

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Sargent Public Schools Board of Education?

Cory Beran: “I am interested in serving on the board to ensure the future of our school system so that our community will have a school system that is beneficial to our students, parents, teachers, and ultimately our entire community.”

Madeline Clayton: “I am hoping to make a positive impact by helping initiate a plan for a thriving school and not just a surviving school.”

Larry Gibbens: “I served previously on the school board and feel that I can use that experience to help Sargent Public Schools grow and improve in the future.”

Cory Grint: “I’ve been a Sargent student, administrator, and a parent of four successful Sargent students. I’ve also been an educator for 30 years so I have first-hand knowledge of the power and importance of a good education. After investing 17 of those years into Sargent Public Schools, now that I’m not working for the district, I can continue to give back to my home town by serving the students and staff on the Sargent Board of Education.”

Martin Riddle: “To help create the best learning experience for the students and to limit the tax dollars collected from land owners.”

Matthew Dean Smith: “My goal for running for the school board is to ensure the curriculum is up to date, I would like to see some updates to the facilities and to try to make decisions that are in the best interests of the students, faculty, and district.”

Anthony Wagner: “I want to be more involved in the community. I have children in school and want a good education and learning environment for them and all students in the district.”

2. What are your qualifications for seeking a seat on the Sargent Public Schools Board of Education? Describe your involvement with the schools in the last five years.

Cory Beran: "I am an active parent and community member and want to ensure our school's future is secure. Previously before working in the community as a rancher I taught as a teacher for 3 years and I feel that time helps give me an understanding of how school systems work from a day-to-day aspect. In the past five years, I've been an active volunteer with our ag department/FFA along with other sports activities."

Madeline Clayton: "I believe my best qualification is that I am a graduate of Sargent High School and am very proud of that fact. Our 3 girls are also Sargent alumni who went on to get degrees at a 4-year college. I want our future graduates to be just as proud. I also work in this community and know just how vital a school is for the future of all downtown businesses. My presence has been lacking in being directly involved in the school in the last 5 years. I have listened to and had discussions regarding the problems the school has experienced and am hoping to bring that knowledge to the board."

Larry Gibbens: "I have served two terms on the school board so I have a working understanding of the role the school board has in the management of the school. I have also served as a Sargent Township board member and in my personal job, I am responsible for managing personnel, and overseeing an approximately \$500,000.00 yearly budget."

Cory Grint: "I have unique insights of Sargent Public Schools having been a student, an administrator, and a parent of Sargent students. With these invested perspectives, a masters degree in education administration, and over 20 years of experience going to board meetings, I feel that I am uniquely qualified to be a school board member."

Martin Riddle: “As a board member we have up dated busses approved math and reading curriculum and up dated lighting in many parts of the school thats a few of the things that have been done that I was invalved with.”

Matthew Dean Smith: “I am a graduate of Sargent Public Schools and have four children currently enrolled, I am also a past school board member I have served two previous terms. I am familiar with the school policies. I have also attended trainings offered to school board members and understand the duties of being on the board.”

Anthony Wagner: “A big part of my job is communicating and building relationships with business partners. With that comes implementing best practices and sometimes corrective actions to achieve the best possible outcomes for all involved. I believe these experiences and qualities would be beneficial to the board.

3. What vision do you have for Sargent Public Schools that will set you apart

from the other candidates?

Cory Beran: “ My vision includes an active plan to revitalize our school system. For our students, parents, teachers, and our community to have a thriving school system we must continue to innovate and be willing to move forward. This may include things like day-to-day activities and lesson plans for teachers and students, protocols that protect the health and well-being of our students and staff, or the continued improvement of our facilities. Whichever issue our school faced we must be proactive in looking to face those issues and resolve them for the better of our entire school system and community.”

Madeline Clayton: “I want to bring pride back to our school. I want the teachers to be discussing something funny a student said and not counting the days till their retirement. I want all staff to feel their concerns are being heard and will have action taken and not being tabled for another month. I want staff and students teaching and learning and enjoying their time at Sargent Public Schools.”

Larry Gibbens: “I am sure all those who filed for election have good ideas. For myself, I would like to find a financial path that would allow for updated facilities where needed, adequate staffing and a curriculum that will best help the students.”

Cory Grint: “I don’t know that it would set me apart from other candidates as anyone should have this as a goal, but my vision for Sargent Schools is for it to be one of the best small schools in the state of Nebraska. I recognize the challenges probably better than most, of accomplishing that, but I also have more experience than most on how to better accomplish that.”

Martin Riddle: “ Maintain quality teachers and keep the tax levy to a minimum.”

Matthew Dean Smith: “I would like to see some updates to the facility to make it more user friendly as well as more visually appealing. I have always pushed for an up to date curriculum as well as teaching methods or tools our staff can use for the advancement of students.”

Anthony Wagner: “ I don’t think there should be very different views among candidates. The number one goal is to have a good learning environment and get a basic education to prepare them for continuing education or the job market.”

4. What is your interpretation of the school’s mission statement?

The goal of the Sargent Public Schools is the development of capable and responsible, lifelong learners. We will prepare students for the global challenges and opportunities of their future by facilitating academic excellence in cooperation with students, parents, and the community.

Explain how you would be certain this statement is achieved in the district.

Cory Beran: “Every student that goes into our school system is unique and different, but with those differences, it is our responsibility for those influenced by us to have the tools to become successful. Success may look different for each individual but ultimately our students will become productive citizens for our country, and community, and have a positive influence on others as well as their own lives and create a positive path in their lives.”

Madeline Clayton: “I believe that statement is a huge responsibility, and we must encourage and help those staff members that are willing to take it on.”

Larry Gibbens: “The role of the Board in this mission should be to make sure the staff has the support needed to help the students achieve their goals after graduation. This mission statement should be discussed by the board as a group, in order to have a united focus.”

Cory Grint: “As an educator, I’ve always had a goal to help students become the most productive citizens they could be. I think the best way to work with this in the Sargent Public School’s Mission Statement is to make sure that students have the best opportunities to reach their potential. That means having class options, facilities, and prepared staff to reach those goals.”

Martin Riddle: “Maintain high teacher standards and offer students curriculum to prepare them for their future.”

Matthew Dean Smith: “My interpretation is, to give each student every possible opportunity to prepare for the next level whether it be college or work. This is achievable by utilizing the best teaching methods, curriculum, and staff available”

Anthony Wagner: “ My interpretation of the mission statement is to educate students and prepare them for life after school whether that is a career or higher education. To achieve this we need to ensure we have the right people and policies in place with open communication and accountability between everyone.”

5. What do you think are two of the most crucial issues currently facing the Sargent Public Schools District? What are your recommendations for the solutions to these issues?

Cory Beran: “ Finding new administrations and moving forward with that new leadership to build effective and productive relationships with our students, parents, and staff members and become a cohesive unit to meet the goals of our school

system. Better communication and understanding of the issues facing the school system. There seem to be many community members and parents who have issues or concerns and little way to bring those issues forward. There needs to be a better system to look at and resolve possible issues within our community and have a way to work through those issues. I would like to continue to see our school system continue to highlight all the great things they do on a day-to-day basis and highlight the great things we do and can do as a small rural school. Great things are happening and if other community members, parents, and students can see that then I feel that raises the bar of our standards and pushes everyone to better reach our goals as a school system.”

Madeline Clayton: “Finding well-qualified staff and administrators. Maintenance of the building. My solution for both is to use our alumni. Reaching out and asking them if they have interest in coming back to SHS in either an administrator or educator capacity or if they have recommendations for us to contact. Using our alumni that know grant writing to improve our building.”

Larry Gibbens: “From conversations with staff and others, I hear that the facilities are inadequate for current needs which would lead to the other concern, which is the ability to finance needed changes and still be responsive and responsible to the taxpayers. As far as solutions to these problems, again it needs to be a solution agreed on by the full board and any citizen who could assist in this.”

Cory Grint: “Funding and being fiscally responsible is always important, but the two most crucial issues I am concerned about are first attracting and retaining quality staff and second improving facilities.

To attract staff we need a competitive base salary, but what about other things that have been discussed such as: securing affordable housing for staff, and daycare options for staff and community kids

Improving facilities would take the development of a long term multilayer plan with things such as: continuing the installations of better yet more energy efficient lighting, replacing and securing interior doors and windows, a true renovation of parts of the building, addition of facilities such as while redesignating and opening up other areas

for better classroom spaces”

Martin Riddle:” Hiring new administration, keeping the building in good repair and appearance. budgeting for lighting and repairs.”

Matthew Dean Smith: “The most important issue is finding good administration to act as the foundation of the staff. I recommend an extensive search for candidates for these positions and to make sure to involve the staff and people of the district to help to decide who best fills these positions.”

Anthony Wagner: “ Two of the main issues I hear about or see are kids leaving for another school and our below-average test scores. To solve these issues, the root causes need to be examined and make sure current policy or new policy can help address these issues.”

**6. If elected, do you have any interest in serving on the negotiations committee?
Why or why not?**

Cory Beran: “ Yes, I would be interested. With my short teaching career along with my current role as a business and landowner in our school district, I feel there is a good connection to both sides of the table and that relationship can be built into a positive for both sides not simply a one versus another.”

Madeline Clayton: “I honestly don’t know the answer to that question. I have had siblings who were educators and friends who are educators so I may be a little biased.”

Larry Gibbens: “Yes, I would be interested, as staff salary is the biggest line item for the school.”

Cory Grint: “I would not have a problem serving on the negotiations committee and would be interested in sharing my thoughts and ideas on the negotiated agreement, but feel that with my background in education and close relationship with most of the current teachers that my talents would be a bigger benefit on other committees.”

Martin Riddle:” YES I have been on the negotiations committee and would like to be on it again to work with the teachers' committee to keep the teacher salaries in the average of our array of schools and be mindful of the taxpayers.”

Matthew Dean Smith: “Yes, I would serve on the negotiations committee. I feel that keeping the staff content and to have them feel appreciated for the work they do is a very important role of a board member.”

Anthony Wagner: “ I would be open to helping serve where it is needed.”

7. Is there any statement not addressed by the above questions that you would like to make?

Cory Beran: “ After what seems to be a roller coaster of a ride for our school district in the past year and a half I truly hope for this new board to help stabilize our school system and strengthen it going forward. Our school has faced great challenges and there are still more hurdles moving forward, but I hope that our students, staff, parents, and community can have a leadership system put in place that looks out for the best interest of our school and meet those challenges proactively moving forward.”

Madeline Clayton: “This is a quote I heard, and I think it says a lot “There is a reason

why the rearview mirror is so small and the windshield is so large". Let's learn from the past and look toward the future. S-A-R-G-E-N-T Sargent High Whoopee!"

Larry Gibbens: "I am glad to see the number of patrons who filed for office and I hope all of them stay involved, whether elected or not. I hope that whoever serves on the board, will work closely with the staff to make our school relevant and a point of pride for our community."

Cory Grint: "I have unique insights of Sargent Public Schools having been a student, an administrator, and a parent of four Sargent students. With these perspectives and my commitment to the community of Sargent.

Martin Riddle: No response

Matthew Dean Smith: "If elected I will put my best efforts towards making decisions that are best for the district and to work with the staff to address needs or concerns.

Anthony Wagner: " I believe the main role of the board is to ensure the overall success of everyone involved within the school. That involves making sure we maintain a good learning environment for the students and supporting staff and administrators with the tools they need to educate our children, while also being fiscally responsible to the taxpayers of the district."