

Warwick School Board to lose 5 members who take 4 decades of experience with them

In Nov. 7 election, 14 candidates are running for 7 board seats

By Laura Knowles

For the first time, there will be seven seats up for election to the Warwick School Board this November.

On Nov. 7, the public will vote for officers that include county commissioner, clerk of the court of common pleas, coroner, district attorney, register of wills, sheriff, judge, and treasurer. They will be voting for Elizabeth Township Supervisors, Lititz Borough Council, and Warwick Township Supervisors.

Voters will also cast ballots for seven seats on the nine-person Warwick School Board.

With the departure of five members of the Warwick School Board, it will be vastly different when the new members take office in December 2023.

"This will be a big change for the Warwick School Board," said school board member Nelson Peters, who has been on the

school board for 12 years.

Peters chose to not run for reelection, leaving the future of the school board to the new members of the board. He admits that the last three years have been a challenging time to be on the Warwick School Board.

The Warwick School District had to deal with an unprecedented pandemic, followed by issues such as the resulting learning challenges, concerns about books, and accepting ESSER funds. Yet, the Warwick School District was able to avoid a tax increase for four years and got students back to in-class learning sooner than most other districts in Lancaster County.

Four other school board members are not seeking reelection, including the longest-serving school board member Todd Rucci, who has served on the Warwick School Board for 14 years, since 2009. For the past two

years, Rucci has served as president of the board, challenged with maintaining order at meetings and keeping discourse civil in times often filled with tension.

Warwick School Board Leslie Penkunas served on the board for two four-year terms or eight years in total. Lisa Miller and Ed Browne have served on the Warwick School Board for four years, both elected in 2019.

In August, Nelson Peters was honored for his 12 years of service as a member of the board, while Leslie Penkunas was honored for her eight years of service on the board. They were each presented with certificates of service.

"The Warwick School Board has always operated in a non-partisan way," said Peters. "The most important thing for all of us has been serving the best interests of the students."

Peters hopes that the new

Warwick School Board will continue to stay focused on what is most important, in supporting students, parents, families, and educators in the school district. As he adds, in the words of the school district's mission statement, "That collaboration is intended to enable all students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to become responsible, productive, and resourceful citizens of the community."

Penkunas agreed. Her family moved to Lititz from Alabama, just before her son started first grade. As she notes, "Within one month, I saw just how special the district was, and how dedicated the teachers are, how they'll jump through hoops for their students."

Years later, she was presented **SCHOOL BOARD.** continued on **A5**



Photo by Laura Knowles

The Warwick School Board will look drastically different as at least five and as many as seven new members will join in December. Pictured (left to right) are current board members Ed Browne, Nelson Peters, Todd Rucci, Scott Landis, Jim Koelsch, Emily Zimmerman, Lisa Miller, Dan Woolley, and Leslie Penkunas. Browne, Peters, Rucci, Miller and Penkunas are not running for reelection. Landis and Woolley were appointed and are running for election. Koelsch and Zimmerman were elected two years ago and will be remaining on the board.

Official Warwick School Board candidate list for Nov. 7 election

Party	Contest	Term	Vote for	Ballot Order	Name
DEM	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	1	Kimberly Regennas
DEM	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	2	Cynthia Wingenroth
DEM	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	3	Amanda Chap
DEM	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	4	Kellye McMillion
DEM	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	5	Lydia Walker de Ardón
REP	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	6	Scott F Landis
REP	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	7	Daniel C Woolley
REP	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	8	Michael Brown
REP	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	9	Bill Breault
REP	SCHOOL DIRECTOR	4	5	10	Reggie Weaver
DEM	SCHOOL DIRECTOR - 2 YR	2	2	1	Cyndi DeLong
DEM	SCHOOL DIRECTOR - 2 YR	2	2	2	Dick Hall
REP	SCHOOL DIRECTOR - 2 YR	2	2	3	Amy Martin
REP	SCHOOL DIRECTOR - 2 YR	2	2	4	Angie Lingo

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with the opportunity to run for school board and enthusiastically embraced it. She wanted to contribute her perspective and experience to the district’s comprehensive planning process, policy reviews, budgeting, and overall strategic direction. She wanted to support the students and teachers while being fiscally responsible for the taxpayers.

“None of the five board members up for reelection is running, so the district is losing 42 combined years of board experience. That’s daunting and there will be a big learning curve for the seven newly elected members,” said Penkunas. “My hope is that all nine members take the time early in their term to learn the key role they have in helping shape the future of the district. I hope that they leave politics at the door and instead, be guided by what is in the best interests of all students.”

As she noted, “I hope that they focus on the big picture—strengthening our facilities, attracting and retaining great teachers, and providing the education, resources and support to allow our students become responsible, productive and resourceful citizens.”

Miller decided to run for Warwick School Board, with her teenage son’s encouragement. As director of community relations for Home Instead, she has always been committed to serving the community.

“As a strong woman of faith, I felt that I was being called to serve,” said Miller.

She was not prepared for the

challenges the board faced in 2020 when the pandemic turned life upside down for everyone. For nearly three months starting in March, classes were taught remotely. She is grateful to the Warwick School District for being able to start in-person learning for students in September 2020, one of the first in Lancaster County.

“It has been a valuable experience for me, and I have relied on my faith and prayers to get through it. I have learned a lot,” said Miller.

Her hope for the future of the Warwick School Board is that those elected to the board put the students first. As she noted, “The kids in our community are most important. We need the community to come together for the kids. We need to value our students and our teachers as we move forward together.”

As the five elected Warwick School Board members leave their collective four decades of experience, two sitting board members will be running for election to the board. Scott Landis was appointed to the board after Millard Eppig resigned in May 2022. Dan Woolley joined the board, after being appointed when Matt Knouse resigned in August 2022. Both Landis and Woolley are running for four-year elected terms to the board.

Only two Warwick School Board members who were elected in 2021 will remain on the board, including Jim Koelsch and Emily Zimmerman.

With seven seats up for election in November, 14 candidates are running for those seats. Seven are Republicans and seven are Democrats. In early October, the

League of Women Voters of Lancaster County planned a non-partisan information session on the 14 candidates. That session was canceled when the Republican candidates chose to not participate.

At the Nov. 7 election, there will be five Democrats running for four-year terms, including mental health professional Kimberly Regennas, senior vice president of development Lydia Walker de Ardon, registered nurse and former Head Start educator Kellye McMillion, childhood case manager and early childhood educator Amanda Chap, and retired counselor and educator Cynthia Wingenroth

Realtor and former school CFO Cyndi DeLong and Millersville professor of psychology and education Dick Hall will be running for the two two-year terms that remained after Eppig and Knouse resigned.

Three other Republican candidates for the four-year terms, project manager Reggie Weaver, retired physical education teacher Michael Brown, and former police officer Bill Breault join attorney Landis and businessman Woolley on the GOP ballot.

Two more GOP candidates are former sales manager Angie Lingo and sales manager Amy Martin, who seek to win on the two-year term ballot.

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