



Application Information	
Name	PJ Striker
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City, Zip Code	St. Anthony, MN 55418
Requirements to Hold Office	
• At least 21 years of age • U.S. Citizen and eligible to vote • Resident of School District 282 for at least 30 days • No record of criminal sexual misconduct for which registration is required	
I verify that I meet these requirements:	
Signature	
Date	
Application Submission	
Return completed application by September 20, 2024.	
By email: bphillip@isd282.org By mail: District Office Ben Phillip, School Board Chair 3303 33rd Avenue St. Anthony, MN 55418	

Application Questions
1. Why would you like to serve on the St. Anthony-New Brighton School Board?

I grew up in New Brighton, MN. I moved to St. Anthony in 2017. I am a foster parent to two teen girls, stepparent to two teen boys and a parent to a young boy. I have a vested interest in this district's continued excellence and growth. I believe that a strong school system impacts the entire community positively and creates opportunities for all community members.

I believe that having children at each level of education, as well as my experience as a child/adolescent psychiatrist and medical director, give me a unique perspective and knowledge to be an asset on this board. I see the benefits from volunteering, both to myself and the community; I want to continue this work and bring my experience with children to bear within the community I live.

2. Please describe your background and experiences serving your community including your experience within a broad range of innovative and diverse settings. How would this service impact you as a board member?

I have had both lived experience and job opportunities which taught me the complexities of the human condition and the importance of community and school in creating a well-rounded citizen. In college at the U of MN, I worked as a peer advisor for the Honors Program. In this role, I reviewed college applications and worked with students on creating schedules and experiences that would help them through college and set them apart from other graduates. In medical school, I also helped review admission applications. These roles provided me a unique understanding about how family circumstances, school and extracurricular experiences, and relationships with mentors impact a person's opportunities throughout life. It also helped instill in me the importance of engaging in the community to lift up others around me.

Professionally, I can see on a daily basis the impact of our current reality on children and the importance of valuing mental wellbeing for our children. Currently, I work on an inpatient psychiatric unit. I see children with intense mental health needs and safety concerns. I truly enjoy my job and cannot imagine working in a clinic, seeing outpatients. However, I do often think about how I can use my knowledge to help children before they get to the point of needing inpatient mental health care. I believe very strongly that helping to create ways for positive social growth, physical outlets and creative outputs for our youth benefits everyone within the community. In this effort, I have volunteered on the Boosters Soccer board, the Kicks Soccer board and helped to found the St. Anthony Village Soccer Club. Seeing kids engage in athletic activities, build bonds with peers, and learn lifelong skills of advocating for themselves and learning to lose make the many hours feel like time well spent. As a board member, I would like to continue to support ways for kids to find a passion and trusted adults to mentor them onto a positive and healthy path.

I know that funding for education is always an issue. I have experience as a fundraiser, through my volunteer work on the Kicks board (supporting HS soccer), on the SANBE board and on the Fashionfest committee (fundraiser for Masonic Children's Hospital).

As a Medical Director for psychiatric units, I understand the importance and value of maximizing a budget and ensuring it aligns with priorities, as well as the importance of advocating for more resources. Similar to a school board position, I have had to work with a team to create a realistic budget (both yearly and over a larger revenue cycle).

This includes seeking out alternative funding options, such as foundation dollars, grants, and scholarships. In this leadership position, I have set policy and priorities based a vision to help all patients and then worked with key stakeholders to ensure priorities are funded. I have experience working with staff to understand and believe in the priorities we set and to then use the knowledge/resources provided to help the patients to their best ability. In this role, I am also being trained on working with the legislature, engaging with lawmakers on high priority issues. I feel this role would make me a strong board member, with experience in budgets, bringing in stakeholders and working with our legislators.

3. Describe your understanding of the role of a public school board and how it operates. What is the decision making process for a public school board? How would you react/respond if the majority of the board took an action that you voted against?

I believe the school board helps to establish policies and strategic priorities for the school district, in concert with the superintendent. This would include setting a budget and list of priorities with the goal of helping each student achieve their highest potential, as well as seeking out ways to measure success of our students. Additionally, the board is responsible for ensuring that we are making informed decisions by understanding and monitoring strategic metrics that allow us to track progress against a goal. The board should be available to the community for questions, concerns and complaints. I would view myself as representing the board at all times, whether at a HS soccer game or watching the Patriots marching band or taking a walk in Central Park. Given my work as a child psychiatrist, I am trained in managing high expressed emotion and helping to distill what others are saying into helpful language. These skills can be utilized in contentious meetings and with any complaints that come to the school board.

The decision-making process should include a clear question, data, thorough discussion and voting.

I understand that not everyone may see things as I do or may vote a different way. More important than the vote is the common understanding that everyone is open to looking at other perspectives, thoughts and real discussion can occur. If I am in the minority opinion after that, I would be disappointed, but move forward with the next task.

4. Describe your vision for public education.

I 100% believe that every child is guaranteed a high quality public education and that this education should help build each child into a functional, knowledge and curios citizen. This means transportation to get there daily (whether a reasonable walk or bus), breakfast/lunch and needed supplies (books, notebooks, pens, computer, tennis shoes, etc), and extracurricular activities that help build a more well-rounded student. This also means preparation for the next step after high school, whether that be college, trade school, work, etc. I believe there needs to be a combination of traditional individual and group learning, but also project based learning, hands on

learning and emotional learning. And all of this has to take into account what the community, parents, students are asking/hoping for and to determine if societal pressures should create change in our schools. Schools have an incredibly hard task to bring all these various responsibilities together. I believe we can do this via quality instruction, applying wellness principles (physical and mental health as priorities) and a grow mindset.

5. How do you see yourself contributing to advance the Vision of ISD282?

I believe strongly in the vision that we are committed to all learners in our district. I feel that our strength is our smaller size, committed families and the knowledge/skills of the people of our community. We can utilize our strengths to lift all students, to scaffold our learners to become functional, educated, thriving young adults. And we can do this by learning and collaborating with other districts and our community members to create innovative experiences and programs for our students.

I have one child that struggled with whether college was right for her. As parents, we had to look at different “success” metrics for her; I’m sure there are many families that have similar situations. Whether it’s college or athletics post high school or work opportunities, after graduation life is different for everyone. I want to help ensure we are supporting each child to achieve what they view as successful and push them to achieve more than they believe they can.

6. How would you describe an equitable school system? Tell us about your commitment to providing educational equity in ISD282.

One of the things I have appreciated in my time in St. Anthony is the increasing diversity of the school system. I see this first hand in the high school soccer program, which has a high percentage of students of color. The Kicks board worked to have communication in Spanish and have a Spanish speaking announcer at home games. I have seen the differences in financial situations of some of our students as well, through my work on the SANBE Foundation.

Equitable schools ensure that all students have the needed resources and opportunities to learn, no matter their finances, race, gender, sexual orientation. What one person believes to be success and what they need to achieve that success is unique to that person. And it is our responsibility to balance supporting each individual's goals/needs to become successful and ensuring that all students achieve a reasonable level of educational standards. I will commit to always listening, to seeking out others of differing views or those who may be under-represented, and to work towards ensuring all the students in the district have what they need from our schools to be successful.

School Board Vacancy Resources

School Board Vacancy 2024 Timeline:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fBQoRuBNpUUPn6VVh4fNDPu -
WY4IxpFz6cyBbTZnKE/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fBQoRuBNpUUPn6VVh4fNDPu-WY4IxpFz6cyBbTZnKE/edit?usp=sharing)

M.S. 123B.09 Subd. 5b:

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/123B.09>

MSBA Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDgfX6tgOCM>

Legal Requirements of School Board Members:

[https://search.mnmsba.org/api/download/file-1607723148509-download-
Legal%20Requirements%20for%20School%20Board%20Members.pdf](https://search.mnmsba.org/api/download/file-1607723148509-download-Legal%20Requirements%20for%20School%20Board%20Members.pdf)

MSBA Running for School Board Powerpoint:

[https://search.mnmsba.org/api/download/file-1632438953840-download-
Running%20for%20School%20Board_A%20Primer%20for%20Candidates.pdf](https://search.mnmsba.org/api/download/file-1632438953840-download-Running%20for%20School%20Board_A%20Primer%20for%20Candidates.pdf)

Responsibilities of a School Board:

[https://search.mnmsba.org/api/download/file-1622569249699-download-
Responsibilities%20of%20the%20School%20Board.pdf](https://search.mnmsba.org/api/download/file-1622569249699-download-Responsibilities%20of%20the%20School%20Board.pdf)

Standards of School Board Leadership:

[https://search.mnmsba.org/api/download/file-1625164038275-download-
Standards%20for%20School%20Board%20Leadership.pdf](https://search.mnmsba.org/api/download/file-1625164038275-download-Standards%20for%20School%20Board%20Leadership.pdf)