

## ELECTIONS 2012

# Keys to the Candidates: MCCSC board

League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County  
October 4, 2012

### DISTRICT 2:

**Randy C. Barrett**

**John David Crane**

**Sue Wanzer**

### DISTRICT 4:

**David Sabbagh**

**Donovan Walling**

### DISTRICT 5:

**Keith K. Klein**

**“Mr. David” Wierhake**

### DISTRICT 2

#### **What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?**

**BARRETT:** B.S., M.S., and Ed.S. degrees. 38 years educational experience. Three grandchildren attending school in MCCSC. Randy and his wife Alice are members of SOCC.

**CRANE:** Graduate of Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology '90; Managing partner of local structural engineering firm since '98; father of (soon to be) 4 year old.

**WANZER:** ¥ Leadership role with MCCSC and other boards ¥ Fairview volunteer ¥ Broad understanding of MCCSC, community and education ¥ Former university administrator ¥ Ability to listen, learn, negotiate outcomes

#### **In view of declining state support, what are your strategies for funding public education?**

**BARRETT:** Budgets should be approved to put the maximum number of dollars in the classroom. It's proven fact, that the teacher in the classroom is the most effective tool for student learning. Because of my experience in completing several school budgets, I know ways to increase general fund support.

**CRANE:** Difficult to answer given the phrasing of question. Form(s) DOE SA545 suggests increasing amounts (2009 \$57,420,727 — ADM 10,584; 2010 \$59,105,416 — ADM 10,300; 2011 \$60,340,924 — ADM 10,315 '11; 2012 \$60,898,427 — ADM 10,327). DOE CFR also suggest increasing amounts (2009 \$58,691,312; 2010 \$60,180,946; 2011 \$61,465,804; 2012 EST\$62,023,306). In general, the manner in which funding is now derived should be considered to be more evenly distributed to Indiana residents across socioeconomic classes than other basis of funding. It would seem logical that the resources of all entities funded by taxpayers should be linearly proportional to the general economic well-being of the citizenry.

**WANZER:** Public education must remain public — I will continue to fight the “voucher” and privatization movement as I did with the resolution I introduced opposing vouchers for private education. Education must be the highest priority of state funding. SEmD we must continue to lobby the legislature to increase funding, improve salaries and reduce class sizes. At the same time, we must continue to work with our local community to find funding sources such as our Foundation and the past Referendum. I helped initiate the Referendum, believing that property taxes are the appropriate way for a community to fund public education.

**What needs would you focus on as a school board member?**

**BARRETT:** Develop policies that support teachers, innovation, and technology in the classroom. All policies should be in the best interest of Kids and their learning.

**CRANE:** I would focus on ensuring that the allocation of resources reflects the priorities of the community. I would also help work towards the goal of reducing all expenditures that do not directly “teach” children. Making sure that the school buildings, over a \$300M capital investment, receive proper maintenance would also be a priority. Currently only approx \$3.8M of approx \$11M budgeted for mx ACTUALLY goes towards maintenance of buildings.

**WANZER:** ¥Continue to strengthen the working relationship with the Superintendent ¥Ensure that environments are safe, nurturing and welcoming where each child finds an appropriate fit ¥ Develop new and effective ways to involve faculty in all levels of decision-making ¥ Continue to oppose the over-reliance on standardized test scores ¥ Create more effective ways for parent and public participation ¥ Ensure that education is developmental, taking all needs of each child into consideration ¥ Equalize health insurance payments so that the lowest paid do not pay the highest amounts ¥ Generate creative cost savings that will maintain or increase subject areas without decreasing numbers of teachers.

#### **DISTRICT 4**

**What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?**

**SABBAGH:** Lifelong educator: IU, Purdue, Ivy Tech, Bowling Green. Operated hi-tech business, directing, educating employees and staff. Deeply involved in the community: NFPs, City Council.

**WALLING:** A parent and grandparent, I was a public school teacher for sixteen years, a curriculum administrator for seven, and an education publisher for thirteen.

**In view of declining state support, what are your strategies for funding public education?**

**SABBAGH:** Report to the community the positive results and questionable uses of the referendum. Limited funding is likely, care must be taken in choices so we continue improvements. Support PLC's, improved teacher collaboration, using data to individualize student learning programs. Enhance partnerships with other community groups in improving early childhood education programs. Encourage the state and nation to increase investments in public school education. Begin preparing for another possible referendum. It is critical we analyze student outcomes resulting from decisions made and programs implemented to continually improve strategies.

**WALLING:** School boards are responsible for advocating the community's interests not only within the school corporation but also to state and federal authorities that often issue unfunded or underfunded mandates. But providing high-quality education also requires careful attention to current resources, including thoughtful analysis of education goals and needs, how best to deliver services, and comprehensive evaluation of programs and activities to ensure that funds are appropriately allocated and taxpayer money is well spent. Federal, state, and local resources are finite; goals must be prioritized to guarantee that schools deliver the best possible education for all students.

**What needs would you focus on as a school board member?**

**SABBAGH:** I would focus on the educational achievements of all our students. The education of our students is my reason for running for the school board. I am a collaborator and consensus builder, and would support MCCSC administrators and teachers in their efforts toward continual improvements in student outcomes. Our school professionals and our community can work together to benefit schoolchildren. I support on-going evaluations of our policies and goals keeping our focus on children first. I have the background and skills to help lead this effort for MCCSC.

**WALLING:** School boards, by definition, are policymaking bodies. Members are responsible for representing the needs and interests of the community, not a personal agenda. The overarching focus is on learning and how the board can help to ensure that teachers and students are provided the structures and resources to make high-quality education for all children a reality. Listening to the public and crafting policies that frame how the district goes about this important work in a way that best reflects the community's needs and interests are vital, as is making policy-driven decisions about issues of the moment.

## **DISTRICT 5**

### **What are your qualifications for the office you are seeking?**

**KLEIN:** ¥ Know the issues ¥ Assistant professor ¥ Education Degree ¥ Taught middle and high school ¥ Value education ¥ Long time community leader ¥ Excellent advocate for students, citizens and corporation.

**WIERHAKE:** Substitute teaching requires "60 hours college credit." My B.A. in Journalism (IU) with ten-plus years as "guest educator" (NEA title — angry or not) inspiring students.

### **In view of declining state support, what are your strategies for funding public education?**

**KLEIN:** The main strategy is to better educate the legislature and the general public of the considerable strengths public education brings to our citizens. Public education is losing a public relations battle that it is not contributing to the successes of society. The negative perception of public schools is leading to a decrease in public support evidenced in: demands to reduce funding, offer alternatives including vouchers to private schools, and provide national tests to guarantee that teaching and learning are taking place. These perceptions need to be reversed and that is part of a board member and the administration's job.

**WIERHAKE:** On my website — [my-mccsc.org](http://my-mccsc.org) — in larger-than-life print, I spell out my proposed "Three R's plus One" approach to addressing the challenges we face in the ever-changing arena of public education: Review. Rethink. Reduce. Rebuild. Would the 'old guard' support this progressive manifesto? If their M.O. showcased these last several years is any predictor of the future, then you have your answer. Is ever-increasing funding 'fundamental' to meeting the educational needs of our children? No. Are we responsible for making up the deficit brought on by declining state support? Or is our charge to work efficiently with those 'god-given' dollars?

### **What needs would you focus on as a school board member?**

**KLEIN:** ¥ Educators need to educate the American public about the real truth of the value and success of education and the role that MCCSC plays in this success. ¥ Educators must become politically savvy, and I would help our educators to increase confidence in this area. ¥ Work on how to achieve more positive outside publicity from people who believe in public schools. ¥ Ensure data that reflects the MCCSC schools accurately. ¥ Ensure that it is widely recognized that public schools are still the most viable means to meet the needs of those students least served in American society.

**WIERHAKE:** ¥ Cautious integration of new technology into the palette of instruction e.g. "A balance between iPads and iCan Use My Brain." ¥ Upgrading computer infrastructure and redesigning MCCSC website. ¥ Welcoming public comment beyond "You've got three minutes." e.g. more open forums to bring the public on board regarding issues such as \$2M bond for iPads or extended day. ¥ Serious review of administrative salaries/benefits to hopefully level the compensation playing field that currently gives administrators a 'sky's the limit' advantage over the 'nickel and

dimed' teachers and support staff — including substitute teachers. ¥ Later school day start time for middle and high schools.