



2026 JANESVILLE SCHOOL BOARD
CANDIDATES

Q&A



Thank you to all the candidates who provided responses
to our 2026 School Board Candidate Q&A.
We appreciate your time and thoughtfulness.

The Janesville School Board is an important governing body that impacts the educational foundation and trajectory of Janesville students and, by extension, our community. School board members serve 3-year terms. **In the 2026 Spring Election, there are 4 candidates vying for 3 seats.**

Forward Janesville is the Janesville-area chamber of commerce and leading private economic development organization. Forward Janesville (FJ) does not host candidate forums but provides a venue for candidates to connect to voters via our *Candidate Q&A*.

The Q&A provides an opportunity to hear from candidates on issues that are important to the business community and residents at large. Questions were developed with input from the leadership of the Forward Janesville Board of Directors and our Government Relations Council. Candidate responses are listed in alphabetical order by the candidate's last name. Candidates answered 9 questions, some with multi-part answers.

The 2026 Spring Election is on Tuesday, April 7. Visit Forward Janesville's 2026 Local Elections webpage (www.forwardjanesville.com/government-relations/2026-local-elections) for essential voting details and information on the candidates, upcoming candidate forums and the latest headlines.

We hope you find our **2026 Janesville School Board Candidate Q&A** useful and encourage you to share it widely with your personal and professional network.

Meet the Candidates



**Karl
Dommershausen**



Karen Hirsch



**Lisa Hurda
(Incumbent)**



Colton Measner



1) What motivated you to run for the Janesville School Board?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

I wish to continue following the expenditures of our latest referendums and help to adjust those expenditures as needed due to inflation and other unseen issues and work with the community on any future referendums.

For those who understand board structure, a superintendent only serves for an average of 4 to 5 years and if one counts, our superintendent has been here for about 5 years. We are blessed with our present superintendent, who has done an outstanding job and continues to make progress for our children and district, but when he decides to retire somewhere in the future I would like to again be part of the selection process for a new one. I have been part of the last two superintendent searches. These are only part of my goals if I return.

KAREN HIRSCH

After working as an aid and substitute teacher within the school district. I was able to see firsthand the challenges that face them.

LISA HURDA

What motivates me to serve on the Janesville School Board is student success and the long-term vitality of our community. As a lifelong Janesville resident, former educator, nonprofit executive leader, and most importantly a mother, I know how deeply our schools shape both individual futures and the economic strength of our city. Our students are our future workforce and leaders, and investing in their education is investing in Janesville's future.

I began serving on the school board in 2018 because I believed in raising expectations, strengthening accountability, and building pride in our schools. I continue to serve because I want to ensure every graduate is prepared for college, the trades, the military, or the workforce and that our district remains a strong foundation for our community's growth and success.

COLTON MEASNER

This will be my third time running for a seat on the Janesville School Board. I have learned a lot over the past two elections. One day, I thought to myself how could I give back to the district who was a huge part in creating who I am today? So, the next day, I had coffee with a current school board member who I consider a good friend of mine and asked him the same question. He responded with "Run for school board". I took that and ran with it.

I launched my first school board campaign at 18. I want to serve this city in the best way I can, but not to mention, I want to give back. I bring a great perspective to the board. I want to be the role model/positive influence the younger generation and students of this district can look up too. However, keeping the notion alive that anything is possible if you put your mind to it is important to me.



2) The main functions of school board members are policy making, budget development and oversight of the district superintendent. As a school board member, what background and experience do you bring to the table in those areas?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

I have spent 15 years serving on the Janesville School Board while also functioning the last 9 years as the Board's representative to CESA2 as a member of the Board of Control and the Treasurer for that organization. CESA2 is a vital support organization for all the school districts in the region along with support statewide for any district that can use CESA2's services, especially smaller districts that cannot afford what larger districts can or just feel that CESA2 can provide a strong solution to their needs. While on our local board I have served on various committees and served as Secretary and Treasurer of the board along the way. I have served for 13 years on the Finance Committee.

I have held board positions with about a dozen organizations in the city and county, frequently serving as chairperson. I am a co-founder of Project 16:49 and founder of that board. I co-chaired the committee that worked for converting one-way streets back to two-way streets in downtown Janesville. I have had the privilege of serving on the Policy and Resolutions Committee for the State board while also sitting on the State Board (WASB) itself.

KAREN HIRSCH

In my position at Massas Transportation, I am responsible for developing and implementing workplace policies to ensure safety, efficiency, and compliance with job requirements. I regularly evaluate operational needs and adjust procedures to meet both company standards and the demands of our workforce.

I manage a defined budget and make strategic financial decisions regarding:

- Vehicle repairs and maintenance
- Equipment purchases
- Employee wage increases

I lead a team of 38 employees, providing direction, support, and performance oversight to ensure productivity, safety, and high-quality work standards.

LISA HURDA

As a current school board member, I bring both professional leadership experience and lived community commitment to the core responsibilities of policy, budgeting, and superintendent oversight.

Professionally, I have spent nearly two decades in nonprofit executive leadership, where I have worked closely with boards to develop policy, oversee multi-million-dollar budgets, implement strategic growth plans, and ensure organizational accountability. My background in philanthropy and fundraising has also required strong financial stewardship, long-range planning, and transparent communication with stakeholders—skills that directly translate to effective board governance.

In terms of oversight, I understand the importance of clear expectations, measurable outcomes, and a healthy governance model that respects the distinction between board leadership and administrative leadership. My role is to support and evaluate the superintendent through strategic alignment, data-informed decision-making, and consistent accountability to district goals.

Additionally, as a former educator, I bring firsthand understanding of the classroom experience and student learning. That perspective helps ground policy and budget decisions in what matters most—student achievement and staff support.

Above all, I approach this work thoughtfully, collaboratively, and with a deep sense of responsibility to our students, families, educators, taxpayers, and community partners.

COLTON MEASNER

I currently sit on the Janesville Youth Baseball & Softball Association Board. I also served on the Janesville Youth Football board and was a council member for First Lutheran Church.

I am a product of the Janesville school district; I know what's going on within the walls of the district. My qualifications are simple. I have a clear vision for the district, will drive accountability, and lead with transparency, and integrity. When it comes down to a project or a task, I will not stop working until it's done.



3) School districts throughout Wisconsin face a challenging funding environment and districts are increasingly going to referendum, especially for operating needs. In November 2024, the voters passed a 2-year, \$14.5 million non-recurring operational referendum that will expire at the end of the 26/27 school year. If elected, you will be a school board member at that time.

a) How will you address the district's funding needs beyond the most recent referendum?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Continue the pursuit of avenues of viable revenues to make improvements of all kinds for the district and its children.

KAREN HIRSCH (provided one answer for all parts of the question)

I use care and thoughtful consideration when evaluating situations and making decisions. Every decision I make takes into account the overall funding needs of the school district. I understand the importance of balancing operational demands with responsible budget management to ensure long-term sustainability and support for students, staff, and the community.

My role in community conversations about school funding is to communicate in a clear, down-to-earth manner using plain, everyday language. I believe it is important that all stakeholders fully understand how funding decisions impact operations, safety, and student success. By avoiding jargon and explaining financial matters in practical terms, I help build trust and ensure the community feels informed and included in the process.

LISA HURDA

First, we must continue exercising strong fiscal stewardship prioritizing student achievement, aligning spending with strategic goals, and operating as efficiently as possible. At the same time, we must acknowledge the structural realities of Wisconsin's school funding model.

As we approach the expiration of the current non-recurring referendum, my focus would be on early, data-driven planning. That includes long-range financial forecasting, evaluating operational efficiencies, and clearly identifying the impact on programs, staffing, and student outcomes if additional funding is not secured. Our responsibility is to be proactive - not reactive - so that we protect educational quality and provide stability for students and staff.

COLTON MEASNER

If our funding continues to shrink and prices for most district needs continue to rise, our next operational referendum will be a higher amount. I don't say that lightly, once you're on a operational referendum, it's extremely difficult to get off it. However, I am extremely thankful to this community for passing the capital and operational referendum in 2024. Keep in mind, the operational is going to last until the end of 2027 and the capital referendum only addressed 17% of our needs.

b) Since referendums are becoming commonplace in most Wisconsin communities to support both operational and capital needs, how should SDJ engage with the community on school funding?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Engage with every possible means to explain why the revenues are needed and how it will affect them.

KAREN HIRSCH (provided one answer for all parts of the question)

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LISA HURDA

Community engagement must be rooted in transparency, education, and two-way dialogue. School finance in Wisconsin is complex, and it is our responsibility to clearly explain how funding works, what challenges we face, and how decisions impact students and taxpayers.

Engagement should go beyond presentations—it should include listening sessions, partnerships with business and community leaders, and consistent communication that builds trust. When the community understands both the needs and the strategy, they are better equipped to make informed decisions.

COLTON MEASNER

We are facing a challenging financial environment right now, most districts are. The district administration recognizes the need to increase funds available to keep our operations functioning at a high level and offering our students the experiences we do today.

Our community has to understand what our operational referendum is for. To keep the lights on, pay the staff, fund school activities, mental health programs, and much more.

c) As a school board member, what is your role, if any, in the community conversation about school funding?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Be available to answer all questions and if needed, make effort to find answers to their specific question.

KAREN HIRSCH (provided one answer for all parts of the question)

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LISA HURDA

My role is to be an informed, transparent, and steady voice. I am responsible for understanding the data, asking thoughtful questions, and ensuring our financial decisions align with student outcomes and community priorities.

I also believe it is my duty to help educate the public about how school funding works and to communicate honestly about both challenges and opportunities. While respecting legal boundaries regarding advocacy, I can and should ensure our community has accurate information and a clear understanding of what is at stake. Ultimately, my role is to represent the interests of students while being accountable to the taxpayers who support our schools.

COLTON MEASNER

As a board member, I'd carefully review decisions related to the budget to make sure we make responsible decisions to drive student outcomes. Our taxpayers need to know we as a board are being fiscally responsible and appreciate the passing of our operational/capital referendum.

It's simple, if we don't have school funding and operational referendums; We are having a totally different conversation right now.



4) In November 2024, voters also approved a \$151.8 million capital referendum to support Phase 1 of the district's long-range facilities plan. The Phase 1 funding breakdown is: \$11.1 million to enhance safety and security, \$16.2 million to improve special education classrooms and \$124.5 million to repair or replace high-priority capital maintenance needs.

a) School board members are responsible for oversight of capital referendum spending. What is your perspective on how the capital referendum funding has been managed and communicated?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

The referendum funding needs and responses were properly handled. It was approached a first time and the feedback was negative, so a second approach of slightly less money needed at this time was rendered and the response was positive. That response was actually below the results of the referendum, which was positive.

KAREN HIRSCH

I believe many community members may not have all the information or a full understanding of the referendum. Because of this, it is important to provide clear, accurate, and straightforward explanations about what the referendum includes, why it is needed, and how it will impact the district and taxpayers.

LISA HURDA

From my perspective, Phase 1 of the \$151.8 million capital referendum has been managed with intentional oversight and transparency. As board members, we have received consistent updates through the Finance, Buildings & Grounds Committee, as well as detailed presentations from district administration, JP Cullen, and EUA. These updates have also been shared publicly through recorded board meetings, ensuring community visibility.

I appreciate the strategic staging of projects—grouping work geographically to create efficiencies and cost savings through subcontractor coordination. That level of planning demonstrates thoughtful stewardship of taxpayer dollars while prioritizing safety, special education improvements, and high-priority maintenance needs that directly support student learning environments.

COLTON MEASNER

From the start, the plan, transparency by district, and its carryout of Phase 1 has been excellent in my mind. The school board has done exactly what they need to do with this process.

b) What are your expectations for the continued implementation of Phase 1?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Implement all needs as outlined in the referendum questions, adjust as needed for the unexpected and inflation. We must stay within the referendum needs and find ways to accomplish all goals.

KAREN HIRSCH

By ensuring the community is well-informed, we can encourage meaningful dialogue, reduce misunderstandings, and support thoughtful decision-making.

I believe it is important to establish a clear timeline and schedule, along with timely updates throughout the process, to keep the community informed and aware. Providing regular communication ensures transparency, reduces uncertainty, and allows stakeholders to follow the progress of decisions and initiatives related to school funding. Consistent updates demonstrate accountability and help maintain trust between the district and the community.

LISA HURDA

My expectation is continued transparency, fiscal discipline, and adherence to the phased implementation plan that has been outlined. The collaboration between the Superintendent, the Business Office, Finance, Buildings & Grounds Committee, JP Cullen, and EUA has been strong, and I expect that level of diligence to continue.

It's important that we remain focused not only on visible improvements, but also on critical infrastructure upgrades such as roofing, mechanical systems, and other high-priority capital needs that protect our long-term investment. Ongoing updates to both the board and the community will remain essential as Phase 1 progresses.

COLTON MEASNER

We need to continue to be transparent and fiscally responsible with referendum dollars. The district has a good plan and my hope is that they see it through the end of Phase 1.

c) In your opinion, are most community members aware of capital funding expenditures and how they are supporting better learning environments and outcomes? If not, how can that be improved?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Many are but not all truly understand that a healthy environmentally physical building and pleasant surroundings lends to a positive learning environment. This will lead to safe and mentally positive academic outcomes.

KAREN HIRSCH

I believe that many community members are not as informed as they could be regarding the timeline, schedule, and vendor accountability related to school funding initiatives. Providing a clear outline of project phases, expected milestones, and vendor responsibilities would significantly improve transparency.

By sharing regular updates and holding vendors accountable to established timelines and performance expectations, we can strengthen community confidence and demonstrate responsible stewardship of district resources.

LISA HURDA

While updates are shared publicly, I believe there is always room to strengthen community awareness. Many residents see construction, but may not fully understand the scope such as the \$11.1 million dedicated to safety enhancements, \$16.2 million for improved special education spaces, and significant investments in essential maintenance like roofing and infrastructure.

We can improve awareness through proactive storytelling such as clear progress dashboards, visual updates, community tours, and concise summaries that connect expenditures directly to student safety, accessibility, and learning outcomes. When we clearly communicate both the visible upgrades and the behind-the-scenes improvements, the community gains a fuller understanding of how these investments support better educational environments for all students.

COLTON MEASNER

In my opinion, I believe most are. The reason I say that is because nearly 67% of the voters (who are in the district and voted) in the 2024 November election, voted yes to the capital referendum.



5) In February 2024, the school board reviewed the 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan and approved four (4) strategic priority areas: Optimal Student Outcomes, Growing Talented & Invested Educators, Family & Community Partnerships, and Innovative Facilities & Use of Resources.

The planning process to develop the 2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan began in September 2023. If the same process is followed, planning for the 2027 – 2030 Strategic Plan should begin in September 2026. You will be a board member at that time.

a) In your opinion, what is a board member's role in the strategic planning process?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Full positive support and find additional resources to make good outcomes be realized.

KAREN HIRSCH

I would need to further educate myself on the specific needs within each area in order to provide a fully informed and thoughtful response. I believe it is important to thoroughly understand all aspects of an issue before making decisions that impact our district.

LISA HURDA

A school board member's role in strategic planning is to help set the district's long-term direction and ensure that the plan reflects the community's vision for student success. This includes participating in the development of priorities that align with the district's mission and core values, embracing input from families, staff, students, and community partners, and approving clear, measurable goals that support Student Academic Excellence, Staff Excellence, Operational Excellence, and Family & Community Collaboration.

A thoughtful board also provides oversight by monitoring progress and ensuring the plan remains a living document that guides decisions and resources focused on improving outcomes for every student.

COLTON MEASNER

I don't have much experience in the process of creating the Strategic Plan. However, I believe providing insight, experiences, and knowledge as a board member benefits the creating strategic plan.

b) What are your expectations for the 2027 – 2030 Strategic Plan?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Continue to move forward in a supportive manner and close all negative loopholes that can hinder progress.

KAREN HIRSCH

I strongly believe in retaining our incredible staff who provide exceptional education to our students. Our teachers and support staff are the foundation of student success, and investing in their retention, professional growth, and support is essential to maintaining high educational standards within our district.

LISA HURDA

For the 2027–2030 Strategic Plan, I expect a process that is inclusive, data-informed, and grounded in our shared commitment to student success. The plan should build on the progress of the current priorities - Academic Excellence, Staff Excellence, Operational Excellence, and Family & Community Collaboration - while thoughtfully incorporating community feedback and evidence from district performance data.

My expectation is that the resulting plan will offer clear goals and actionable strategies that align resources with our highest educational priorities, foster staff growth and wellbeing, strengthen community partnerships, and continue to prepare every student for success in a rapidly changing world.

Once the 2027 - 2030 Strategic Plan is developed, I will continue to uphold accountability by monitoring progress, asking the right questions, and celebrating successes with our district and community. Above all, I view strategic planning not as a one-time event, but as a shared roadmap that helps us invest our resources and energy in what matters most for student achievement and community confidence in our schools.

COLTON MEASNER

My expectations would be based on how we finish this year, but also not allowing standards to drop. I would like our plan to continue to put us down the path of “exceeding expectations” on the state report card. Listening to district leadership will also help me form more expectations.

6) In 2025, SDJ entered into a partnership with Studer Education to accelerate student achievement and effectively communicate the progress being made. The last board update on the Studer Education partnership was on Jan. 13.

a) What is your perspective on the Studer Education program?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

The Studer Partnership is actually over 10 years old starting with basic relationships and has grown dynamically since. This has been a fulfilling journey.

KAREN HIRSCH

Schools are not businesses. Each classroom faces its own unique challenges, with students who have different learning styles, backgrounds, and needs. Because of this, education cannot be approached with a one-size-fits-all mindset.

It is important for the district to recognize that teachers must be flexible and adapt their classroom management and instructional strategies to meet the specific needs of their students. Supporting that flexibility allows educators to provide the best education possible and ensures that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

LISA HURDA

I view the Studer Education partnership as a thoughtful, structured approach to strengthening our district's focus on continuous improvement and clearer communication about progress. Studer Education is a nationally recognized partner that helps school systems build alignment around strategic priorities, develop meaningful metrics, and embed improvement practices into daily leadership and operational habits.

At the January 13 board meeting, we received a detailed update on how the Studer model is being implemented in SDJ and how district leaders are establishing measurement tools and dashboards to track progress. Those updates reflect a commitment to data-informed decision-making and ongoing communication with the board and community. I appreciate that the partnership is helping us articulate not just what goals we pursue, but how we will monitor and communicate meaningful improvements over time.

COLTON MEASNER

The Studer Education program was one of the best decisions the district made last year. It is a great program and provides tremendous knowledge for our district leadership to pass on. This program played a big role in our state report card this year. I was a big supporter of bringing this program back last year.

b) School board members play a critical governance role in the Studer Education program. What should a school board member be looking for as the program progresses?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Each Board Member should understand the objectives and support the goals. Each Board Member should be looking for progress in and area touched on.

KAREN HIRSCH

The school board needs to understand the intricacies of each classroom, including the unique challenges that come with managing diverse groups of students. It is essential to recognize that teachers not only manage and maintain order in their classrooms, but also adapt their instruction to meet the wide range of learning abilities and needs of their students.

Acknowledging and supporting the skill, flexibility, and dedication of teachers is key to ensuring high-quality education and positive outcomes for every student.

LISA HURDA

As a board member, my responsibility in the Studer Education partnership is to stay focused on outcomes and alignment. As school board members, we are not involved in day-to-day implementation, but we are accountable for ensuring the work is producing measurable progress tied directly to our strategic priorities.

As the program progresses, I look for clear, consistent reporting that shows trends over time not just activity updates, but evidence of real improvement in student achievement, stronger leadership alignment, and better communication across the district. I want to see that continuous improvement practices are becoming embedded in how we operate, not existing as a separate initiative.

Ultimately, my focus is on whether this partnership is helping us create sustained, meaningful gains for students and reinforcing a culture of accountability and excellence. If we can clearly demonstrate growth and communicate that progress transparently to our community, then the partnership is fulfilling its purpose.

COLTON MEASNER

We need to continue to see the great results. I want the Studer Program to continue to provide strong standards and hold our educational plan accountable.

7) Many factors impact student success and there are different ways of measuring student outcomes. One measure is the District of Public Instruction (DPI) State Report Cards. In the 2024-25 DPI Report Card, SDJ improved to a "Meets Expectations" rating with an overall score of 61.6, a 5.9 point increase from the previous year.

a) What are your thoughts about the district's DPI State Report Card scores?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Positive.

KAREN HIRSCH

I feel that teachers are currently spending too much time teaching to tests, rather than fostering a wider range of thought, creativity, and imagination. Children learn in many different ways, and not every student excels in a test-taking environment—I personally have struggled with tests myself.

LISA HURDA

I am encouraged by the School District of Janesville's move to a "Meets Expectations" overall rating with an increased score of 61.6 on the 2024-25 DPI Report Card. This nearly six-point gain from the prior year reflects real progress and shows that the intentional instructional strategies, data-driven practices, and the hard work of students and educators are yielding measurable results. It's important to celebrate this improvement while also recognizing that there is more work to do to ensure all students reach their full potential.

COLTON MEASNER

Last year to this year is a tremendous improvement. I believe we are going to continue to move up our scores every year. As always, there's room for improvement. Nothing is going to change overnight; we need the community's patience. This is the trend we want to see!

b) What were the drivers of the improved rating?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Many factors. Moving past the Covid period, younger children improving as they move up through the grades, not trying to bite off too big of chunks of improvements or just being realistic towards any improvement, giving our educators the resources they need, etc.

KAREN HIRSCH

Did not provide a response to this question.

LISA HURDA

The district's improved rating was driven by gains across all four DPI accountability areas, with particularly notable growth in Target Group Outcomes and increases in both Achievement and Growth indicators.

Gains in English Language Arts and mathematics proficiency, stronger attendance results, and improved subgroup performance all contributed to this upward trend. These results reflect coordinated instructional focus, consistent use of data to inform teaching, and committed effort from students and staff alike.

COLTON MEASNER

The Studer Program, tremendous district leadership, teachers carrying out our strategic plan, checkpoints throughout the year, and communicating with our teachers better.

c) As a school board member, how will you support a sustained trend of improved scores?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

We must find ways to compensate our educators better. It is hard to concentrate on progress when one gets less than a cost-of-living wage increase while health costs are increasing beyond a healthy means to exist. It is the same in most school districts, so moving to another district is not a viable option for most. The better educators especially the newer ones, will find their best option is to move to another career field, which is not a "healthy" path forward in life.

Remember, these are educated people who continue to invest in more education to support new and better teaching methods. We must find ways to improve their lot in life and support those who choose to continue on in the district.

KAREN HIRSCH

Relying heavily on standardized tests can unfairly label students and overlook their unique strengths and talents. It is important for the district to support teaching approaches that cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, allowing all students to thrive in ways that suit their individual learning styles.

LISA HURDA

Sustaining and building on this progress requires continued focus on instructional excellence, leadership practices, and strategic use of data. As a board member, I will:

- Support district leadership in setting clear, measurable goals tied to student outcomes.
- Advocate for ongoing professional development and resources that empower educators to meet student needs.
- Monitor progress regularly, ask thoughtful, data-informed questions, and ensure accountability for continuous improvement.
- Encourage transparent communication with families and the community so that stakeholders understand both where we are and where we're headed.

Maintaining this momentum means celebrating progress while always focusing on equity, growth, and readiness for life after graduation.

COLTON MEASNER

By adding my thoughts when appropriate but also listening to the people in our district who know how to sustain a trend like this. Having a strong line of trust between the board and the district I believe would help.



8) Strong standards, student attendance and parental involvement are all key components of a high-performing school climate. SDJ has 12 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 2 high schools and 3 charter schools.

a) As a district, how does SDJ perform in terms of strong standards?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

This response is to all 3 parts as they have similar results and goals. Standards drive us and if we do not live up to strong standards we will move backward or stay the same. We should always strive to strengthen and improve our standards.

KAREN HIRSCH

Did not provide a response to this question.

LISA HURDA

The School District of Janesville (SDJ) maintains a sequential, articulated curriculum aligned with the Wisconsin Academic Standards and Benchmarks, ensuring consistency in what students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level.

This alignment with state standards supports instructional coherence across the district's 12 elementary schools, three middle schools, two high schools, and three charter schools. SDJ's strategic planning and curriculum work also emphasize academic excellence and continuous improvement, reinforcing high expectations for learning while supporting diverse learners.

COLTON MEASNER

I believe this year was a tell to how our standards are. We made a significant jump in the report card and a lot of that has to do with the standards set by the district. I believe our standards will get higher and higher by the year. Exceeding expectations takes time to do.

b) As a district, how does SDJ perform in terms of student attendance?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

This is an area that has positive improvements for the past 10 years. A strong effort to get children in the seats with home visits from district personnel, phone calls and making parents understand that one cannot learn if a child does not attend and absorb the knowledge in person.

KAREN HIRSCH

Did not provide a response to this question.

LISA HURDA

Student attendance is a priority within the district's strategic vision, where regular attendance is recognized as a foundation for learning and success. The district has established board policies consistent with Wisconsin's compulsory attendance law to support regular student attendance and address chronic absence when it occurs. In recent data shared with the board, there has been movement in improved attendance indicators that contribute to higher outcomes on state accountability measures, illustrating that consistent engagement in school supports overall student achievement.

COLTON MEASNER

The state report showed that we made improvements in attendance. One thing to keep in mind, we are the 9th or 10th biggest district in the state of Wisconsin. Obviously, there's always room for improvement. But there is a key factor in this that if improved, our attendance would be much better; that is parental involvement.

c) As a district, how does SDJ perform in terms of parental involvement?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Parents have encountered a very adverse environment with the need for their necessity to work, having to become the sole bread winner due to single family environments and many times necessitating to work multiple jobs. This can arise with multiple bread winners.

The social networks have been replaced with cell phones, social networking, and just plain not having one-on-one conversations. There are many reasons more but the family structure is not what it was in the past and we must learn how to live properly and positively within reality. Even the best family are affected.

All these areas (a,b,c) are intertwined with each other and do not exist alone.

KAREN HIRSCH

I believe the district needs a dedicated community liaison to help foster parental involvement. We live in an era where many parents work long hours, and some families are headed by a single parent. It is our responsibility, as a community, to support these families and ensure they feel included rather than left out.

By providing outreach, resources, and opportunities for engagement, we can strengthen the partnership between schools and families, which ultimately benefits students' learning, well-being, and sense of belonging.

LISA HURDA

SDJ actively fosters parental involvement through structured communication strategies and family engagement initiatives. The district uses tools like Infinite Campus and two-way multilingual platforms (e.g., TalkingPoints) to ensure families are connected and informed. These communication systems support ongoing engagement between school staff and guardians in ways that strengthen involvement in student learning, school activities, and district decisions.

The district's strategic priorities highlight family and community collaboration as central to student success, reflecting both culture and intentional practices to engage parents as partners in education.

While the district has made strong efforts to engage parents, there is always room to improve. Strengthening two-way communication and creating more opportunities for meaningful parent participation remain ongoing priorities. Parents are vital to the success of their children's education, and we will continue to work diligently to ensure they are informed, empowered, and actively involved in supporting student learning and growth.

COLTON MEASNER

The district does its best to involve the parents, but the parents have to want to be involved. Students in Kindergarten through 9th/10th grade are not able to drive themselves to school. Which means it is up to the parents, students' family, or the Janesville Transit System to get them to school.

I believe school shouldn't be an option and if a student wants to come to school there is absolutely no reason they shouldn't be able to come. I encourage SDJ parents to get more involved in their students' education and push them to be the best they can be.



9) The Janesville School Board is responsible for overseeing the superintendent. How should the superintendent be evaluated and should the evaluation process and evaluation criteria be public?

KARL DOMMERSHAUSEN

Since this is a personnel issue and the evaluation is a personal issue, so only legal releases of employment issues can be made public. Some generalized reports pertaining to the superintendents are released throughout their employment tenure. The results of various areas are the views of performance.

Since I have been on the board, I feel we have been blessed with the correct person at the time with each of the superintendents performing well, if not outstanding. The superintendent is rated against what the board charges he or she is tasked with. They are rated based on how well they accomplish those goals each year. This is done in a closed-session and a discussion is involved by the group and by the individual board members. There is room for the superintendent to ask question and ask for additional guidance.

KAREN HIRSCH

The superintendent is a public figure who is accountable to the community. Therefore, the evaluation process and criteria should be made public. After all, taxpayer dollars fund their salary, and the community has a right to understand how leadership performance is measured.

Transparency in this process builds trust, ensures responsible stewardship of public resources, and allows the community to have confidence in the decisions made by district leadership.

LISA HURDA

The Janesville School Board evaluates the superintendent using the Effectiveness Project (EP), a state-approved system through CESA 6. This research-based framework ties leadership performance directly to student outcomes, strategic priorities, and district effectiveness. It emphasizes multiple sources of evidence, collaboration between the board and the superintendent, and support for continuous professional growth.

While the evaluation process is public to ensure transparency and community trust, the superintendent's individual performance results are confidential. This confidentiality protects the professional integrity of the evaluation process, allows for honest and constructive feedback, and respects personnel privacy while still holding leadership accountable. It ensures the board can provide meaningful guidance and support without compromising professional relationships or exposing sensitive information about personnel or internal decision-making.

COLTON MEASNER

I believe the current system of evaluation of the superintendent is the right one. As far as the criteria to be public, I'd have to do some research and asked some questions before I have a sure answer. I am very happy with the work Superintendent Mark Holzman has done.









