

GEA School Board Candidate Vetting 2026 Questions

Candidate Name: **Anne Utech**

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Q: Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your own experience with public education.

A: My name is Anne Utech, and I'm honored to be seeking a School Board seat. I have been a Germantown resident since 2015. My husband, Mike, and I are raising 4 students in the Germantown district - this year we have 1 at Kennedy and 3 at Amy Belle. I volunteer frequently at my kids' schools as well as coach volleyball through the Recreation Department and Jr. Warhawks program. I serve as the current president of the Amy Belle PTA, so I have a unique view into the public education world through that. Both my husband and I attended public schools K-12 and I want to see our district's students have the same positive experience with public education that we did. Our experiences with public education within our family have been positive so far. The teachers and staff have been welcoming and work with each of our children to meet them where they are and encourage them to grow academically.

Q: Why do you want to (continue to) be a member of the school board?

A: I want to be a member of the board because I see a need for those new parent voices. I want to facilitate communication and develop relationships throughout the administration, staff, parent and student circles. The board needs members with students actively in our schools, who are passionate about making our district the premier area school by making policy decisions that promote strong academic growth for our students while being fiscally responsible.

Q: What do you see as the board's primary roles and responsibilities?

A: The Board's essential role includes creating policy that encourages a strong learning environment that teaches critical thinking while focusing on the core academics of math, science, history and reading and writing. The board also has the responsibility to wisely steward the budget.

Q: What do you believe are the current challenges that must be addressed by education/school boards?

A: One challenge faced by school boards is balancing high expectations for student education with limited resources. Boards also face the challenge of maintaining clear communication and trust with families and the community while navigating ever-changing state requirements. Ensuring access to high-quality education for all students, while remaining fiscally responsible, should be an ongoing priority.

Q: What would you do to attract and retain the best teachers and staff for our students?

A: I believe teachers and staff need to feel supported to do the best job they can. An administration and board that is available and accessible will allow staff to be heard. Advocating for fair compensation, within our budget, while doing our best to give staff the tools they need to support our students, will make it clear we desire to retain staff.

Q: How would you describe the role of the superintendent?

A: The superintendent should be the voice of the staff and administration. The role should include implementing the policies passed by the board, while being the biggest advocate for district staff at the Board's table.

Q: To what extent should the school board consider input and opinions from various groups (community, students and parents, superintendent, educators, politicians, etc.) in their decision making? Which group(s) do you feel the board's decisions should be most reflective of? Please explain your reasoning.

A: I believe it is imperative that the board consider input from staff, the superintendent, parents and students and taxpayers in their policy making. Each is important but all have different views. Our taxpayers fund a large part of the budget and we must be able to prove we're being responsible stewards of those funds. Parents are the at-home voices of what is working within the education structure. Students must be able to academically grow, and should be able to have input on how the curriculum is working in the school setting. The superintendent should have the big picture view of the district and its direction. And the staff is the frontline for educating the students in our district. Ultimately, the board should strive to uphold the policy that is shown to give the greatest benefit to our district's academics, while following the state laws and guidelines. It is impossible to make everyone happy, but the board should be able to explain WHY a decision was made.

Q: How do you view the role of the GEA (teacher union) in the Germantown School District?

A: I see the GEA as representing teachers at the board's table. The GEA should be advocating for issues that they feel are important to support the education of the students in Germantown School District.