Board of Education Candidates

There are seven candidates for two open seats on the Board of Education. Board members serve a three-year term. The candidates are listed below in alphabetical order.

DENNIS BELL
Address: 12 Sparrow Point (34-year resident)
Family: Wife, Anna; daughters, Hayley (Gr. 1) and Harper (Pre-K)
Education: BS in Business, St. John Fisher College
Employment: Vice President and Owner, Bell Mechanical Contractor, Inc.

Qualifications and Activities:
- Supporter/Volunteer at Penfield Shepherd Home
- 2008 SJ Fisher Lacrosse Team Captain
- 2008 Empire 8 Sportsman of the Year

Personal Statement:
After growing up and experiencing Penfield Schools from K to 12, I have now decided to raise my family in Penfield. Whether it was on the athletic fields or in the classroom, some of my best memories of my youth were while I was in school. The public schools of Penfield were a great experience for me and as my children are starting to attend them, I want to ensure they—along with every other young adult attending a Penfield School—have the same great experience that I did. I want to do my part to make sure that the budgets get passed and that the funds from the budgets are being allocated properly so students can continue to learn and grow. I want to make sure that the teachers and staff receive the appropriate funding and materials to grow and succeed. I want to help the turnaround from COVID-19.

LISA BENATI-CHIDSEY
Address: 3726 Dear Meadow Run (38-year resident)
Family: Husband, Keith; three children, one PHS Grad, one high school, one middle school
Employment: Business Owner and Consultant, Wellness and Coaching

Qualifications and Activities:
- Penfield Board of Education Member (2014–Present)
- Board Liaison: Policy Committee (2018–Present); Audit Committee (2016–2018); Health & Safety Committee (2014–2016)
- School PTA, PTSA, PTO, SEPTA, PACE and Boosters (2014–Present)
- Monroe County School Board Association Member (2014–Present)
- Parent Advisory Board Member (2010–2013)
- PTA, Library, and Classroom Volunteer (2009–Present)
- Autism Learning Health Network Family Advisory Council (2020–Present)
- Starbridge Volunteer (2010–Present)
- PHS Grad, one middle school, one high school, one PHS Grad

Personal Statement:
I have been an active board member of the Penfield Central School District for the past six years and I am seeking a third term to continue to serve our community. I enjoy meeting families, teachers, and administrators throughout our district, working toward common goals with various stakeholders. Additionally, I attend various county and state events advocating for Penfield and public education. Part of our district mission is to work collaboratively to develop the individual talents of all our students and I am proud of the collective work we continue to do especially around social-emotional learning, curriculum development, and mental health. It is my goal to continue this mission, utilizing a whole student lens to develop innovative solutions with fiscal responsibility. As an educator, parent, alumni, and taxpayer; I would be honored to continue to serve as a Penfield Board of Education Member.

CALVIN FRELIER
Address: 15 Old Westfall Drive (41-year resident)
Family: Wife, Laurie; children, Leah, Audrey, MaeMichelle (PHS Grads), Nathaniel (Gr. 12) and Luke (Gr. 7 at RCS)
Education: MBA, University of Rochester; BSME, University of Michigan; BS in Letters and Engineering, Calvin College
Employment: Self-Employed

Qualifications and Activities:
- Penfield Board of Education Member, 2019-2020
- Member, School Board and Treasurer, Rochester Christian School, 2010–2011
- Numerous patents

Personal Statement:
As a member of the Penfield BOE for the past year I have worked to bring fresh ideas to the board to help improve student scores and work within budget constraints. The work has been difficult. My first attempt at improving the math curricula by stressing the re-emphasis of trigonometry at the pre-calculus level, (trigonometry is no longer part of the regular curriculum) was met with a letter from the teacher’s union castigating me. With a refrain of we are not going to change the curriculum. I further opposed the introduction of a police curriculum. I opposed the introduction of a police officer or SRO and the surveillance policy as draconian and reflective of a police state. That didn’t work out either. However, I was the first in highlighting the dangers of the Coronavirus and the emails would prove that. I also encourage the English department to provide more uplifting materials in view of improving students’ mental stability.
I have two daughters in the Penfield school district (23/27)

I hold my Master’s Degree in Public Policy from the University

I grew up in Pullman, WA. and have lived in Penfield since 2010.

I most want to focus on student achievement and implementing

I received a high school diploma from Marcus Whitman Central

Qualifications and Activities:
  - Co-President, Indian Landing PTO
  - Member, Education Committee, American Fundraising
    Professionals, Genesee Valley Chapter
  - AmeriCorps*VISTA at the American Red Cross in Disaster
    Preparedness Education
  - Presidential campaign worker, including organizing for the
    2008 Iowa Caucus

Personal Statement:
I have an extensive career in non-profit work and currently
work full-time in fundraising and part-time as a group exercise
instructor in Penfield. I currently serve as the co-president of
the Indian Landing PTO.

I received a high school diploma from Marcus Whitman Central
School and have a Bachelor of Arts from SUNY Geneseo. I have
a firm belief that quality education should be accessible to every
single person and is the best investment you can make as a
taxpayer.

I most want to focus on student achievement and implementing
policies that will ensure success for all students. I plan to use
my professional leadership and collaborative skills to assist
school leadership and board members with moving the district
forward. I am interested in creating an exceptional educational
experience for students, while also representing you when
making important budget decisions. I look forward to serving
our community in this capacity.

Qualifications and Activities:
  - Active YMCA member, including Bay View YMCA Swim Team
  - Penfield Rangers Soccer Club

Personal Statement:
I grew up in Pullman, WA. and have lived in Penfield since 2010.
I hold my Master’s Degree in Public Policy from the University
of Wisconsin-Madison and my Bachelor’s in Geography and
Political Science at The University of Washington in Seattle.
I have two daughters in the Penfield school district (23/27
graduating classes). They are both active in the many activities
Penfield Central School District offers, notably music and sports.
I currently work for URMC in the IT department supporting key
software systems. I am running because we need to ensure all
of our children continue to have the best education possible and
have the opportunities both in school and in the extracurricular
activities they deserve. Our children are the key to our society’s
future and keeping exceptional quality in focus is crucial, all
with the understanding taxes are already high and we need to
control spending.

Qualifications and Activities:
  - Dean’s List at MCC
  - Volunteer Peer Mentor and Coach, Thomas Ryan
    Recreation Center

Personal Statement:
I feel qualified with the three plus years working at the
RCSD. I have been in various roles such as ISS coordinator
and currently working in special education in a self-contained
classroom. Working with youth, I understand how of the
essence it is to invest time in our youth to ensure that no child
is left behind. I understand diversity from all aspects of student
learning and want to incorporate this within the Penfield School
District. I want to ensure adequate funding in all programs so
that every student is given a chance to learn in an atmosphere
that benefits their individualized learning style.

Qualifications and Activities:
  - 2000 PHS National Honor Society Teacher of the Year
  - Who’s Who Among American Teachers
  - PHS 10th Grade Math Award in my name

Personal Statement:
I began my teaching career in Penfield in 1966. I taught in
the mathematics department at Denoville and PHS during my
tenure in Penfield which ended with my retirement in 2000. The
education of children has always been very important to me.
I started another degree towards getting an Administrator's
Certificate but ended that path when I realized the classroom
was where I belonged.

Having been retired for 20 years, I have seen the many
changes in education and want to return to share my
experiences and to help the district look forward to the future.
After retiring, I was contacted by Dr. Richard Mace, previous
Penfield Superintendent, and was asked to join him at Roberts
Wesleyan College as an Associate Professor in their education
department. I observed student teachers and full-time teachers
to help them progress in their careers.