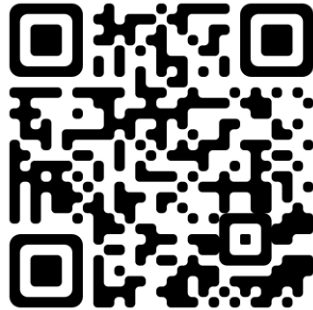


Join the DeWitt Elementary PTA

Visit: <https://dewittlempta.memberhub.com/store>



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The DeWitt Elementary PTA is made up of parents, teachers, students, and community members in the DeWitt Public School district. Due to the PTA's non-profit 501(c)(3) status, the PTA cannot support or oppose candidates for public office, establish political action committees that support candidates, rate candidates in any fashion, conduct research or analysis for a party or candidate, or give membership lists to candidates. However, we can sponsor public forums in which all registered candidates are invited to participate.



MEET THE CANDIDATES FOR THE **DeWitt School Board**

Wed., Oct. 26, 2022
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

DeWitt Middle School
Auditorium – Forum
Cafeteria – Meet & Greet

Hosted by the DeWitt Elementary PTA

PROGRAM

Welcome	Jamie Young
Introductions	Moderator
Candidate Introductions	Candidates
Universal Question	Moderator & Candidates
Questions for the Candidates	Moderator & Candidates
Closing Statements	Moderator & Candidates
Meet & Greet	Cafeteria

**All official candidates were invited to participate in tonight's forum. Candidates were given the following prompts to generate the content for this booklet. Submissions were printed exactly as received. The PTA did not edit or omit any submissions.*

- *I am...*
- *My qualifications are...*
- *I am/have been connected to DeWitt Public Schools....*
- *I am seeking a position on the Board of Education because...*

Don't forget, Election Day is Tuesday, November 8th

THANK YOU!

A huge thank you to the DeWitt Elementary PTA officers for supporting the community's request to host a 'Meet the Candidate' event. A special shout out to Katie Kiter, Krista Howard, Kayla Tipton, and Moderator, Laura Clark-Roumpz, for their contributions to ensure tonight's event is impartial, educational, and within the guidelines set by state and national PTAs as well as the IRS.

2022 – 2023 Officers

President.....	Angela Straus
Vice President	Kirsta Howard
Secretary	Jamie Young
Treasurer	Crystal Weaver

John Tramontana



I am the current Vice President of the Board of Education. My wife, Jessica, and I moved to DeWitt in 2012. We have two daughters, Isla (10), and Gia (8), and two black Labradors, Rosie and Zola. I am currently the CEO of the Michigan Veterinary Medical Association and previously worked with the Michigan Association of School Boards.

I have served on the school board for eight years, and as an officer of the board for the past four. I have also been a member of the Curriculum & Instruction and 2016 Bond Committees and currently serve on the Finance Committee and Sexual Education Committee. I was also a school board trainer for five years during my time with MASB.

Our family is very much a part of DeWitt Public Schools. In addition to Board service, my wife and I are both members of the PTA, and support students in various activities outside of academics such as athletics and the arts.

I am seeking to continue my role on the Board because I feel our current Board is highly effective and is positively impacting student achievement. Whether it's high graduation rates, improved test scores, or keeping more money in the classroom than any other peer district in mid-Michigan, we are getting things done and making DeWitt a destination district for students and staff. I have traveled around the state and met with dozens of boards. I have seen what works, and I have seen what doesn't work. Working so closely with boards has given my first-hand knowledge and expertise that other candidates do not possess. I love this role and I love being a part of something bigger than me. I appreciate your support.

Will Thompson



My name is Will Thompson and I have lived in DeWitt for 24 years. My wife and I have three boys, two of which have graduated and one who is still in the district.

I have been a practicing professional civil engineer in Michigan for over 24 years. I have been working with the public for many years to analyze complex problems and develop data driven and inclusive solutions. I have over 20 years of management and budget

experience. With over 250 employees, and a budget of over \$100million, I understand the complexities of large and diverse organizations such as DeWitt Public Schools. I work daily on strategies to not only recruit great talent but find ways to make our workplace great. I will leverage my experience to help the district succeed.

DeWitt Public Schools(PDS) was the driver for our decision on where to live. My three boys have attended DPS and one is still enrolled. A couple years ago, I became interested in the School Board so I started to regularly attend the meetings. Because of my participation I was invited to be on the Covid and Mask Plan Task Force in early 2022. I also participated in the DeWitt Strategic Planning Retreat in early 2022. In August I attended a 2-hour training session hosted by the Michigan Association of School Boards.

I am seeking the position on the BOE because I want to continue my long history of contributing to the DeWitt Community. I have enjoyed coaching a variety of sports from soccer to lacrosse for my boys. I also spent many years leading Cub Scout dens and, eventually, leading the entire Cub Scout Pack. I hope to contribute to continuing a long tradition of success at DPS.

Angelina Barnes



Angelina Barnes, a parent, attorney, current DeWitt Board of Education Trustee, and active volunteer in the school district.

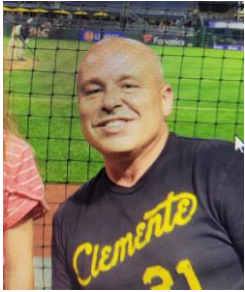
I have a Bachelor of Arts in Social Relations from Michigan State University, a Juris Doctorate from William Mitchell College of Law, and hold a law license in both Michigan and Minnesota. As an attorney I am a highly trained problem solver. A majority of my career has been spent training and advising

public board members on their legal, ethical and fiscal responsibilities as board members. I have the skills required to continue to serve on the DeWitt School Board which requires the ability to analyze and navigate a complex system of law, policy, and compliance. I am also an excellent listener who understands the importance of hearing from everyone. I advocate for transparency and clear consistent communication in the district, knowing a diverse approach is critical to district success.

I am a parent of a 10th grade DeWitt High School student and a 6th grade DeWitt Middle School student. I am actively involved in the DeWitt Marching Band as a member of the pit and props team. I am committed to giving both time and financially to the district to ensure its success. I am a current member of the DeWitt School Board, member of the Curriculum Committee and the Sex Ed Advisory Committee.

I am seeking to continue my service as a trustee on the DeWitt Board of Education because public education forms the core of our community. I am my family's first college graduate. I know first hand how important a strong public education is to a successful community. I am also concerned about the increasing stressors and challenges in our public schools including diminishing resources, educator and staffing shortages, mental health issues and want to use my skills and experience to contribute in a way that matters.

Clay Coey



My name is Clay Coey. Father of 2 daughters (ages 29 and 11), and Grandfather of my 4-year-old Granddaughter. I am an auctioneer by trade, a taxpayer and concerned parent, just like you. I am originally from Pittsburgh, PA and have been a resident of Dewitt since 2013.

I work for a living. I am a parent. In a nutshell? I am just like you. With my youngest currently in DeWitt Schools, my "on-paper

qualifications" may not be as "impressive" as some whom may view "qualifications as being relative to how many diplomas one can frame and hang on a wall". Having seen and experienced life's ups and downs, and learned many lessons by simply "doing", my "primary qualification" would likely be that I see, speak, understand what everyday PARENTS and CITIZENS go through. And I understand, respect and know that (regardless of "what side of a political issue" that parents fall on? We are all wanting the SAME thing. The very best for our most-precious resource: our children.

For 7 years now, since my youngest began Kindergarten. Having attended every Board Meeting for the past year, my connection has become more "up close", as to gather a better understanding of the issues at hand...the directions the district is headed in...thinks we like and things we do not.

The School Board needs BALANCE. Above all other things. To have a voice on both sides of an issue. To have a voice representing that OF the parents and also to be able to have respectful debate and open dialogue between all sides. For too long, the voices of the concerned parent, the taxpayer, the families...have been sequestered and silences. I intend to bring a change to that. I speak to ALL sides, and respect all sides. However, it can never, ever be "all one way or the other". The real world does not work that way. Bringing a voice that speaks to the townspeople every day, and opening up dialogue and ideas-exchange is of vital importance. It is my goal to return OUR school back to parents, citizens, school employees, etc...and hear ALL sides. ALL sides before making decisions.

Dwight Handspike



I have been a DeWitt resident for the past 19 years. My wife and I selected DeWitt due to the strength of the educational system. We have raised our 4 children here and the last one will graduate in 2023. I enjoyed watching them participate in athletics, musicals, and choir concerts. My hobbies include cooking, singing, playing pickleball, and watching the Spartans (and sometimes the Lions).

- DeWitt Board of Education Trustee since July 12, 2021
 - *Member of Curriculum Committee, COVID Mask Task Force, and the District's Strategic Plan*
 - *Assisted with DeWitt Superintendent's initiatives on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the past 5 years*
- MSU Master's degree in Educational Administration – Student Affairs
 - *Educational training included child and adolescent development, legal issues in education, leadership development, and multicultural education.*
- Senior Associate Director of Undergraduate Academic Services in the Broad College of Business, MSU (1998 – Current)

I have volunteered in many classrooms, field days, field trips and heart dissections as well as chaperoned a 4th grade Mackinaw Island trip and a Florida DHS Soccer trip. In the community, I have been a coach at many levels in basketball, soccer, flag football, baseball, softball and have been the president of the DHS Soccer Club.

I would like to continue to serve on the Board of Education because I care about the future of DeWitt. I want our schools to be a place where all students feel safe, both physically and emotionally. I want all students to have access to resources that will allow them to thrive academically, regardless of their background. I want our educators to know their value to the district and receive the support that they need. I want to make sure that we are fiscally responsible so that we can maximize every dollar given to the district.