



EAGLE RIDGE ACADEMY

2017 Board of Directors Election Guide

This guide has been created to provide the Eagle Ridge Academy community with information regarding the Board of Directors election and about the candidates themselves. In addition to the information below, the following pages contain the candidates' responses to our standard board questions.

To learn more about the candidates, please attend the 2017 Candidate Forum on Tuesday, April 4th, at 6:00 P.M. in the Eagle Ridge Academy Forum.

The Overall Function of the Board

Board members have both a legal duty and an ethical obligation to ensure that Eagle Ridge Academy carries out its mission and vision.

The Needs of the Board

In order to ensure the continued success of Eagle Ridge Academy, please consider candidates that would fill the following needs:

- A Commitment to the Academy's Classical Mission and Vision
- Development/Fundraising
- Non Profit Management
- Education
- Facilities Management
- Finance/Accounting
- Governance/Law
- Human Resources
- Marketing/Public Relations/Advertising
- Strategic Planning

The Election

The Board of Directors is made up of six teacher seats and five parent/community member seats. For the 2017 election, you will be voting for six candidates:

- Three teachers
- One community member
- Two parent/community members

Thank you for giving this election your careful thought and attention. Participating in this cornerstone of our country's system of government is an excellent way to exercise, and model, true citizenship.



Colleen Brennan - Teacher

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I am interested in serving on the ERA Board because of the potential to continue improving the quality of education for our students. I have over 14 years of experience working in schools as a teacher, and in universities as a teacher educator at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and I am interested in helping any way I can to improve how we educate all students for their future. I have significant experience with and a passion for bringing multi-sector partners together and coalescing community voices to develop actionable solutions to issues while keeping students' needs central. Those that have worked with me over the years can attest to my passion for school policy and procedural issues, charter school advocacy, fiscal integrity, and collaboration with local and state level agencies to deliver the best educational program possible to students and families.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

I've always considered myself to have a very strong work ethic and I am committed to making sound judgments when navigating difficult situations to reach the best possible outcome in a situation. I am also very goal-driven and organized, and I am a problem-finder, but I also enjoy collaborative problem-solving to work through situations and issues where policy, practice, theory and reality intersect. Additionally, I have a lot of interest and experience in coaching and mentoring teachers and students, and in using inquiry to encourage looking at things from a different perspective. Lastly, my first career life was spent as a Graphic Designer working in branding, advertising and marketing, and I can bring expertise from these areas such as market research, organizational development, and brand messaging into my Board service.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

I believe school culture, faculty/staff community and culture, academic rigor (high expectations), and curriculum alignment are the most important aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy to maintain. In light of the current expansion initiative it is vital to the future of the school that the comprehensive core identity, not only limited to the mission, be strengthened, focused and truly embodied.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

- creating optimum class sizes for mission delivery and effective use of resources
- diversity of course offerings in the School of Rhetoric
- the use of student and staff time in the daily schedule
- creating a culture of curiosity
- the role of technology in a classical education
- teacher work/life balance
- balancing expectations of homogeneity with ideas of global, big-picture perspectives
- accessibility of our educational program
- developing active partnerships within the Minnetonka community

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

I think the most important indicator of mission delivery is not only what we say to the public about ourselves, but what others say about us both directly and indirectly. I would evaluate our mission delivery by surveying students, alumni and alumni families in addition to parents and faculty/staff/administrators. I would also ask students/parents who have recently left Eagle Ridge Academy to complete a formal exit survey to better understand gaps between the educational program we perceive we are delivering and what we actually deliver. Lastly, I would talk with and/or survey senior students and parents before graduation to gather information about students' overall preparedness for meeting their future goals and the relevancy of their ERA experiences to their contemporary lives.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

I think gathering information and input from all constituents is a vital part of Board work. It's difficult to truly understand others' perspectives or how a decision could impact any one person or group in an organization without constantly reaching out to stakeholders formally and informally to discuss issues and Board decisions. And while it's usually difficult to prioritize the needs of one group over others, my goal would be to keep the idea of meeting students' needs central to informing my Board decisions.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

Eagle Ridge Academy is a K-12 Classical charter school focused on providing a rigorous, academic foundation grounded in truth, beauty and goodness. ERA provides students with a traditional, Classical education that helps them achieve their best academically while challenging them to develop behaviors, habits and mindsets that will help them to attain their highest potential.



Hayden Bunn – Community Member

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I believe that any representative body needs to truly reflect the community with which it represents. Currently the Board of Directors lacks any student representation, yet they are supposed to represent student interest within the school. As a student, I will truly be able to represent student interest on the Board. I believe I will be able to combine my perspective as a student with my experience working within local government to effectively serve the community.

My second reason is that I have a passion for serving my community. I am incredibly thankful to be part of this school's community and it would be an honor to be able to serve this community as a member of the Board of Directors.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

As a student, I would provide a completely different viewpoint that is not possessed currently by any Board member. I would also bring my experience from the work I have done within the City of Eden Prairie. I am a member of the Conservation Commission, appoint by the city where I work with the community to promote environmentally friendly policy and practices. I am also a Secretary and Director for a local non-profit as well as a community activist. I have also been a leader within multiple student organizations at this school, including NHS, Student Ambassador, and Student Senate. A complete list of my experiences can be found at haydenbunn.com.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

There is a reason that Eagle Ridge is consistently listed as one of the best schools in the state. I believe that we must continue to offer our time-tested version of a classical education. One that promotes the study of the classics and promotes critical thinking. We also need to ensure that we continue to offer a rigorous curriculum that challenges students to reach their full potential. And, Eagle Ridge should continue to provide a small teacher to student ratio to continue the educational success for all students.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

We as a school are continuing to grow, both in our student populace and in our building expansion.

Throughout this expansion, we as a school must not lose sight of our core beliefs and principles that we have held since the founding of this school. The Board also must ensure that our expansion is a smooth process for parents, teachers, and students.

The Board also need to address the low retention rates that exist between certain grade levels. To do this the Board needs to listen to what parents and students are looking for in a school and why they feel that they have to leave the school to find what they are looking for.

Finally, the Board will need to address the issue of transportation and busing. As our school continues to grow we are going to need to offer more bus routes and add additional bus stops to ensure that all students have access to proper transportation.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

I would ask myself the following questions:

- Are we staying true to providing a classical education?
- Are we following the principles we preach (Citizenship, Integrity, Perseverance, Honor, Excellence, and Respect)?
- Are we seeking to better our community?

These are questions that I would ask myself when making decisions. I would use these questions to help guide my thinking. Currently, I think our school is doing pretty well in delivering its intended mission; but like anything else there is room for improvement.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

My top priority will be to ensure that all members of this community feel like their input is not just heard, but is valued. Students, teachers, parents, and the Administration all have an invested interest in the direction of this school. Teachers and the Administration work at this school and they want to see this school be successful in achieving its mission. Parents send their children to this school, they entrust us with their children. Students will spend a large part of their youth at this school. All those groups provide different perspectives and they should help guide the Board in making their decisions. There will be some decisions in which one viewpoint is more applicable to the discussion and the Board should take that into consideration; but the Board should never disregard or ignore any comment made by a member of this community.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

Eagle Ridge Academy is a charter school that offers a different form of education to students that are seeking to be challenged and that want to grow as a person. The school offers a classical education that drives students to achieve their full academic potential while also instilling the key values of citizenship, integrity, perseverance, honor, excellence, and respect in all of the students. Eagle Ridge Academy helps students become knowledgeable citizens that have the ability to think for themselves and advocate for themselves. Finally, Eagle Ridge Academy strives to see all students develop a passion for learning and exploring the world around them. A passion that will stay with them long after they have graduated the school.



Tariro Chapinduka - Parent

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I strive to look out for children and their needs. Education for children is the only item i am concerned about. As a product of good public education i want to instill the same values to our most important of all generations which is the next generation. I am a parent of a child who attend the Academy and i want represent other parents and their children on the best practice in child education. I have a career in education as a C Level manager in a large Public school district with responsibilities to make decisions which impact children and the community and whenever i make a fiscal decision about a school program i incorporate the community's view of what students should know and be able to do. M Board Directors are accessible and accountable to the public on the performance of the school and my goal is to make sure that the we are better stewards of the resources we use to educate our children and those resources are accounted for to the penny.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

I hold a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting and a Master of Business Administration Degree with a concentration in Accounting from Bellevue University (NE). I also obtained a Master of Science Degree in Forensic Accounting from Carlow University (PA). I am a member of the Minnesota Society of Certified Public Accountants, Association of Certified Fraud Examiners and Minnesota Association of School Business Officials. I am currently enrolled in the Council of Greater City Schools' (CGCS) Center for Urban School Executives (C'USE) 2018 Graduating class. I am currently employed as the Executive Director of Finance for a large Public School district and i am responsible for the district's finance operations including Budgeting, Payroll, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Purchasing and Procurement, Student Accounting, Grant Management, Operation and Facilities Finances. I have in-depth knowledge of financial processes within school districts and i have worked to build fiscal processes which encompass student achievement and the Return On Investment on different education programs. As a C Level manager i help the Board in district-wide resource allocations and decision making. I am an expert in informed policy making using data and will be looking forward to work with other Academy Directors to enhance the good work the Academy is already implementing.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

Curriculum - I honestly believe that a strong curriculum is the key to education success in our students. I value the Academy's curriculum which i believe prepares the students to being exemplary and knowledgeable citizens and my own Kindergarten son is a testament to that. A strong curriculum instill life long passion for learning and it also teaches truth and goodness in the students. The established vision and mission of Eagle Ridge Academy is an epitome to the success of the Academy.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

College/career ready student performance - the goal of the Academy's education system is to guarantee that every student should graduate from high school ready for college or a career. The Board should work with Academy administrators in supporting college and career ready standards, preparing college and career ready students. We should reward progress and success at every level and turn around the lowest performing students.

Fostering Equity - The Board should encourage increased resource equity at every level of the institution. Lower standards and inadequate academic preparation of our students results in high costs for individuals and the community at large and therefore it is imperative that the Board evaluate the rigor of standards and assessments for our students to be marketable in a global and competitive market place.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

We will evaluate student outcomes putting more emphasis on reading proficiency, math proficiency, science proficiency using a target rationale.

Family and Community Engagement by putting emphasis on parent phone surveys on building atmosphere. "How do parents feel when they walk into ERA campus?" We want to make sure that parents feel welcome at ERA.

Equity - we will measure student of color achievement gap in reading and math with an intention to close the achievement gap.

School Leader, Teacher and Staff effectiveness - we will measure the percentage of teacher position vacant at the start of the school year, employee retention, diversity of school staff and employee engagement based on a logic model tied to the strategic plan.

Fiscal Responsibility - evaluate the policy on unrestricted fund balance, variance in budget to actual revenue and expenditure and audit opinion.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

Parents - emphasis on parent phone surveys with intentional target on building atmosphere and different ways on involving parents in the education of their children. Survey result will be a guiding stepping stone on fostering collaboration with the community.

Students - using ERA mission and vision as a guide and emphasis is put on what is best for the students. ERA exists to serve the kids and social emotional needs of the students have to take precedence with open lens on equity.

Teachers and Administrators - employee engagement at every level of the decision making is important. Employee understanding of the Academy's Strategic plan is very important to the success of our mission and vision. Using logic model we can align the needs of our valuable stakeholder and make informed long term decisions.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

ERA exists to afford our students the right to a quality education which prepares them for life long success. Fostering family and community engagement is very important to the success of every student and self discipline, respect, good citizenship and attitude are important to success in life. Transparency, accountability and appreciation for your country build a strong nation



Rahul Deep - Parent

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I am a passionate about the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge and want to help it continue to be successful. Its mission, methodology and infrastructure are geared towards creating valuable citizens and help achieve their potential.

I have seen substantial changes in my son's way of thinking, concepts of responsibility, self discipline and academic growth while at Eagle Ridge. I believe my skills and experiences can be useful in the school's continuous journey and would be grateful to be a given a chance to contribute.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

I have experience being on school, non-profit and co-op boards and can help use that experience to be a valuable board member. I am familiar with board governance models and the fiduciary responsibility hat the board has to execute to.

Additionally, I have over 20 years of organizational leadership experience and in-depth experience in strategic planning and multi-cultural talent management. I have lead medium to large organizations for Fortune 100 companies. I currently am a Senior Director, technology for a large Minnesota based company.

Over the last 5-7 years, I have been involved in significant organizational transformation initiatives where I have learnt organizational change management, establishing organizational vision and affecting culture change.

My hope is to being these insights to bear to help Eagle Ridge flourish in its future direction.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

The most critical thing I have experienced in Eagle Ridge is orienting the child's behavior towards becoming great citizens. This, to my mind, is the best gift we can give our country and our students.

I see the Pillars framework as being instrumental in developing character, instilling values and creating habits which will make our children productive and valuable citizens of tomorrow.

The second most critical thing are the precepts of classical education that Eagle Ridge embodies. Having experienced it and learnt about it, it seems to be in the best position to inculcate a life long love of learning.

These aspects would be essential for us to maintain.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

I see 3 main things ahead of Eagle Ridge in addition to continue to grow and be successful

1. Tactically, get through the summer construction without any disruptions of children's experiences at the school
2. Strengthen School of Rhetoric's support for AP and college readiness
3. Find ways to create an identity of the school at state and national level

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

Having experienced the School of Grammar personally, I would say it is working well. My son loves being there and loves the way things are taught to him. He moved from a highly rated public elementary school. Even with that, there has been an acceleration in learning. I have friends whose children are in School of Logic and cannot think of them being in any alternate educational institution.

I can confidently say that the school is delivering to its mission admirably. I have seen changes in son's way of thinking, grasp of fundamentals and discipline after we moved him to Eagle Ridge and they attest this statement.

Also, anecdotally, I have heard about concerns about AP and college prep support for School of Rhetoric's students. This may be an area where there is work to be done to have the school live up to its aspirations.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

I think of all of these as stakeholders of the school with varied aspects of a common goal...to create great citizens of tomorrow.

The center of this institution is the student and all inputs (regardless of the source) should be weighed according to its impact on the education of the student.

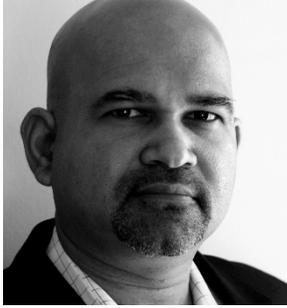
All the constituents contribute significantly to make that happen. To ensure a holistic perspective of any action's/decision's impact, it is critical to seek and evaluate input from them and consider them from a 2 fold perspective:

- Does this decision help improve how we educate students according to our mission
- Does it have long term beneficial consequences that enables the school to continue to be successful at its mission

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

Eagle Ridge exists to impart Classical education to students with an aim to nurture them to become valuable and contributing citizens of tomorrow. They do that by:

- Adhering to the highest standards of academic education
- Instilling a love of learning
- Cultivating self discipline and strong character
- Appreciating America's role in the world



Huzefa Gandhi – Parent

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I would like to serve on the Board of Directors at ERA because I feel ERA is a great, well managed school. I have a lot to learn and a lot to offer from such a board.

It is highly motivating to be part of the team that shapes and refines the school as it takes on the current growth phase.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

My Education Background:

High School in Mumbai, India

Bachelors of Engineering, University Of Mumbai, India

Masters of Engineering, University of Texas at Dallas,

MBA, Stern School of Business, New York University.

I have a diverse background, which will be very valuable to the board, given the diverse student population. Like me, many of our parents are first generation immigrants and have concerns; which i can relate to. I have a strategic attitude and like to view the students development in a multi-year time frame. In my professional life I have to manage large teams in an in-direct reporting structure, which has developed my influencing skills.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

I think the ERA mission and vision is strong and should only grow stronger over time.

The classical approach to education has shown many benefits and should be preserved.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

My family is new to ERA, so I cannot claim I understand all the issues ERA is facing. However as a parent i have noticed the following:

- 1) Bus Schedule. I think there can be some improvement in this category.
- 2) Drop-Off Flow: The parking lot is a mess during drop off. It is mainly because of the flow of the traffic. I think we can educate the parents on the proper drop off curtsies
- 3) Parking Lot maintenance.
- 4) Sports. You cannot have a holistic education without sports and music from the early years.
- 5) 2nd/ 3rd Languages. Early language development has shown to have many benefits.
- 6) Student Leadership. Create programs for student leadership for in-school and in community.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

We need to have two aspects of evaluation:

1) Subjective. This is harder; but is achieved by keeping the pulse on the stakeholders's concerns. We need to create multiple forums for them voice their concerns; then understand their main grievances and develop a plan of action.

2) Objectives. Clear, pre-defined objectives that the school, staff and curriculum will be measured against. We should have minimal, acceptable and stretch goal limits.

Some sample objectives could be:

a) Wait List length, per class over time. This shows us what the perception of the school is in the community.

b) Test Scores: Above or at par with similar schools, per class, mapped over time

c) Graduation class: University enrollment rate, Top tier colleges enrollment rate

d) Student/ Parent Participation in ERA events. Track per event over time.

e) Top Universities Recruitment: Are we able to attract top tier universities to come to ERA for recruitment.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

In making my board decisions i believe in taking in inputs from as many stakeholders as possible. I tend to collect the feedback into themes. Once you have similar themes from multiple stakeholders the decision and course of action becomes clearer.

I also like to filter out "noise", feedback which is degrading or non productive.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

I believe ERA's mission, which aligns with aspirations for my children; is to provide superior, holistic education. The goal is not only for students to be book smart but overall cohesive individuals. To push the children to the best of their potential while keeping a caring and nurturing attitude and environment.



Farheen Hassan - Parent

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I am interested in serving on the Board because I believe in the philosophy of Classical education. This would be an opportunity to support and get involved with Eagle Ridge Academy and contribute to its growth and expansion of the fundamental principles of its academic vision.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

I am an AMI certified Montessori teacher with a BA in Psychology. I have taught as substitute teacher at Montessori schools across the Twin Cities as well as in Minneapolis School District.

I was born in UAE, and share my home in Dubai, London, Karachi and Minnesota. I come with a diverse knowledge of cultures and appreciate differences and similarities. I am a thinker and collaborator, a firm believer of 'two heads are better than one'.

I believe that these experiences, along with my education and Montessori training have provided me an enriched understanding of child development, through observation and understanding a child's innate need to follow their natural development.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

My daughters have attended Eagle Ridge Academy for the past four years and we continue to appreciate this institute more every year.

The pillars and philosophy of the school, in my opinion, makes Eagle Ridge one of the most unique and sought after charter school in the Twin Cities. Small class sizes, individualized attention, camaraderie amongst students and teachers; an intimate attitude that compares to a family environment and high expectations from the students - these are some of the qualities that I believe make Eagle Ridge what it is today and most important in my mind to maintain!

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

As the school settles into its new environment, it is critical for the Board to ensure it does not lose sight of its mission and objective. As we increase our student body we must make sure we are able to offer quality classical education by growing our teaching and administrative staff.

As long as the school continues to adhere to the rigorous curriculum and maintains the integrity of the vision, and so long as Eagle Ridge Academy sustains the warm essence of school distinction, I am confident it will continue to succeed.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

The satisfactory response from students, teachers and parents of Eagle Ridge Academy would be reflective of the success of the intended mission.

State and National level school achievement results are reflective of a school's success however the real measure of a school's success is reflected in the enthusiasm with which its pupil and staff talk about it when they are away from it. I know this first hand because I witnessed my daughter gushing all about ERA to her Stanford University interviewer recently. She was proud to share her experience at ERA and I would consider this to be the best evaluation of it delivering its intended mission.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

Eagle Ridge community's input must always be considered a critical part of any decision the Board has to make. After all, it is the parents, students, teachers and administration all working together with the Board that make ERA the successful education institution that it is today.

I would ensure that all suggestions, ideas and input from ERA community is given due consideration and all Board decisions are made inclusive of their feedback.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

The mission of Eagle Ridge Academy is to provide students with outstanding Classical education that creates life long learners who are exemplary citizens of the world.

Our vision is to have our students be their best self, to be all-rounded individuals who are articulate, who have an in depth understanding of the world around them, who are contributors and deliverers.



Erica Higgins - Teacher

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

After serving for three years on the Board I have found it is important to have two things in order to have a successful board--consistency and experience. It took at least a year of serving on the board for me to truly understand everything with which we are charged to handle. I am interested in continuing my service to this Academy in order to maintain some consistency within the board but to also provide some knowledge that comes with the experience of working with the board to potential new members. Overall, I love this school and continue to wish for its growing success. I will find as many ways to serve this community as possible so I may hopefully be able to contribute to its success.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

First and foremost, I believe my prior experience on the board is the most essential to continuing my service. I have a strong understanding of the challenges our school faces as well as some incredible opportunities that may come to our school. I understand and enjoy the work involved with being a member of the Board of Directors.

It is important for Board members to look at decisions from many different angles and always have in mind the best possible education for our students, and I believe I have been successful in this area. Having an arts background is a unique perspective that has brought new light into the decision-making process of the Board. Since Classical Education prides itself on a high level of emphasis in the arts, I can ensure that voice will be heard but will also prioritize the needs of our students beyond just their arts education.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

Our school has chosen the Classical model for education for a reason. I believe it can be a challenge to maintain our vision during an era of education requiring so much from our students and teachers. I believe we should continually ask the question "is this Classical?" and not allow that structure to deplete over time. We should also continue to pride ourselves in a rigorous curriculum and high academic standards of our students. It is because we hold our student to such a high standard that they are able to perform incredibly well beyond the walls of ERA.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

As we grow and expand I believe it is important for the Board to maintain its high expectations of academic performance in our school. We are aware of and have accepted the idea that growth will have some effect on the school's overall performance, however, it is important to return back to its same high level of performance. I have full confidence in our administration's ability to keep this as a focus and to achieve the goals set for them, however, it will be the board's responsibility to ask the right questions to ensure we are on the right track.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

As a board, we receive financial statements and a report from Mr. Ulbrich every month. In our workshops, it is the duty of the board to ask questions both surrounding the financial statement and regarding the information presented by Mr. Ulbrich. We are fortunate to have a high level of mutual trust between Mr. Ulbrich and the board; it will be imperative to continue this relationship while still staying abreast of potential risks.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

Seeking information from all constituents is a key role for any board member. I have often sought opinions and thoughts about topics being discussed as a board from fellow teachers and staff members. All of their input in addition to the materials presented to the board allows me to take a bigger picture look at how I will choose to vote on any given topic. I have the closest relationships with teachers and administration, however, I will also seek input from parents and students when necessary. Ultimately, the success of our students should be our first priority, and I would weigh the input I receive based on whether it comes with the students' best interest in mind.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

Eagle Ridge Academy is a Classical Education school that requires a high level of academic dedication. It challenges students to not only be competitive academically but morally. Eagle Ridge Academy teaches the whole student and creates an environment conducive to becoming a life-long learner. Each student will discover his or her greatest potential at Eagle Ridge Academy.



Ken Kulus - Parent

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I've entered a phase of life where I now have more time to perform volunteer work and give back to the community. And our two girls, 7th and 8th grade, have recently commented that they would both prefer to stay at Eagle Ridge Academy through their senior high years. (We love the new campus!) So, after hearing of their stated commitments, I thought it would be an appropriate time to apply as a Board member and demonstrate a "re-commitment" of sorts as a parent to Eagle Ridge Academy.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

I've had the opportunity to work for a handful of sizable corporations within the Twin Cities for the past 25 yrs. I began my career out of state as a Medical Malpractice Insurance Underwriter, returned to MN and entered the Banking sector as an Operations Manager, jumped into a consulting role working for a large Healthcare Services client, then left consulting to work for that client as a Sr. Business Analyst in their IT Division. I expanded my IT responsibilities and became a Project Manager. And after several years within the medical benefits management industry, I transferred jobs into the pharmaceutical benefits management industry and performed Program Management duties for a government sector client.

All this boils down to suggest that I have a strong history of analyzing data and operational procedures to look for opportunities to leverage systems and maximize efficiencies. I'm able to gain consensus with various stakeholders and then skilled in the discipline of project management and leading diverse teams towards a common goal.

My preferred relational approach is to look at things pragmatically, have a "Can-do" attitude and achieve success through team work and collaboration.

And on a personal note, I really love to tackle large home improvement and landscaping projects as stress-relieving hobbies. (Crazy, I know.) But I would look forward to assisting with the facilities footprint expansion and plans for outdoor green space enhancements.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

Eagle Ridge Academy has a tremendous history of growth and expansion, while remaining true to its classical education roots and small school atmosphere.

- * Continue to foster a well-trained mind and a love of learning.
- * Continue to foster the six pillars so that we not only have good students, but good people who are model citizens and productive contributors to society.
- * Train, maintain and retain good teachers. Invest in them and they will invest in our kids.
- * It's seems silly, but it's really important to continue with school uniforms.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

- * Leadership through Phase II expansion and adding flesh on the bones of a Phase III.
- * Retaining students past 8th grade and graduating them through the School of Rhetoric.
- * Addressing diversity trends within the student body.
- * Expanding co-curricular activity involvement and fostering school pride.
- * Deepen students understanding and appreciation for the performing arts, musical arts and creative arts. (These are being erased and replaced by electronics.)

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

- * Set up objective goals and criteria to measure against school charter, mission and vision statements.
- * Analyze national test results looking for areas of progress and opportunities for future growth.
- * Survey parents, students, teachers and administrators annually. (Incentive or mandate.) Also, seek feedback from graduating students and former students/parents.
- * Select two or three mentoring institutions to model after and measure against.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions? * Listen, listen and listen some more to make sure I've captured the idea, comment, critique or concern.

- * Look for consistency of themes to determine hot-button issues.
- * Recognize that this is a public service appointment. My role is to serve these stakeholders and to provide follow-up.
- * Recognize that I am a strong voice, but I am ONE voice within the framework of the Board. Our collective role is to lead while serving those we lead.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

Eagle Ridge Academy's mission is to provide a classical K - 12 education where learning is deep, rigorous and rich. It is accomplished via the structure of a Trivium; A School of Grammar, School of Logic and School of Rhetoric.

The Academy strives to not only educate academically, but to shape a student's character by modeling six virtues: Citizenship, Integrity, Perseverance, Honor, Excellence, and Respect.

The Academy's vision, therefore, becomes to challenge their students to a higher level of learning, a higher expectation of behavior and achievement of their highest potential.



Shashwati Nadkarni - Parent

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

I think having a parent on the board brings another angle in the decision making and welfare for the students. Having a parent perspective is very important before the board and I think i will be able to bring in ideas for the development especially after the hiccups of the expansion.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

My experience as a project manager in customer service in a leading MNC has helped me gain the ability of problem solving, patience and listening. My area of expertise would be communication. I'd like the parents to know what happens in school since the kids are spending better part of their day away from them.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

Discipline, Perseverance and Academics.

Kids are gaining over all confidence to socialise in the outside world.

The curriculum of ERA is up to the mark.

The teaching methods and the quality of staff.

The importance of time and teaching kids about being punctual.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

1) Sports Team - The area where ERA might want to have an advantage is a sports team. Given the new premises, there is a better chance to include kids in different kinds of sports.

2) Transportation - Though there is a bus service, Its a chaos. As a parent myself i have faced several issues getting my points across the management about coordinating the transport routes. It will be great if the board intervenes and streamlines the process.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

As a parent, I evaluate the school by the efforts it takes in general upbringing of my child. I am very happy with what my child is learning, the staff and the exposure he gets while at school.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions? A board decision should be profitable to everyone involved. I would love to have inputs from all parties involved to come to a mutual agreement with the rest of the board for the well being of everyone. In fact, we should encourage such brain storming sessions as it will give a perspective of every side.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

The mission is to provide better than the best! To give the students attain their best achievements.

The vision is to provide the students with education which will not only help them academically but also make them an honest person with positive attitude, values, discipline and integrity.



John Schwirtz – Community Member

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

As a student at the academy, I saw the critical importance of the board's leadership role during a sometimes-challenging period of rapid growth and change. I am eager to serve on the board of directors because I have personally benefitted from the classical education that Eagle Ridge provides and I want to help others to have the opportunity to participate in the rigorous educational program I experienced. Since high school, I have been a vocal advocate not only for a classical liberal arts education, but also Eagle Ridge Academy itself.

In the past two years of service on the board, I have been honored to work with truly dedicated parents and teachers. As the board has worked through challenging and long-lasting decisions about expansion, financing, and strategic direction, I have seen my colleagues grow and support each other in great ways. I'm excited about the possibility of continuing my service to Eagle Ridge with other dedicated teachers and parents at such an incredible period of growth and opportunity for the academy.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

I have been a student at Eagle Ridge Academy and I can show from my own experiences the value of a classical education at the academy and how it prepared me for success in higher education and civic life. I have a firsthand knowledge of classical education at Eagle Ridge and I am ready to share my perspective and my experiences with the board to help them make informed and wise decisions. I believe my experiences as a student leader at the academy give me a unique perspective on the mission daily work of the academy.

Since graduating from Eagle Ridge Academy, I have sought out a variety of challenging opportunities that have broadened my perspective and deepened my commitment to classical education. In college, I participated in a two-year great books program, studied abroad in the Middle East for a semester, and served as president of student government. Since college, I have spent two years in sales at a dynamic technology startup as well as serving on the Eagle Ridge Board of directors. In all these experiences, I have practiced the personal empathy, strategic thinking and dogged persistence that board work requires.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

As we have grown, and will continue to grow, there has understandably been concern about how to maintain the close community feeling of our academy. I trust and support our administration, faculty, and parents as they strive to grow, maintain, and strengthen the bonds of our community on a day-to-day basis. My greatest priority as a board member is to ensure that the academy maintains its rigorous classical focus. I want to make certain that our community's considerable talents and resources aren't spread too thinly across too large a spread of interesting, even valuable activities. As a classical charter school, we can never be all things to all people and we need to maintain a disciplined focus on our academic program, and the high-impact co-curricular activities that support the development of our students into wise and virtuous young citizens.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

As we grow our community, our staff, and our physical facilities, the Board of Directors must continue to maintain a close eye on the financial and academic performance of the Academy. Every year, seemingly successful charter schools close because of inattentive boards and poor oversight. We should rightfully celebrate the success of our students, the growth of our community and the accolades from around us. However, we must remain vigilant to the things that could negatively impact our continued success. These include, but are not limited to changing state legislation, financial downturns, poor teacher retention, decreasing test scores, and unforeseen costs. These are the strategic issues that our board should keep in mind continually. I also believe the time has come for our board to start seriously researching and considering how potential replication could happen. We need to be engaging deeply with our community about whether such growth would be beneficial to the academy and how we could do it most effectively. While any expansion to a second location is a few years away, the board should be planning now for the conditions, and resources that would make such expansion possible and successful.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

While test scores and evaluation forms are critically important, we already have robust tools for evaluating them and we do quite well. I believe one of the most important ways we can gauge the success of the Eagle Ridge Academy mission is to watch our students and graduates. Do Eagle Ridge alumni leave the academy with a love of learning or are they disenchanted with education? Are they eager to serve in their communities or do they shirk opportunities to contribute? Do students consider the nature of truth and beauty in their everyday lives? Do they persevere? When I look back on my own experiences at Eagle Ridge, I don't remember my MCA scores and I don't think about my ACT results; I recall the community that challenged me to study diligently, write effectively and speak with conviction on weighty matters. Many schools can produce high test scores but Eagle Ridge has made the commitment to create not just smarter students, but better people. Only by getting to know our students and watching how they impact the world can we see the formation of their character and the success of our mission.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

The board is ultimately responsible for the strategic direction, as well as the academic and financial viability of the academy. As our academy and our community has grown and matured, the board has rightly stepped away from many day-to-day operational affairs. Because of this, the board has actually started to receive less direct input from members of the Eagle Ridge community. As a board member, I have, and would continue to have, a responsibility to actively seek out the opinions of these different stakeholders and try to address their concerns. Currently, the board has very little input from students and alumni about what's good at Eagle Ridge and what could improve. If elected, I would also seek opportunities to bring representatives of the student and alumni populations to speak at occasional board meetings so we can get a fuller picture of how Eagle Ridge Academy is operating and fulfilling its mission.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

In my view, the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy requires that the school be a place where personal and intellectual development are in the very fabric of everyday life. Eagle Ridge should be a place where excellent teachers and staff help students along in the process of owning their education for themselves. Students at Eagle Ridge should be excited about what they learn and why they learn it. As they progress into the schools of logic and rhetoric, students should be keenly aware of their own responsibility for their education and their personal growth. The classrooms at Eagle Ridge should buzz with curiosity and wonder.

Eagle Ridge should also be a school where civic engagement and social awareness are a natural byproduct of the educational environment. Eagle Ridge should prepare students to be knowledgeable, thoughtful, and active citizens, not just in the voting booth but also in their everyday lives. Eagle Ridge students, staff and alumni should actively engage with the wider world as a natural expression of their zeal and curiosity in the classroom. Eagle Ridge should foster an environment where high personal and intellectual abilities are put to work in the world. While it was far from perfect, this is often how I experienced Eagle Ridge, and it is that experience that I want to ensure for future generations of students.



Ann Watanabe – Parent

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

As parents, my husband and I believe our responsibility is to ensure our children are receiving the education necessary to be successful and contributing members of society. I embrace this responsibility by doing my best to teach my children the importance of education. When the opportunity presents itself, I evaluate how I can best serve. Representing Eagle Ridge Academy constituents - its students, faculty, administration, staff, and parents, is one of those ways, I feel, I can perform that service. And it is for this reason that I am interested in continuing to serve on the Board of Directors. Our daughter enrolled in Eagle Ridge Academy as a Kindergartener in 2010, the first year of the K-5th grade program (now in 6th grade), and our son is currently in 1st grade. I have a strong and vested interest in the continued success of the Academy and look forward to seeing that first group of Kindergartners graduate in 2023. Education is definitely part of who I am, as I was raised by two public school teachers. My mother taught junior and senior high English for over 30 years and my father taught high school history for over 35 years. I believe I have a keen understanding of the challenges teachers face and would be extremely honored to be re-elected to the Eagle Ridge Academy Board of Directors.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

I have a number of strengths and personal qualities that I believe would continue to serve the Academy's Board of Directors well. My skills are the ability to partner, to act as an internal consultant, and to provide direction and process improvement feedback. I possess strong communication skills and am able to facilitate, coach, and motivate others. I live by trying to understand all points of view and strive to be open-minded. Personal integrity and a strong ethical compass are of the utmost priority to me. I believe that my work experience continues to be valuable to the Academy. I am presently employed by Optum, as a Senior Project Manager. I have management consulting experience and for nearly 13 years held positions of increasing responsibility at Best Buy Co., Inc. My background includes vendor management, managing data privacy, licensing, safety compliance, and business continuity. I also have experience in project management, business ethics, product compliance, contract/legal negotiations, vendor relations, executive recruitment, and have over 10 years in the field of human resources.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

In addition to the mission of Eagle Ridge Academy, I believe the most important aspects to maintain and further enhance are the emphasis on Classical Education and all facets of the Trivium, an academically rigorous program, the focus on traits that lead to a virtuous life – such as personal integrity, perseverance, respect, and a commitment to the quality of the Academy's teachers and staff.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

In the past four years of serving on the Board of Directors, we have addressed a number of major efforts, including the growth of the school and the purchase, renovation, and opening of a new building that have continued to strengthen the foundation of the Academy. As a Board, we have endeavored to be less operational and more strategic, putting an emphasis on providing direction for the future of the school. The Board will need to continue to be laser focused on our Strategic Dimensions, ensuring that growth does not dilute or impact the mission or vision, nor the educational outcomes expected. Continued efforts to build strong community engagement among all stakeholders within the Academy and setting expectations of what level of involvement is necessary to support the school – whether through volunteering, participating in work groups or committees, offering talents/expertise to the classroom, etc. will be essential. I also believe having a strong succession plan in place for critical administrative and faculty positions is necessary and the board will need to work closely with administration to build this.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

Four years ago, I answered this question by explaining that determining whether an organization is delivering on its mission or objectives is not always easily accomplished. Normally one turns to metrics and financials as indicators of success. For Eagle Ridge Academy, I would submit it must evaluate, on an on-going and frequent basis, its curriculum and student achievement in relation to its intended objectives. Finding a balance between student achievement, as measured through standardized tests, and achievement that is immeasurable, the kind of outcomes that one cannot assign a score to – is truly challenging. The mission of Eagle Ridge Academy is “to provide our students with a traditional, Classical Education that demands their best in academic achievement, behavior, and attitude and challenges them to attain their highest potential.” But how do we determine what one’s “highest potential is?” I would submit that we, as a Board, must look at various factors beyond test scores and student achievement, we must look at how our students are carrying out their lives, how they are contributing to society in meaningful ways, we must look at how our faculty and staff are impacting the lives of the students in their classes, and we must constantly recognize and value the contributions of all.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

I value the opinions and perspectives of all Academy constituents. I find deep satisfaction in working hard with others to achieve goals. I will continue to understand the feelings, the goals, the fears, and the aspirations of all stakeholders. This can be risky, but it can also open doors to so many possibilities. Ultimately, I will always keep in mind that Board decisions are for the benefit of the entire school, and that there are times when not everyone will agree with its decisions.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

The mission of Eagle Ridge Academy is to focus on a Classical Education that presents the prospect for its students to achieve their greatest potential. In doing so, it envisions a forum where students are immersed in the greatest books, authors, philosophers, scientists, musicians, historians, artists, and mathematicians, where they have the opportunity to be active and responsible citizens, where they are expected to perform to their highest potential, and to be respectful, honorable, live with integrity, and be humble.



Christina Woodlee - Parent

Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

My son is in first grade, so we were one of the many families that has been part of the exciting growth at ERA. In addition to being a room parent (which has been great), this year, looking to increase my involvement with the school, I joined the PTO Board. While the PTO is important, I have more skills and talents that I'd like to contribute to ERA in hopes of helping create a financially sustainable future grounded in the core vision and values of ERA.

What personal qualities, experience, and expertise would you bring to Board work?

With 15+ years in the nonprofit sector in development, communications, and marketing; in addition to a professional lens, because of my interaction with clients from diverse backgrounds I would be able to provide perspective to the unique challenges faced by low-income families; balancing increasing diversity/cultural competency; and a greater understanding of the challenges associated with significant growth. As a relatively new parent, and room parent the past 2 years, I'm in a unique position to garner and share feedback from families on their affinity for the school as well as the challenges they've encountered with ERA.

What aspects of Eagle Ridge Academy do you think are most important to maintain?

Academics is today, and should remain the primary focus of Eagle Ridge Academy; character development, a sense of community, and developing well-rounded students; these four elements are essential to fulfill the mission and remain a premiere classical education charter school.

What issues need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?

Eagle Ridge Academy is a public school that at times operates as if it is a private school. Significant growth over the last year has increased the diversity of students - which is a great thing! However with that growth comes new challenges for teachers, students and families. While growth has been discussed at length, from my perspective the emphasis has been on the nuts and bolts of the building, with little public discussions about changes or considerations to address the changing needs of students and families. With an increase in the number of low income families, families where English is a second language, and an overall flux in composition of the student body; I think most pressing is for the board to start to take fresh lens at who our students are, what their particular needs are, and what policies need to be updated to reflect a lens of racial equity. Essential is financial stability, planning for future growth, and leadership success ion.

How would you evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission?

There's multiple ways to evaluate if Eagle Ridge Academy is delivering its intended mission - quantitatively academic scores, SAT/ACT scores, graduation rate, college placement, reading & math scores, # of students that enroll each year/withdraw during the year, the # of families applying to get in; there are many things that can and already are being measured. Equally important are qualitatively surveys from parents, students, teachers and the community.

How would you weigh the input from parents, students, teachers, and the Administration in making your Board decisions?

EVERYONE has a voice and deserves to be heard. This doesn't mean that all feedback results in change, instead it means an individual feel validated and more importantly understood. I would welcome and consider all input before making any decision.

In your own words, describe the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy.

Eagle Ridge Academy is rooted in traditional classical education that challenges students to perform individually and collectively, at the highest levels academically and socially. Adhering to the principals of the CIPHER the character of students developed through a lens that garners their appreciation of a world greater then themselves.