



**Dr. Teri Staloch, Superintendent**  
**Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools**  
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Voters were presented with many important choices to make last Tuesday, not the least of which was deciding who should fill four seats on Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools' school board. Eleven candidates sought positions on the board which speaks to the importance of education in our community. Congratulations to incumbent Stacey Ruelle along with Michael Nelson, Jonathan Drewes and Enrique Velázquez who will begin their terms in January.

Each of these newly elected board members will serve four-year terms and will join existing board members Melissa Enger, Mary Frantz and Lee Shimek.

Serving as a board member is one of the most important responsibilities that a citizen can undertake. According to the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA), while school board members have no individual authority, as a governing board they affect the future of the students, staff and the community. Each school board is responsible to its community for governing efficiently and leading effectively to provide for equitable education, resulting in high student achievement.

According to the MSBA, school boards must work as a team to achieve the district's vision, they must establish organizational and physical structures for student and staff success, they are accountable to the community for monitoring the conditions affecting the school district as a whole and they must seek stakeholder input to envision the educational future of the community, and then formulate goals and define outcomes.

To that end, community input has been key for our current board members as they review our school district's Strategic Plan. On November 1, more than 125 school and community members came together to review the most important document in PLSAS: our Strategic Plan that defines our mission, core values, vision and strategic directions. It was an interactive evening with students, parents, staff and community working in groups to describe the experiences they would like to have in our schools in the coming years. These descriptions will help guide the district in the next stage of planning.

During the review, attendees learned about the current state of the district, along with the progress we have made to date on our strategic directions. We believe community input is essential in helping us shape our district goals. That's why during the review we answered questions, received input and listened to our stakeholders. As a result, we will continue to make progress on our current strategic directions and are also ready to make adjustments to our plan. Recommendations will be presented to the School Board for final decision making. Any updates made to our Strategic Plan will then be shared with our staff and community.

Going forward, our school board will continue to use our strategic plan, shaped by our community, to help achieve our district mission and to guide educational programs, services and applied resources.

I would like to thank our school board members for their decision to serve the students, staff and families of PLSAS. I would also like to thank current board members Ben Hanson, Todd Sorensen and Rich Wolf who have each made outstanding contributions while serving PLSAS and each made the difficult decision to not seek re-election.

Newly elected members will take office in January. I know each is committed to continuing to build on the trust they have earned in our community and will be dedicated to making the best decisions possible for the students of PLSAS.