

Please provide some personal background information: Name, Occupation, Community activities.

Barb Herzog; Community volunteer and Board of Education Member (Incumbent); I currently serve as clerk of the Oshkosh Area School District Board of Education, vice-president of the Oshkosh St. Vincent de Paul Society, and board chair of Project SOAR (Special Opportunities for Artist Residencies). I am a member of the Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors, a lector and communion minister at my Oshkosh church, and a volunteer pie baker for the Winnebago County Historical Society Pie on the Porch Program. I volunteer up to three times weekly in a middle school literacy classroom. Previously I have served as a board member of the Oshkosh Public Museum and The Paine Art Center and Gardens. I have served as chair of the Oshkosh Area United Way Board, Women's Fund of the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation, and the Oshkosh Symphony Orchestra. I have served as co-chair of the Oshkosh Area United Way Annual Campaign. I am a graduate of Leadership Oshkosh.

The Board has three primary responsibilities. These include hiring and evaluating the superintendent, writing policies, and fiscal responsibilities including passing the district budget and overseeing district finances.

My most important objectives in the first year will be to work with the Board to establish goals and metrics for evaluating the superintendent, promote accountability in literacy and math growth and achievement, and determine the best ways to reduce the district budget with the least direct impact on students.

2. What distinguishes your experience and candidacy from your opponents?

I am a former teacher, principal, and central office administrator in four Wisconsin school districts, as well as a former academic staff member at UW Oshkosh in the College of Education. I hold teaching degrees from UW Oshkosh and a doctorate in educational administration and adult education from UW Madison. I am currently the clerk of the Oshkosh Area School District Board of Education and have previously served as Board vice-president and as president. I have served on the Board's Facilities and Finance Committee, Policy and Governance Committee, Education Committee, and Legislative Committee. I have experience with school boards at the regional and state levels while serving on the CESA 6 Board of Control (including serving as vice-president) and the Wisconsin Association of School Boards Board of Directors (including service as vice-president and president). I have regularly attended workshops and conventions

sponsored by the Wisconsin Association of School Boards to improve my effectiveness as a Board member.

I have a proven history of volunteering in schools and attending dozens of school programs every year to support our students and staff. People in the community frequently tell me that I am “a voice of reason on the Board.” I have the time, energy, commitment, experience, and heart to serve another Board term.

3. The Department of Public Instruction releases annual school and district report cards measuring student achievement and engagement. Although the Oshkosh Area School District improved its overall score from 69.7 to 71.3—placing it in the “Exceeds Expectations” category—our Advanced and Proficient levels in English Language Arts and Mathematics still fall behind state averages. As a member of the Board of Education, what steps would you take to raise performance in these two subject areas?

I support the efforts of the assistant superintendent of instruction to align expectations, appropriate instructional resources, quality staff professional development, and coaching and evaluation of staff to ensure student growth and improved achievement. He has planned the work and is now working the plan. I will continue to encourage the Curriculum Department to deploy additional human and material resources to those schools that have not reached the “Exceeds Expectations” category and to provide meaningful summer school and other interventions for students who need additional time to master curriculum. I will seek data on progress on student personalized reading plans required under Act 20. I will seek data on what the state defines as our “target group”, those students who are our lowest performing students and how we are working to insure their improvement. I will ask administration for plans to include parents in working with the district to help with student success. I will work with the Board to define metrics to better evaluate the superintendent in raising performance in these two subject areas which impact other subject areas and influence student high school course selection and plans beyond high school.

4. What are the most pressing literacy challenges you see (early reading, adolescent literacy, interventions, materials, professional learning, etc.) and how would you address them?

We have pre-K and K learners who come to school with limited vocabulary as well as limited knowledge of the alphabet. We need to encourage parents to enroll their children in the district’s

pre-k program which is required to be staffed by licensed pre-k teachers to address these needs. We need to work with parents and give them literacy strategies to work on at home with their children.

While we provide a great deal of professional training for staff, we need to be sure that staff professional learning is targeted to the needs of students and evaluate its effectiveness. There may be a need to adopt and purchase additional literacy materials to better meet student needs.

Adolescent literacy is another concern. We need to implement personal reading plans with students who are behind in achievement and to work with parents to support the progress of their students. We need to collaborate with SEPO (a local organization primarily serving second language learners) to coordinate efforts to help our adolescents improve their literacy skills.

The district is working on an updated strategic plan with yearly and monthly goals. Monitoring the goals will be important in making sure that we are addressing our literacy challenges.

5. What does College, Career and Community Ready (CCCR) mean to you? Where is OASD performing well, where are the gaps, and how would you help the system improve?

College, Career, and Community Ready (CCR) means cognitive learning (including literacy and math achievement), social and emotional learning skills, employability skills, and communication. CCR Ready means that students are prepared for life after high school, whether that means having the knowledge and skills to be successful in a two- or four-year college program, a job-related program, the military, or contributing to their community in other positive ways.

The OASD is generally performing well in preparing students to go on for a four-year college degree. However, typically only about 50% of graduating high school seniors have gone on for a four-year degree. Of that 50%, only about half or 25% of the graduating class finish a four-year degree. We need to do a better job of preparing the 75% of students who typically do not finish a four-year degree for some type of education after high school, including two- year college programs, apprenticeships, etc.

To address the gaps, I would begin with improving skills in literacy and math, social and emotional learning, and employability. We need to focus on improving the literacy and math skills of all students in order to provide them with more options in high school course selections and in career plans after high school. I support expansion of collaborative efforts of the Oshkosh Chamber and the school district, including the current “Shaping Tomorrow’s Workforce: A Webinar Business Series on Engaging Students.” While the district has 36 dual-credit courses

through UW Oshkosh and FVTC, we could expand this number as well as the number of students in apprenticeship programs.

6. OASD is working to address a projected budget deficit for the 2026–27 school year (approximately \$5.5M). What principles will guide your decisions (e.g., priorities, efficiencies, service levels, revenue options), and what steps would you support to address this challenge in the coming years?

The principles that will guide my decisions to address projected budget deficits will include the need to balance the district budget, the need to be a good steward of the district’s resources, the priorities in the district’s strategic plan, and our district’s guiding principle of “students first.” I want to maintain the quality of our curriculum and instructional efforts and the learning opportunities that we provide our students. I want to limit the direct impact of budget cuts on student learning.

I will look at efficiencies and partnerships with Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) to offer more dual credit courses. The district currently offers 36 dual credit courses through UW Oshkosh and FVTC. I will look at revenue options for maintaining our driver education program that is so important to many of our families.

In the coming years, I will look more closely at the district budget for areas that could be reduced with minimal direct impact on students. In the district’s 2024-2025 budget, the auditor noted several budget items that came in higher than anticipated. All these items were overseen by administration. These included school building administration, business administration, general administration services, and central services.

I will continue to promote increased funding for special education with our state legislators. The 2025-2027 state budget was passed with a level of special education funding at 42% for 2026 and 45% for 2027. The current projection is that the reimbursement will be closer to 42% in 2026, or a decrease of \$1.9 million dollars for Oshkosh. These dollars would go a long way to helping us reduce our projected budget shortfall.

7. OASD has recently completed major facility upgrades, including the opening of Vel Phillips Middle School in 2023 and Menominee Elementary School in 2024. In addition, voters approved a \$197.8 million referendum to build a consolidated middle school on the Shapiro site, resulting in the closure of South Park and Perry Tipler and reducing the number of west side middle

schools from three to two. Looking ahead, long range planning includes constructing a new West High School and making improvements to North High as we move into the 2030s. What is your position on these facility improvements and school consolidations?

As a member of the Board in 2018, I advocated for the development of a long-range plan to address concerns related to our facilities. In 2017, an architectural firm provided an analysis of our facilities that called for over \$150 million in structural repairs (roofs, tuckpointing, basements, etc.) The analysis did not address curriculum needs. A facilities advisory committee worked with the superintendent to develop a long-range facilities plan that included four phases. I supported this plan when it came to the Board because I believed that we needed such a plan to be strategic and proactive, and because it made sense to me at the time as an investment in our students and our community.

The 2024 referendum called for a new west-side middle school. It also called for providing air conditioning in three elementary schools, adding on to three more elementary schools, and creating a performing arts center at North High School. These were all related to Phase 2 of the Long-Range Facilities Plan adopted by the Board in 2020.

According to district administration, the consolidation of northside middle schools into Vel Phillips Middle School in 2023 saved the district (and the taxpayers) over \$560,000 in the first year. Administration defined the savings of consolidating northside elementary schools with the opening of Menominee Elementary School in 2024 to be over \$750,000 in the first year.

The district has been committed to prepayment of existing capital debt. Since 2022, the district has reduced long term principal balance by over \$7 million due to prepayment/defeasance. This also captured over \$3.8 million in state aid payments resulting in total savings to taxpayers of nearly \$11 million.

The 2020 Long Range Facilities Plan adopted by the Board will need to be reviewed considering changing factors including declining enrollments. Oshkosh West High School was built in 1960 (66 years ago) and has inadequate Career and Technical Education (CTE) facilities to meet the needs of these programs now and into the future. It is likely that a new West High School could be built on the existing site at West and retain the Alberta Kimball Auditorium. Updates to North High, which opened in 1972 (54 years ago) would allow us to save additional funds by using the current site.

I support these facilities improvements and consolidations to address our curricular and instructional needs, reduce costs, and improve economies of scale and efficiencies of operations.

8. What role should Tech Ed/hands-on learning play in OASD? How much emphasis would you place on CTE in policy and budgeting, and how would you ensure accountability for results?

I believe that Career and Technical Education (CTE) is extremely important. Success in these areas relies on all students having strong literacy and math skills. Knowledge and skills in CTE allow students to be college, career, and community ready whenever they enter the workforce.

Two years ago, I toured the ACE Academy at Fond du Lac High School. Over the last two years, I have toured Appleton FVTC facilities including those in the transportation field. I have been a strong advocate for our alternative high school program, the Riverside Program, with Oshkosh FVTC where students can earn their diplomas along with FVTC credits.

Within the last year, I have toured the CTE facilities at both North and West. It is evident that the West CTE facilities are inadequate in space for the curriculum content and for building dual-credit options with FVTC. On October 15, 2025, I joined district students and CTE staff at the Building and Construction Trades Career Fair. On November 15, 2025, I advocated for our Health Science Pathway during a visit by State Senator Rachel Cabral-Guevara's visit to the West Medical Careers class. On January 15, 2026, I attended the Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting to support our two OASD scholarship recipients for the College and Career Readiness Award. On February 6, 2026, I participated in the Link2Learn event supporting our CTE teachers and business partners as the district and community works together to shape a future vision for OASD students.

I want the district and the business community to set short- and long-range plans to emphasize and prioritize improving our CTE efforts. I will continue to advocate for policy, budget, and facility changes as needed to address these plans. Accountability will come from the development and implementation of such plans and with increasing our enrollments in CTE programs..

9. What reforms, if any, would you support to fund public school operations? What is your view of school choice?

According to administration, Oshkosh Area School District general revenue per pupil has lagged inflation by more than \$3300 since 2009. I support the Wisconsin State Legislature providing funding for public school operations at the level of inflation. I support the Wisconsin Legislature providing a sum certain level of funding for public school special education reimbursement instead of a sum specific amount. Both of these suggestions would greatly improve the fiscal health of Wisconsin school districts. While I believe in the 1963 quote of the late President John

F. Kennedy that “children are our most valuable resource and our best hope for the future”, Wisconsin public school funding does not reflect this belief.

I believe that parents should decide where they want their children to be educated. I also believe in transparency and openness. The public needs to know that vouchers are not free to the taxpayers. In the last five years, the Oshkosh District levied just over \$33 million dollars on local property tax bills to support voucher schools with no accountability. The voucher schools do not have to follow the same state laws for teacher licensure, curriculum, school report cards, start date of the school year, etc. that apply to public schools. I believe that if public dollars are going to voucher schools, the voucher schools need to follow the same state laws that apply to public schools. The amount of local funds that go to voucher schools should be noted on our property tax bills.

10. How would you help recruit, develop, and retain educators and staff (e.g., compensation, workload, mentorship, career pathways, culture)?

Under Act 10, the district is limited to using the CPI (Consumer Price Index) for employee raises. With this restriction, the district is permitted to make market adjustments with employee groups whose compensation has fallen behind neighboring districts. I have supported market adjustments for teachers, paraprofessionals, and maintenance employee groups. I have also supported raising compensation for coaches, game workers, and student adviser groups that had not been addressed in many years.

I have supported the district’s teacher mentorship program which has been seen as an asset in attracting and retaining new teachers. Mentorships have been seen as an asset state-wide by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in attracting and retaining new educators.

Incentives to recruit, develop, and retain educators and staff include such actions as creating career pathways to teach higher level high school courses, becoming an instructional support teacher (IST), becoming a dean of students or an assistant principal, and addressing questions related to teacher workload and prep time during the work day. Other incentives include involving educators and staff in decisions for which they have interest and expertise (locus of control), having fulltime positions in single buildings rather than dividing staff over two or more schools, providing safe and healthy working conditions, and creating positive and supportive cultures where staff feel valued and respected. I will encourage administration to focus on these areas.

I have tried to do my part to show support and respect for staff by attending school/district events involving students and staff, sending “thank you” and “congratulations” notes to staff for their successful efforts with students, and reflecting the Oshkosh Civility Project at Board meetings,

Board committee meetings, and in the community. What happens in the Board Room is reflected in the classroom. Board members need to show respect for one another and for our staff members.

11. The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce is working with local businesses and the school district on programming to help create employable students through programs such as Youth Apprenticeships, Career Fairs, Youth Leadership Oshkosh, Career Pathways and Job Shadows. How will you build partnerships with the business community? Would you consider alternative models (e.g., industry-led academies like Fond du Lac's ACE) if supported by local partners?

I have partially addressed this question in Question #8 above. I build partnerships with the business community by serving as a member of the Chamber Ambassadors and attending various Chamber functions. As a member of Southwest Rotary, I have developed good relationships with members of the business community.

If supported by local partners. I would definitely consider alternative models to help create employable students through programs such as Youth Apprenticeships, Career Fairs, Youth Leadership Oshkosh, Career Pathways, Job Shadows, and the Fond du Lac ACE Program. CTE is a major priority for me in order to meet student and community needs. As noted in Question #8 above, I have toured the Fond du Lac High School ACE Program. In addition, I have had several conversations with the lead teacher in the ACE Program and have concluded that it deserves consideration for Oshkosh.

12. A major challenge for leadership in any school system is navigating community perception, misinformation, and misunderstandings about how the district operates. Where do you obtain reliable information about the district's performance, needs, and priorities? How do you ensure that the information you rely on is accurate? (Include Board meetings attended, classroom visits, and your approach to communicating with all stakeholders.)

I have always sought a variety of sources of information to seek to understand what is happening in schools and make decisions on behalf of the community about the district's performance, needs, and priorities. I attend many events/programs involving students and staff where people share input or ask questions for me to follow up. I have volunteered in two different elementary

schools for literacy where I observed general school operations and people shared input and questions with me. I am currently volunteering up to three times weekly in a middle school literacy classroom where I observe general school operations and people share input and questions. The same is true when I have attended PTO meetings in two schools this year.

Within the last year, I have met with West High LGBTQ+ students and members of the West High Black Student Union to better understand their concerns and issues. In addition, I talk with neighbors with students in our schools and the students themselves.

I am part of a weekly coffee group of ten, including retired educators, and I often seek their input on education topics. I have school board member friends/colleagues in other districts as well as contacts at the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and am in contact with these individuals for their input and professional opinions. Frequently I go to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website to gain information and data. Workshops and webinars of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and the annual January Wisconsin State Education Convention are also sources of information for me.

Additional ways to ensure that information I rely on is accurate include information from Board meetings, information shared at Board committee meetings, phone calls and meetings with the superintendent and district staff, school visits, updates on the Key Performance Indicators from the district's strategic plan, attendance at the CESA 6 Legislative Breakfasts, and conversations with Wisconsin DPI consultants. Typically, I try to find at least two sources to verify information or if I have any questions.

I have always said that I am willing to talk with anyone at any time. I maintain a Facebook page, Barb Herzog Oshkosh School Board, where people can contact me and where I can communicate with all stakeholders. I maintain a landline so that stakeholders can reach out to me and leave messages for me to return. I am accessible by attending many district and community events where everyone is free to reach out to me.

13. As a Board member, how will you foster ongoing, accurate communication and engagement with families, educators, and community members—including those with differing views?

Skills that I continue to work on include looking at a variety of viewpoints, seeking to understand consequences (both intended and unintended) of our Board actions and decisions, and listening patiently when others have questions or statements to share. I have always made it clear that I am willing to speak to anyone at any time. I try to be open and to listen to others, ask clarifying questions to better understand, and seek to acknowledge and understand other points of view. I want to be seen as respectful in my interactions and to model the Oshkosh Civility

Project including with those who have differing views. I do my best to respond to emails, phone messages, and phone calls. I try to be available to others by being visible in the schools and in the community which allows me to engage with families, educators, and the community.

14. Have you participated in the OASD School Academy? If yes, when and what did you learn? If not, how will you get up to speed?

While I have not participated in the OASD School Academy, I will get up to speed by talking with Superintendent Davis and reading the Jamie Vollmer book Schools Cannot Do It Alone which participants in the Academy have read.