

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

Jacob Wolf; Fiber Optic Technician; Oshkosh Fast Club volunteer softball coach, YMCA volunteer Football and Baseball coach, Oshkosh Rec Department volunteer basketball coach.

**1. What do you see as the Board's primary responsibility? If elected, what will be your most important objective in your first year?**

As a school board member, our primary responsibility is to act as a representative for the community members who elected us. If elected, my primary focus in the first year would be to provide complete transparency on every decision made in the district and to regain the trust of families throughout the OASD.

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

I am a blue-collar husband, father, and coach in this community. I understand the value of hard work and would bring a new perspective to the board. I know there are no simple solutions to the problems our district faces, but having a different viewpoint to represent similar families in the district could allow for more equal representation than we currently have.

**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?**

Early intervention is vital. We need to address struggling students immediately through small-group intervention and by providing support both inside and outside the classroom. It takes a village to raise a child; if students do not continue their education at home, they face a far greater risk of falling behind. We must ensure families have easy access to all available support systems. Furthermore, if a student is not meeting grade-level standards by the end of the year, we cannot simply "push them through" the system. We must ensure our students are truly equipped with the skills necessary to move to the next level.

**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?**

The implementation of CKLA could be very beneficial, but for it to work, it requires continued support inside the classroom. If we are asking our teachers to completely overhaul their instructional methods, we cannot just send them to a single seminar and expect them to have all the answers. We need to provide educators with in-class support and ongoing training to ensure this implementation is successful. As we know, if students fall behind early, there is very little chance of them catching up later. This is apparent when looking at the impact of the COVID-19 shutdowns; many students fell behind during that time, and we are still struggling to help them recover.

**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?**

To me, being CCCR means providing the skills necessary for real-world success. This means ensuring our graduates can balance a budget, solve problems, and adapt to an ever-changing work environment. Whether attending a four-year college, a technical school, or entering the workforce, students need both "book smarts" and the life skills necessary to succeed.

The OASD has great programs like School2Work, Youth Apprenticeship, and the Career Based Learning Experiences partnership. These provide the real-world training our students deserve, and I believe we should expand these partnerships with other local businesses. To improve, we must prioritize the classroom over administration. With the current budget crisis, we must take a top-down approach to "right-sizing" to keep resources in our schools and classrooms.

**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 district must be proactive and diligent, addressing budget issues long before they become a crisis. For example, the OASD has tracked declining enrollment since 2015. Since those projection models have been fairly accurate, the district should have planned further in advance rather than waiting until the last moment to make drastic cuts that hurt students and teachers.

I support a top-down approach to eliminate deficits. I believe it would be beneficial to request an outside audit of administrative positions and duties to streamline non-instructional costs before considering reducing classroom resources. Finally, I advocate for a public dashboard that shows

how every tax dollar is allocated. Easy access to this data provides the transparency needed to regain community trust.

**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?**

I understand the logic of reducing overhead through consolidation, but there are consequences that are often overlooked. Neighborhood schools foster a close-knit community feel that helps students feel seen and included, which is vital given the mental health issues children face today. Consolidation also creates transportation hurdles and increased commute times for families.

Furthermore, many new facilities focus heavily on tech-integrated learning. While technology has its place, numerous studies show the negative impacts of a solely technology-driven education. While some upgrades are necessary for ADA compliance or fiscal responsibility, the decision-making process must be more transparent. The district needs to hold open forums and receive community feedback before decisions are finalized.

**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?**

Hands-on learning is vital for students who may struggle with our current screen-heavy instruction. It encourages engagement and prepares students for the local economy. I believe the OASD should focus on partnering with local industries to provide equipment and services, expanding Youth Apprenticeship programs that benefit both our students and our community.

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

I strongly believe every family deserves the right to choose what is best for their children. While state funding hasn't kept pace with inflation, we would not be in this situation if the OASD were

a "destination" for education. By focusing on internal factors—like proficiency scores and retaining talented educators—we can elevate our standing so that families don't feel the need to seek alternative schooling or leave for other districts.

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

Our teachers are currently burdened with too much administrative paperwork and unnecessary meetings. To retain talented educators, we must protect their prep time and allow them to do what they do best: teach. Additionally, administrators need to be consistently present in schools, assisting with discipline and working face-to-face with staff to foster a supportive culture.

**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 am absolutely open to expanding these partnerships. As a technician, I know that real-life experience and training cannot be fully learned from a computer or a textbook. I would be eager to look into alternative models, such as industry-led academies, that create programs benefiting our local workforce.

**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.)**

Accountability and transparency are the keys to combatting misinformation. Currently, I find it difficult to navigate the OASD website to find specific data; while 90% of the information is public, it shouldn't require "digging" to find. This is why I push for an accessible public dashboard for spending and proficiency scores. I personally stay informed by attending or watching board meetings, communicating with current board members, and meeting with the superintendent.

**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?**

I value conversation. I know I won't always share the same beliefs as every board member or family, and that is okay. We don't need a board that agrees on everything; we need a board that works together to find the best solutions. Having different viewpoints while maintaining a collaborative spirit is the only way to produce results that benefit the entire 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 have spent the last two years attending board meetings, meeting with district leadership, and communicating with stakeholders. I am committed to listening to the community, meeting with teachers, and putting in the necessary work to be an effective and valuable member of the board.