


SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE APPLICATION & BACKGROUND

Note: This information will be released to media personnel and the general public.

Candidate First & Last Name: Joel Hollerich	Home Phone: 952-220-5562
Resident Address: 75 Balsam Lane	Work Phone:
City/State/Zip: Madison Lake, MN 56063	Email: joel.hollerich@gmail.com
Place of Employment: Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership	
Children in the District: James and Noah (East high school), Julia and Elyse (PWMS)	
Background: see attached	
1. Explain why you would like to serve on the Mankato Area School Board. see attached	
2. How can you contribute to a successful school board? see attached	
3. Is there anything else you would like to share with the School Board? see attached	
Signature: 	Date: 8-6-2024

Background: I grew up in Garden City MN, attended LCWM and Mankato State University, and moved to the twin cities metro area after college. I moved to Madison Lake 7 years ago. My mother was an elementary school teacher for her entire working career. I have four children who have been in four different schools in district 77, and my wife has worked in the district for several years in a few different roles. I have worked primarily in banking and/or for non-profits for my adult life. I have helped to coach baseball and football, and served at church in various roles over the last 25 years. Recently, my work has been focused on housing for low and moderate income families.

1. Why I would like to serve: Simply, I want to make the world a better place, and I think I can do that by serving on the school board and helping to provide a great education for our students. In more detail, I want to serve on the district 77 school board because I want every child in the Mankato area to get a great education that prepares them for the workforce or additional education, and gives all students critical thinking skills that are required to fully participate in the world around them. The Mankato area needs people who are ready to work in health care, education, agriculture, manufacturing, trades, and services. We should be able to produce those workers within our own education system and not count on bringing people in from somewhere else, but should also have a thriving economy that does attract new investment and ideas. A great school system can help attract that outside talent when needed. Education can open doors for people in this country and help people achieve their dreams. But we're turning out too many students who cannot read, struggle with math, and can't think critically. I care about our community and the people in it. I want my children to have the best education possible, so they can have access to as many opportunities as possible after graduation. I think we all want that for our families, and I want to help ensure that maximization of choices for every household in the community.
2. I want a great school experience for students, staff, parents, and area employers. I've worked in positions where I was hiring new staff and looking at resumes and skills, and I know what kinds of skills employers say they are looking for and what is really needed. Having worked in housing, I know that we have a severe lack of people going into building trades, and other trades, where someone can earn a good living without having to taking on a 20 year debt. I've also seen a lot of young people who lack problem solving skills and the ability to think critically, not just repeat back information that was presented in a slide show. Having a mother who was a teacher, and a wife who is a teacher, and being part of four different school districts in my life, I have seen schools run in a variety of ways and I think I can help bring the best pieces of what I have seen to the board room. With experience in economics, finance, accounting, and banking, I can help with budgeting and trying to do more with less like the district seems to need to do each year. I also know the importance of needs, such as more teachers and more paras in the classroom, versus wants like a new turf field. A teacher shouldn't have to publish a wish list on Amazon to make sure he/she has the things that are needed to educate students.
3. When I was a kid, my parents thought about enrolling me in Mankato schools to give me access to more opportunities than I had in a smaller district. Today, parents are enrolling kids in smaller districts to get away from Mankato. We can go back to being a district to which parents look forward to sending their children. We need to maintain our AP offerings, make sure we keep band, and choir, and shop, and other non-college prep classes. We

need to show kids that there are lots of good and honorable jobs to be had that don't require a college degree. We need to encourage entrepreneurship in our schools so that we can continue our good and diverse economy here in Mankato. Our schools need to be safe, and staffed with the resources to protect students and staff, and support kids who are struggling with issues not related to academics if at all possible. I think we also need to encourage parent engagement, and find ways to help parents be involved, such as ride sharing to concerts and sporting events, and scheduling conferences that can also accommodate parents who work second and third shift positions. And we need to make sure all our students can be as successful academically as they desire to be. I think the strategic roadmap has too little focus on academic success and too much focus on the school environment. While students need to have a place where they feel safe and feel comfortable being themselves, they also need to be supported in being able to read at grade level.