

Meet the newly elected school board members

By Isabella Boedeker, Piper Marshall & Christos Routsis
MANAGING EDITOR & INTERNS



On Nov. 5, Clint Derringer, Laura Hull, incumbent Colleen Worden and Timothy Klepp were elected to the school board beginning January 2025. The four ran together as a slate because of their shared goals and unified vision for the future of the Grosse Pointe Public Schools System.



Clint Derringer

Q: What experiences or skills do you bring to the board that will be beneficial in your role?

A: I started as a substitute teacher, and then became an intervention specialist, helping kids study during school and then I ran a credit recovery class before school. Then I started coaching football, wrestling and baseball year-round while I was working at the school. And then eventually I became the coordinator of all of those intervention services, and I also took over the Positive Behavior Intervention Support for the school. I have an idea of how schools work and how they provide services, especially to kids that need the most help. I was the facilities engineering manager for [Chrysler's] stamping plant, which ties directly to the facilities' roles that we have to do with the school board.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish during this term on the board?

A: I hope that we can lay out a plan that bridges our communities together. I think it's important that we represent every community from the south end of the park to the northwest tip of Harper Woods. And it's really important that we kind of appreciate and acknowledge all of the differences and listen, but also find the common ground that allows us to work together and solve problems. I think outside of that, I really would like to try to find methods to amplify student voices, and one thing specifically that I'm interested in starting a conversation on is adding student representatives to the board, one from each high school.

Q: How do you plan to stay informed about the needs of students and teachers, specifically at North during your term?

A: That's another reason that I think we should have a student representative from each high school and get that first-person experience. I want to hear all of the good news, but if there is negative feedback I think we should hear that as well in an open board meeting and then being able to take those policy discussions back to those student representatives is also helpful. And then showing up, being at the events that are in the North end of the district, not just at the high school, but also at Parcels and at the North end elementary schools, and when you are there and when you are listening, when you're engaging with them in person, that is the best way to show them respect and to honor what it is that they are doing.

Laura Hull



Q: What experiences or skills do you bring to the board that will be beneficial in your role?

A: My experience as a public school teacher gives me insight into the issues facing our students and staff. I am in the classroom working with students every day. I will base all decisions on what is best for students, placing a priority on using our resources closest to the classroom. Teachers deserve to have their voices heard and I will always have the best interest of the students and staff in mind.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish during this term on the board?

A: There are many unfilled positions in central administration. Filling those roles is imperative to the success of the district. We will bring transparency to the district by including all stakeholders in important decisions. I hope to incorporate student representation on the school board and to invite students to participate in sharing the good news of their schools and community at meetings.

Q: How do you plan to stay informed about the needs of students and teachers, specifically at North during your term?

A: Having taught at North for several years, I understand the strengths and unique needs of the North community. It is an amazing place and will always hold a special place in my heart. I am looking forward to attending more North activities and opening avenues of communication. I will be accessible, involved and dedicated to making our schools a place where all students are welcomed and appreciated.



PHOTO | Isabella Boedeker

EDITOR'S NOTE | Responses are edited only for length and AP style and are not endorsements.



Colleen Worden

Q: What experiences or skills do you bring to the board that will be beneficial in your role?

A: First, as a parent in the district and having a daughter at North, who has been through all three levels of schools in the district, as well as my involvement in the PTO and being a room mom and volunteer, I have been deeply involved in the district and am deeply invested in keeping our amazing schools a top-notch district. Second, as an Assistant Prosecutor in the Special Victim Unit in the Macomb County Prosecutor's Office, I deal with kids every day who are the most vulnerable. I have to make tough decisions and fight hard for kids every day. That gives me an important experience and skill set in putting our students first and always doing what is best for kids. Third, I practiced law for a municipal law firm for 16 years and gained significant expertise in public finance and balancing budgets, which will be an asset in prioritizing fiscal responsibility. Finally, I work with attorneys every day and have to practice civility, respect and decorum in the courtroom. I pride myself on being civil and respectful, even when I disagree with someone else's point of view.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish during this term on the board?

A: Keep Grosse Pointe a top-tier district and maintain academic excellence for all students. Financial stability and responsibility while maintaining a healthy fund equity balance. Give our teachers competitive wages, a fair contract and incentives to stay in Grosse Pointe. Increase enrollment. Stabilize central administration and fill key roles such as curriculum directors and HR directors. Address staffing concerns, especially for special needs teachers at Parcels. Keep GPPSS walkable.

Q: How do you plan to stay informed about the needs of students and teachers, specifically at North during your term?

A: I regularly communicate with teachers, administrators, students, parents and coaches to ensure that I know what is going on in the North community and to determine what I can do to serve their needs. I am always available to talk to anyone who would like to share information and issues. I also go to every North event I can to support our Norsemen. I also talk to my North student daughter every day.

Timothy Klepp



Q: What experiences or skills do you bring to the board that will be beneficial in your role?

A: I have a background as a CPA and I currently work in IBM's Consulting practice. My day-to-day professional life involves engaging with clients to solve complicated business problems. I think that will be a helpful background for the board and serving this community.

Q: What do you hope to accomplish during this term on the board?

A: We have significant issues to address with teacher attrition, staffing gaps for special needs classrooms and an overall atmosphere of conflict and distrust within and among the board, administration, teachers and staff. As a start, I aim to be a positive influence across all those issues.

Q: How do you plan to stay informed about the needs of students and teachers, specifically at North during your term?

A: I'd like to encourage student participation at board meetings. The exact format needs to be determined, but allocating meeting time to hear regularly from student representatives is something I'd like to see.

Keeping it brief

By Jolie Plewa & Charlotte DeCraene
STAFF REPORTER & INTERN

Digital AP exams

With new digital technology, major tests like the SAT are turning to online testing, and Advanced Placement tests are following suit.

This update has stirred up major discussions amongst the AP community, and AP European History teacher Bridget Cooley is preparing her students for this upcoming change in testing.

"I'm in a PLC group with some other AP teachers, and we are actively working on strategizing on how to help our students transition," Cooley said. "So we very much know it's an issue, and we know that students are going to need practice with the digital version."



Freshmen Assist Shadow Day

On Tuesday, Nov. 19, the Freshmen Assist students shadowed their junior and senior mentors throughout their school day.

This was an opportunity for these freshmen to experience higher level courses they are not normally able to see. Junior Zoe Newsome felt touched by the opportunity for the underclassmen.

"They watched me do what I do on a daily basis," Newsome said. "It made me proud of myself, because they were paying attention."



Zoo field trip

On Wednesday, Nov. 13 Environmental Science and Zoology classes took a field trip to the Detroit Zoo to learn more about the scientific process through the lens of animal behavior.

Junior Tessa Ragle attended this field trip for her Environmental Science class and connected class materials to the animals they were observing at the zoo.

"We learned about animal behavior, and we observed penguins," Ragle said. "It helped us to learn about biodiversity, and animals and how they behave."



Meet Marissa Ford An advocate for student voice in board decisions

By Isabella Boedeker
MANAGING EDITOR

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