

MENAHGA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



MEET THE CANDIDATES

MENAHGA SCHOOL BOARD



Write about your background and family, including how long you have lived in the School District.

I grew up in the Wolf Lake area and attended Menahga Public Schools for grades K-12 and graduated with the Class of 2012. My wife Lindsay and I, along with our three young children, now reside just outside of Menahga.

Describe your involvement with Menahga Public Schools.

Upon graduating high school I have stayed involved within the district in a variety of ways. I was a volunteer youth coach, referee, open gym supervisor and I currently serve as an assistant coach of the Menahga girl's basketball program. I have also had the opportunity to be part of several career expos and career presentations at the school on behalf my current employer, West Central.

What do you believe qualifies you to be a school board member?

I have had the opportunity to spend a significant amount of time working at the school on various projects through West Central. I feel like I have a very strong knowledge of the facilities especially in the technological and mechanical areas. I also have been able to build and maintain relationships with many of the dedicated staff members of our district!

What do you see as the school board's roles and responsibilities?

The role of a school board is to approve budgets, adopt policy and act as a liaison between the community and the school district.

What is your vision for Menahga Public Schools and how does that relate to the district's mission statement?

N/A

What goals do you hope to accomplish if elected to the school board?

My goal as an elected school board member would be to collaborate with our leadership team to build an environment where students can thrive and place our teachers want to call home!



Write about your background and family, including how long you have lived in the School District.

I grew up in the rural Menahga area, where I attended Menahga Public Schools and graduated as part of the Class of 1996. After high school, I attended Bemidji State University and earned a Bachelor of Science degree. In 2001, I met my husband, Chris, and we spent several years living in Fargo before returning home to Menahga in 2010, where we have lived ever since. Chris and I have two children. Our daughter, Grace, graduated from Menahga High School in 2026, and our son, Fynn, is currently a junior at Menahga. I work remotely as a Network Relations Manager for Sentara Health Plans, a health insurance company based in Virginia.

Describe your involvement with Menahga Public Schools.

My involvement with Menahga Public Schools spans both my personal and family experiences. I attended Menahga Public Schools and graduated in 1996. My husband and I chose to return to Menahga to raise our family, and both of our children have attended Menahga Public Schools. In addition to being a parent, I have remained actively involved in supporting school activities and students throughout the years. I have helped coach elementary basketball, served as a student supervisor for school activities, participated on the football coach hiring committee, and served on both the UNC Wrestling Booster Club and Menahga Baseball Booster Club. Throughout these experiences, I have had the opportunity to work with students, parents, coaches, staff, and community members to support opportunities for our students and contribute to the success of our schools. I have also enjoyed participating in school traditions, including being a prop in the 2025 Homecoming float during my daughter's senior year.

What do you believe qualifies you to be a school board member?

I believe I am qualified to serve on the Menahga School Board because I bring the perspective of a graduate, parent, volunteer, and community member who is invested in the success of our schools. Having attended Menahga Public Schools myself and now having children who have benefited from the district, I understand the important role our schools play in preparing students for the future. Professionally, I work as a Network Relations Manager, where I collaborate with diverse groups, analyze complex information, solve problems, and make thoughtful decisions. These skills, combined with my commitment to Menahga Public Schools and the community, would allow me to be a positive and effective member of the school board.

What do you see as the school board's roles and responsibilities?

I see the role of the school board as providing leadership, oversight, and accountability for the district. The board is responsible for setting policies, managing resources responsibly, supporting the superintendent, and making decisions that keep students at the center. I also believe it is important for board members to listen to parents, staff, students, and community members and work collaboratively to ensure Menahga Public Schools continues to provide a strong education and positive opportunities for all students.

What is your vision for Menahga Public Schools and how does that relate to the district's mission statement?

My vision is for Menahga Public Schools to continue being a school district that our students, families, staff, and community are proud of. I want every student to have the opportunity to succeed, feel supported, and be prepared for life after graduation. This directly supports the district's mission because student success is achieved when schools, families, and community stakeholders work together. By strengthening those partnerships and keeping students at the center of our decisions, we can help ensure all learners succeed.

What goals do you hope to accomplish if elected to the school board?

If elected, my goals would be to support student achievement, recruit and retain quality staff, strengthen partnerships with families and the community, and ensure responsible stewardship of district resources. I want to help maintain a school district where every student feels supported, has opportunities to succeed, and graduates prepared for their future.



Write about your background and family, including how long you have lived in the School District.

N/A

Describe your involvement with Menahga Public Schools.

I would be honored to serve on the Menahga School Board because I am committed to putting students, families, staff, and our community first. Through 15 years of coaching a variety of activities, I have seen how important strong schools, supportive adults, and meaningful opportunities are to student growth and success. I will bring a practical, collaborative, and accountable approach to board service by listening to the community, supporting educational and extracurricular opportunities, and making thoughtful decisions that protect the long-term strength of Menahga Schools. I will work to keep our schools aligned with the values and priorities of the community while ensuring every student has the opportunity to succeed.

What do you believe qualifies you to be a school board member?

I am qualified to serve on the Menahga School Board because I am committed to the success of our students, staff, and community. For the past 15 years, I have coached numerous activities, giving me firsthand experience supporting students, working with families, and collaborating with staff. This experience has shown me the importance of teamwork, accountability, communication, and providing students with opportunities to grow both in and out of the classroom.

I understand that board service requires careful listening, respectful collaboration, and responsible decisions based on facts, district needs, and the long-term interests of taxpayers and families. I will bring a practical, thoughtful approach to supporting student learning, maintaining a safe and welcoming school environment, and helping Menahga Schools remain strong for the future.

What do you see as the school board's roles and responsibilities?

N/A

What is your vision for Menahga Public Schools and how does that relate to the district's mission statement?

N/A

What goals do you hope to accomplish if elected to the school board?

·Extracurricular activity support: Activities, athletics, and fine arts help students build teamwork, leadership, confidence, and a connection to school. I will support opportunities that allow students to participate and succeed outside the classroom while managing programs responsibly and fairly.

·Educational resources: Students and staff need reliable, high-quality resources to support learning. I will advocate for thoughtful investments in curriculum, technology, facilities, and staff support so that students have the tools and opportunities needed to succeed.

·Accountability: The school board must be accountable to students, families, staff, and taxpayers. I will support transparent communication, careful use of district funds, clear goals, and regular review of outcomes to ensure that decisions serve students and reflect the community's values.



Write about your background and family, including how long you have lived in the School District.

I'm a self-employed graphic artist with AH Grafix. I married Loren Haverinen 22 years ago and I've lived in Menahga since that time. I have one child who graduated from Menahga Public Schools, 2 kiddos in high school, and a toddler at home.

Describe your involvement with Menahga Public Schools.

I have had kids enrolled in Menahga Public Schools for over a decade. I have been on the board for a while now, and have participated in many activities including Strategic Planning, chaperoning field trips, attending concerts and classroom events.

What do you believe qualifies you to be a school board member?

I'm a good listener. I value the opinions and lived experiences of our community, staff, and students, and I make thoughtful, well-informed decisions and stay calm under pressure. I am currently serving in my 12th year on the school board. During that time, I have served as chair and vice chair, as well as served on multiple committees throughout the district. I am currently serving on the Minnesota School Boards Association as Director for our region. I also serve as chair for Region Five Development Commission which serves our five county region.

What do you see as the school board's roles and responsibilities?

The board hires and evaluates a Superintendent, oversees the budget, and sets high-level goals and expectations for the District. The board also serves as a bridge between the community and District administration.

What is your vision for Menahga Public Schools and how does that relate to the district's mission statement?

How do we make public education relevant in this century? My aim is to equip students with the tools and skills they need to be successful, contributing adults. Our Mission Statement is to "build strong partnerships to ensure all learners succeed." That includes parental and board involvement to make school a successful experience for students, staff and community members. Education doesn't end when the diploma is handed over. Lifelong education is the goal of Menahga Public Schools.

What goals do you hope to accomplish if elected to the school board?

Technology is currently changing faster than the education system can keep up, including the use of Artificial Intelligence. Do we require it as a learning standard? How do we teach it? My hope is that we introduce these digital tools to students at an age-appropriate time, and teach them to ethically and carefully utilize them. My other priority is to participate in the process of creating a Superintendent profile and hire a new leader for Menahga Public Schools.



Write about your background and family, including how long you have lived in the School District.

I was born and raised in Menahga and graduated from Menahga High School in 1994. All six of my children also graduated from Menahga. I was gone for a few years after college but moved to Sebeka in 2002 and then to Menahga in 2012.

Describe your involvement with Menahga Public Schools.

I have been a volunteer wrestling coach for the past 20 years.

What do you believe qualifies you to be a school board member?

I live in the Menahga school district and want what is best for our community, students and staff.

What do you see as the school board's roles and responsibilities?

Help set policies, goals, approve budgets, and hire and evaluate the Superintendent.

What is your vision for Menahga Public Schools and how does that relate to the district's mission statement?

To provide an environment that empowers our educators, helps our students access quality career opportunities while being fiscally responsible.

What goals do you hope to accomplish if elected to the school board?

To provide a quality education to our students, a good work environment for our staff, while being fiscally responsible to our community.



Write about your background and family, including how long you have lived in the School District.

My husband and I are raising our family in Menahga. We have five children that have graduated from Menahga High School, five more currently enrolled and one little still at home. I have lived here for twenty years.

Describe your involvement with Menahga Public Schools.

Currently, I am on the School Board, and serving my community and its kids is something I take great pride in.

What do you believe qualifies you to be a school board member?

Bringing experience to this job is important especially in this day and age when everything in the school realm is constantly evolving. I believe I bring level-headedness and willingness to serve, listen, and learn.

What do you see as the school board's roles and responsibilities?

The board's roles and responsibilities include: hiring/evaluating the superintendent, managing the budget, overseeing facilities, selecting curriculum, and advocacy.

What is your vision for Menahga Public Schools and how does that relate to the district's mission statement?

- Mission: "To build strong partnerships with stakeholders to ensure all learners succeed."
- Vision: "To engage all learners on a lifelong path to success."

My vision is one where our students graduate with the skills to succeed, and there is a strong partnership between our community and school.

What goals do you hope to accomplish if elected to the school board?

Some of my goals include ensuring that our school remains fiscally responsible, our students graduate with real-world skills, and I continually advocate for our hometown values.



Write about your background and family, including how long you have lived in the School District.

N/A

Describe your involvement with Menahga Public Schools.

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