

Watchmen Voter Guide for St. Maries School District Zone #4

*** Click on each candidate's name to see their completed questionnaire ***

	Joshua J. Harvey	Sandy S. Kennelly
1. What is your name, what office are you running for and why are you running for this position?	No Response Received	I am running for school board trustee because I am an advocate for public education and for our kids. I have served 2 elected terms in this position and 2 years prior to that as an appointed trustee. I am seeking re-election for a 3 rd term. I want to continue the work being done to improve student achievement, expand our Career & Technical Education programs, update and renovate our aging school buildings, and increase parent connections and community partnerships with our public schools. All 3 of my children attended and graduated from St Maries public schools. My professional background is in law and business, including running a Christian based non-profit elderly and disabled care organization with 300 employees. I bring experience, commitment and continuity to this position and hope the voters will choose me to continue in this role.
2. How could your school district be improved? Please provide your top 2-3 ideas.	No Response Received	Key areas for improvement in our district: (1) <u>Student Achievement</u> – Steps to achieve improvements must be continued and prioritized; (2) <u>Career and College Readiness</u> – Expand and improve programs so students reach graduation ready to enter the workforce or make informed choices and qualify to enter vocational/technical education programs or 4 year degree programs; (3) <u>Improve Trust</u> – Engage the community to assure them traditional conservative community values remain a priority in St Maries public schools; (4) <u>Upgrade Aging Facilities</u> – Find resources to renovate our buildings like the \$14 million Renew America's Schools grant recently awarded to the district to take the burden off local property taxpayers for these needs.
3. What is your educational philosophy and how do you plan to implement this philosophy as a member of the board of trustees?	No Response Received	<u>My philosophy</u> : Provide quality instruction to students so they master Idaho's established educational standards and obtain an Idaho accredited high school diploma at the end of their K-12 education. In the course of that mission, students need to be taught: (1) Skills and knowledge (the academics) needed to succeed in whatever career or educational path they choose; (2) How to research to find and verify accurate information; (3) How to exercise critical thinking and problem solving skills; (4) Our Constitution, history and system of government so they are prepared to participate as good citizens; (5) The value of a community that cares about each other and treats all with respect regardless of different backgrounds, opinions and experiences. There is no place in school or civilized society for bullying, harassing or ostracizing others; (6) How to develop their interests, passions and life skills to lead full and productive lives. <u>My Role in Implementing</u> : Board trustees set district policies, approve curriculum selections, approve staff hires and direct the creation of a strategic plan that contains specific goals and the actions to be taken to achieve those goals. Board trustees monitor progress toward achieving the goals set and must insist on accountability for the results. Board trustees must engage parents and create partnerships with them and with others in the community (business, service organizations, churches, youth programs like Scouts, 4-H, etc.) to create a cohesive effort to support student education, provide opportunities for kids to contribute back to the community and gain valuable volunteer and work experience while in school. Board trustees also must create a supportive environment for school staff to let them know their hard work is appreciated and make sure they have adequate resources to do their jobs. Boards must also support a variety of extra-curricular activities to engage students to pursue their different interests, passions, and learn life skills.
4. What role should "Critical Race Theory" have in the education of children?	No Response Received	CRT is not appropriate for K-12 education, and I will guard against any attempts to introduce this in any classroom in our district. Idaho law also prohibits teaching CRT in our K – 12 public schools.

	Joshua J. Harvey	<u>Sandy S. Kennelly</u>
5. Would you support adding diversity, equity, and inclusion to the school curriculum? Why or why not?	No Response Received	I do not support adding specific diversity, equity, and inclusion education programming to the school curriculum. However, I do believe schools must give and promote equal treatment to all students and support the inclusion of all students in the school community. All students need to feel safe and secure in their school environment so they can thrive without fear of being bullied, harassed, ridiculed, or excluded. This can be done without adding a DEI program to the school curriculum. A good anti-bullying program emphasizing mutual respect for all is appropriate.
6. What is your view on the growth of Charter Schools?	No Response Received	Charter schools are an important part of school choice and I support them. Public charter schools have built-in accountability akin to traditional public schools and are a great addition. They can focus on specialty areas and enhance opportunities for certain segments of students. Private charters and other private educators can offer things public schools cannot and I support parents having the choice to use them. Because private charters and private educators do not have the same accountability to the state or taxpayers that public charters and traditional public schools have, I do not support taxpayer funding for them - especially if that means taking funding away from public schools. Without similar accountability, there is no way to assure they are teaching to Idaho educational standards, that students make adequate academic progress and that funds are spent for the purposes intended. If the state wants to provide funding to private charters and private educators, it cannot be done to the detriment of our public schools and public charter schools. There must also be accountability attached and such funding must comply with the Idaho Constitution.
7. Should children be allowed to access obscene materials through school libraries? Please base your answer on the federal definition of obscenity.	No Response Received	Absolutely not! School libraries need to have established policies to review materials parents or staff find objectionable or obscene. Using the federal definition of obscenity can be a part of that review criteria. The federal definition emphasizes that local community standards should apply in determining what is considered "obscene" and is without any serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. Our school board has proactively addressed this issue and a new policy is in the process of being adopted. Public input has been sought in creating this policy. It sets up a review process for library materials that includes these considerations and creates a committee that assures local community standards are applied to exclude harmful or obscene materials. Our policy also sets up a review process for any curriculum materials parents or staff may find objectionable.
8. Do you support or oppose bathroom and locker room usage based on preferred gender identification? Why or why not?	No Response Received	I oppose bathroom and locker room usage based on "preferred gender identification." Idaho law requires bathroom and locker room usage to be based on gender at birth, with options available for those not comfortable using the facilities corresponding to their gender at birth. In our district, this has always been how this issue is handled. All children need to feel safe and secure in the bathrooms they use. Birth gender determines which facility to use, but those uncomfortable with that can use the single stall restrooms which are located near the office and faculty lounge. There are security cameras located at the common bathroom entrances so if someone is trying to enter the wrong facility, it will be captured on camera and action can be taken to address the issue.
9. How should counselors work with parents to resolve issues with their children?	No Response Received	Parents need to be notified and counselors need to work fully and directly with parents to resolve issues with their children. Parental consent is required. Counselors can provide parents with referrals to appropriate services if requested. If the parents are the source of the issues as in cases of abuse or neglect, then counselors have legal obligations to contact Child Protective Services and/or law enforcement.

	Joshua J. Harvey	<u>Sandy S. Kennelly</u>
10. What is your opinion on students being able to receive an abortion or change their gender without parental notification?	No Response Received	This is totally unacceptable. Parental notification is required. These are not services schools should refer students to under any circumstances. If a student comes to school staff seeking such services, parents need to be notified with proper protections provided if a student is in a precarious home situation. For example, if a student reports a pregnancy resulting from parent sexual abuse, school staff should first contact Child Protective Services and law enforcement instead of the parent.
11. Do you support the 1619 project? Why or why not?	No Response Received	This material is not appropriate to introduce to K – 12 students. The 1619 Project is a collection of essays interpreting American black history. It ultimately makes the case descendants of slaves have been so disadvantaged by the racism that was embedded into this country’s legal and social systems that society (the government/taxpayers) should make reparations (monetary payments) to compensate for the economic disadvantages descendants of slavery have suffered as a result. It is not a simple factual recounting of black history. It is an interpretation of American black history that weaves an argument to persuade readers to a specific viewpoint. If you want to understand that argument, read it. But you must understand it is meant to promote a specific viewpoint. Proper fact checking along with other interpretations of historical events should be considered when reviewing this material. The 1619 Project is more appropriate for upper level college students, law students or public policymakers to study when examining all the sides to this issue.
12. In what circumstances should students be able to receive mental health assistance without parental notification?	No Response Received	Mental health assistance can only be provided with parental notification and consent. Parents need to be alerted to any mental health screenings offered and of services provided in situations like occurred at the recent death of a beloved teacher or in the case of the death of a student so parents can opt their student out of participating in such services if they so desire.
13. Who has the responsibility for the education of children?	No Response Received	First and foremost, parents have the responsibility to make sure their children get an education. Children have a responsibility to take advantage of the opportunity to receive an education. The community and our society at large have a responsibility to make sure all children have access to a formative education. Our system of government, our economic success as a country and our ability to be individually self-sufficient depend on all citizens being educated. Thus, it is everyone’s responsibility to support the education of children.
14. What should the goal of education be?	No Response Received	The goal of education is to create informed, productive, self-sufficient, and engaged citizens who can think critically and solve problems so they can achieve success, personal fulfillment and be positive contributors to society throughout their lives.
15. Do you support or oppose the legalization of marijuana? Why or why not?	No Response Received	I support the legalization of medical marijuana that is used under a doctor’s supervision. Legalizing recreational marijuana produces the same kinds of problems in society that tobacco and alcohol use produce and is another step on the slippery slope to harder drug use. I value individual liberty, so part of me agrees this is a matter of personal responsibility and choice. But I also don’t believe we need to officially condone use of another mind altering substance. It is unacceptable for people under age 21 to use recreational marijuana.

	Joshua J. Harvey	<u>Sandy S. Kennelly</u>
16. What is your background and why do you feel it qualifies you for this position?	No Response Received	I have served on the St Maries School Board for a total of 10 years to date. That experience has taught me much about school funding in Idaho, school fiscal management, what challenges and issues our schools face and what the true function of a trustee and a school board is. The continuity I offer along with my knowledge of the history of district operations are valuable going forward. I retired from my professional career in 2019 after serving 10 years as CEO of a Christian based elder care non-profit organization with 300 employees. There, I was deeply involved with large, complex budgets and fiscal management along with grant administration, employee recruitment/retention, regulatory compliance, and the maintenance and renovation of older buildings. Prior to that I worked in business and in the legal profession with experience in compliance, risk management, business management, employment matters and contracts. I have the time and flexibility to devote to the school board as needed. I have lived in St Maries for 17 years. My husband and I raised 3 children in a home with traditional, conservative family values that align well with the St Maries community. All graduated from St Maries High School and are successful adults. I am also a grandmother. I have been involved in our community in various organizations over the years including the Heyburn PTO, Lumberjack Booster Club, Rotary, Timber Plus and Eagles Aerie 2012. I love our schools and I love our kids! I hope I earn your vote to continue my commitment to the well-being of St Maries public schools and the success of all our students.