the other person is coming from, and why the disagreement exists. After that to seek a compromise, if at all possible. If compromise is not possible, to agree to disagree. The goal is not necessarily to agree, but to understand and respect one another.</p>	David Lowitzki	
6/30/2022 7:51:04	[REDACTED]	Theodore Shew [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<p>Not currently. I have 2 children who were D47 students in the past.</p>	<p>To serve the community which has given much to my family, and to help D47 face the challenges of today while passing on a tradition of strong academics and individual goodness.</p>	<p>A board member is one of seven individuals who, acting together, serve the best interests of the parents and students in the district by advancing policies that reflect the values and academic goals of the community, and put forth budgets and enter into contracts that spend our hard earned tax dollars in as fiscally responsible manner possible.</p> <p>I am founder and president of my own engineering firm. This appointment would be my first seat on this type of governance board.</p>	<p>I am founder and president of my own engineering firm. This appointment would be my first seat on this type of governance board.</p> <p>Quite honestly, it depends upon the policy. For example, I would not support a policy that would marginalize persons or groups for characteristics that are immutable such as race, color, etc... even if a majority of the board were to somehow pass such a policy, legally notwithstanding. In the case of policies that do no such harm, but that I personally disagree with, I recognize the need for the board to provide unified support.</p>	<p>My philosophy is to try to find common ground, if it exists. To understand where the other person is coming from, and why the disagreement exists. After that to seek a compromise, if at all possible. If compromise is not possible, to agree to disagree. The goal is not necessarily to agree, but to understand and respect one another.</p>	Theodore Shew	