

2025 General Election Westerville Candidate Information

To offer voters deeper insight into this year's candidates, the Westerville Area Chamber of Commerce and Business Advocacy Council invited each candidate to respond in writing to additional questions. These written responses, limited to 300 words per question, complement the answers shared during the Candidate Forums and can serve as a valuable supplement to the Candidate Guide. Candidate submissions are published as received, without editing or alteration by Chamber staff.

Westerville Board of Education Candidates

Tajana Brown

Email: tatjanabrownforwcsb@gmail.com

Facebook: Tatjana Brown for Westerville City Schools Board of Education

Instagram: tatjanabrownforwcsboe

What motivated you to run for the Board of Education, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I was motivated to run for the Westerville Board of Education because I believe every child in our district deserves access to an excellent, well-resourced public education - regardless of the language they speak, where they are from and what their zip code is. As a parent of three children who currently attend Westerville schools, I've seen firsthand the incredible dedication of our teachers and staff, as well as the challenges they face in meeting diverse student needs in the midst of limited funding and changing enrollment.

My background uniquely prepares me for this role. I'm a small business owner with close to 20 years of experience in budgeting, strategic planning, and community engagement. I've built partnerships that connect local resources to support schools, and I understand how to make fiscally responsible decisions while investing in long-term success. I've also been deeply involved as a volunteer in our schools, giving me insight into what works, where we can improve, and how to bring together parents, educators, and community members to create solutions. Serving on the Board is about listening, collaborating, and leading with transparency—and I'm ready to bring those skills to work for our students, staff, and community.

How will you ensure the Board maintains open and effective communication with parents, staff, and students?

Open, transparent, and consistent communication is essential for building trust between the Board, families, staff, and students. I would work to ensure that we are using multiple communication channels — not everyone engages the same way, so we need regular updates through email, social media, website postings, in-person meetings, and even student-led forums. Being a busy parent, I understand the challenges of all of the communication that we deal with on a regular basis, and the need for more ways than a one size fits all approach. I would engage in two way dialogue and active listening to ensure we are gaining clarity from staff, parents and community members. I would work to ensure we are looping back after a decision to ensure transparency. By making communication timely, accessible, and reciprocal, we ensure everyone feels informed, respected, and heard—strengthening trust and collaboration across the district.

What strategies can or should our district implement to improve early literacy rates among struggling students?

Improving early literacy is about starting early, identifying needs quickly, and providing targeted and consistent support. I would advocate for early intervention, utilizing science-based screeners in Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st grade to quickly spot reading challenges and implement small-group or one-on-one interventions without delay. I would advocate to ensure all K–3 teachers have access to high-quality, science-of-reading-aligned materials and professional development, including strategies for supporting English language learners and students with dyslexia. I also believe the more we can engage parents and help to work out obstacles that they may feel hinder their ability to support their child, the better. I would work to seek out partnerships (I hope to secure and solidify business partnerships within the community) that could help to provide parents with tools, workshops, and take-home materials so literacy practice continues beyond the classroom.

Nafiso Jamale

Email: jamalenafiso@gmail.com

Website: <https://njamale.com/>

Facebook: Nafiso m Jamale

What motivated you to run for the Board of Education, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I'm running to help restore trust and strengthen connections between the district, families, staff, and the wider community. As a former student, current parent, and social worker, I've seen the impact of school decisions from every side. I supported the levy because I know when our schools thrive, the whole community benefits. My background in social work has prepared me to listen, problem-solve, and advocate for students and families, which I'll bring to the Board.

How will you ensure the Board maintains open and effective communication with parents, staff, and students?

Open communication has to be two-way, transparent, and accessible. I will push for regular community forums, clearer communication from the district, and proactive outreach to groups that often feel left out. My social work experience has trained me to listen and build trust, and I'll use those skills to ensure all voices are heard.

What strategies can or should our district implement to improve early literacy rates among struggling students?

Improving literacy starts with strong, evidence-based interventions, early screenings, and ongoing teacher training. We also need to partner with families by providing workshops and resources so they can support reading at home. My experience working with schools, parents, and students has shown me how powerful collaboration is, and I'll advocate for strategies that help every child succeed.

Anisa Liban

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/people/Anisa-Liban-for-Westerville-City-Schools/61574730226822/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/anisaforall/>

What motivated you to run for the Board of Education, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I am running as the incumbent appointed Vice President of the Westerville City Schools Board of Education. I am a first generation student and proud product of public schools who is running to be a voice for equity, transparency, and to put students first. As a parent to a young child, I am always thinking about how I can strengthen our schools to support his educational journey. I find myself constantly thinking about the future of our district.

As a Black woman, I bring both a unique professional and lived experience to the table. Our district serves multiple communities who deeply value representation. I want to uplift all voices and ensure parents, caregivers, and staff have the tools they need to help our kids thrive.

I have built a career in nonprofit leadership and public affairs, focusing on advocacy and supporting underserved communities. With roughly 63% of our students being disadvantaged pupils, I know first hand what kinds of wrap-around support they need. I bring years of experience supporting youth in public & private projects. My background has helped me hone in on important skills such as communication and overseeing district finances.

How will you ensure the Board maintains open and effective communication with parents, staff, and students?

To ensure the Board maintains open and effective communication with parents, staff, and students, I will focus on increasing board member outreach and engagement efforts district-wide. As Vice President of the school board, I plan to host quarterly meetings that include key district personnel who can address questions and collect feedback. Additionally, I will continue the “Around the Table with Anisa Liban” listening series, launched this summer, which aims to bring together parents, staff, students, and educators.

To facilitate effective communication, I will advocate for access to language services and critical resources for parents. I believe it’s essential that every available resource is allocated to ensure access to these vital services. I recognize that many caregivers and parents may face challenges such as the digital divide, transportation issues, and language barriers. Therefore, it’s crucial to make technological updates such as adding an easy to use contact form to the website and holding meetings that allow me to listen and relay important information from the district in collaboration with district leaders.

Furthermore, I will prioritize ongoing connections with the Westerville Education Association, the Parent Council, and building staff—not only when issues arise but also on a regular basis. This consistent communication will help us stay aligned and responsive to the needs of our community.

What strategies can or should our district implement to improve early literacy rates among struggling students?

Improving early literacy rates among struggling students is crucial for their academic success and overall development. While our district currently aligns with state standards and the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, I believe we can adopt additional strategies to enhance our efforts.

First, I believe we should broaden our literacy instruction by incorporating various evidence-based practices. Expanding our network of external partnerships can provide essential support for students and their families, ensuring that children remain engaged and motivated in their education.

Additionally, I believe leveraging local colleges and universities can create opportunities for students to access diverse literacy programs. Hosting workshops and reading camps at public libraries during school breaks can offer a stimulating and enjoyable environment, helping to instill a love for learning in our students. Implementing mentorship initiatives, such as a “Reading Buddy” program, can further encourage reading by pairing younger students with older peers or community volunteers, fostering both support and enthusiasm for literacy.

I also believe that integrating technology-assisted learning tools tailored to individual reading levels can enhance literacy instruction. These adaptive programs offer immediate feedback, making them particularly beneficial for struggling readers, including English language learners and students with disabilities.

Investing in professional development for teachers is essential, as it equips them with the latest research and strategies in literacy instruction. I believe this empowers educators to better meet their students' diverse needs.

Finally, I believe that regular assessments to monitor literacy progress will enable us to refine our interventions and ensure that we are effectively addressing the challenges our students face. While financial resources will influence the extent of our initiatives, a community commitment to investing in our schools is vital. Together, I believe we can create an environment that nurtures early literacy and supports every child’s journey toward success.

Kristy Meyer

Email: Meyer4OurFuture@gmail.com

Website: www.KristyMeyer.con

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Meyer4OurFuture

Instagram: www.instagram.com/meyerforwestervilleschoolboard/

What motivated you to run for the Board of Education, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I'm running for re-election because our work isn't finished—and the future of public education is at stake. My journey to the Board began with a deep desire to give back to the community that has given so much to my family. My siblings and I are products of Westerville City Schools, as are my children and my nieces and nephews. These deep roots, combined with my commitment to ensuring every student feels safe, included, and supported—academically, socially, emotionally, and physically—drive my dedication to serving our district.

Since joining the Board, I've worked with my colleagues, staff, families, educators, and community members to deliver on that vision: securing a guidance counselor in every school, expanding social-emotional learning, increasing support for English learners and students with special needs, investing in diversity, equity, and inclusion, opening a new middle school, supporting the creation of homegrown career pathways, and more. Our district has earned the State Auditor's Award four years in a row for fiscal stewardship.

But with ongoing funding challenges and growing political interference, our schools need experienced, student-focused leadership now more than ever. I bring over 20 years of experience leading complex initiatives, building coalitions, and advocating for meaningful change—skills that translate directly to thoughtful, effective school governance. I collaborate closely with educators, administrators, families, and the community to ensure every decision is made in the best interest of students.

I am a candidate who acts. From advocating at the Statehouse to supporting ballot measures, strengthening communication, and fostering safe, welcoming schools, I am committed to giving every student the programs, resources, and opportunities they need to thrive. I listen, I collaborate, and I follow through—because Westerville students deserve leaders who are engaged, informed, and unwavering in their dedication.

How will you ensure the Board maintains open and effective communication with parents, staff, and students?

Open and effective communication is essential to a strong school district, and as a Board Member I've worked to build trust by listening, being transparent, and keeping families, staff,

and students informed. I believe communication must be a two-way street—where the Board not only shares information clearly, but also actively listens to the voices of those we serve.

To do this, I will continue to support multiple channels for communication, from in-person meetings, phone calls, surveys, and listening sessions to digital platforms that make information more accessible. Parents, staff, and students should never feel left in the dark about Board decisions or district priorities. I also believe in making Board policies and financial decisions as transparent and easy to understand as possible, so that everyone knows how resources are being used to support students.

Equally important is creating space for meaningful feedback. When our families raise concerns, when our educators share their expertise, or when our students and families speak about their experiences, those perspectives must help shape how we move forward. That's why I've consistently engaged with community members and will continue to do so, advocated at the Statehouse with their voices in mind, and pushed for programs—like expanded counseling services, social-emotional programming, processes that support recruiting staff that represent the diversity of our buildings, and resources to support our special education and English Learners staff—that reflect our shared priorities.

Strong communication is about more than updates—it's about building a culture of trust and collaboration. If re-elected, I will continue to make sure every parent, staff member, and student feels heard, valued, and informed, and that their voices are part of shaping the future of our schools.

What strategies can or should our district implement to improve early literacy rates among struggling students?

Helping every child become a confident reader is one of the most important responsibilities of our schools, and it is also one of the most complex. When we look at our district's report card, our early literacy rates are similar to districts like ours - Pickerington, Gahanna-Jefferson, Hilliard, and Worthington. But these numbers don't tell the full story. Factors such as families moving in and out of the district, the number of English Learners, and frequent changes to state standards all affect results. And while many children can read words in the early grades, true literacy requires comprehension—the ability to make meaning from those words and apply them in real life.

That is why we must stay focused on both strong instruction and targeted support. The expansion of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is an important step. MTSS gives us a way to identify student needs early, provide the right level of support, and monitor progress over time. This means a struggling reader can get help right away—whether through small group instruction, specialized reading intervention, or additional language support.

Equally important is ensuring that all students are taught with a high-quality, research-based curriculum. Expanding Wit & Wisdom into kindergarten through second grade provides teachers with a framework that not only teaches students how to read but also builds their

knowledge and comprehension skills. When combined with the expertise of staff such as reading specialists, intervention teachers, special education, and English Learner staff, this creates a powerful network of support to meet students where they are and help them grow. By pairing research-based curriculum with a strong support system like MTSS, our district can give every child the tools they need to thrive. Investing in early literacy is investing in the future success of our students—and our community.

Mark Stevens

Email: mstevensforsb2025@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.mark-stevens-for-westerville-school-board.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61577755420885>

What motivated you to run for the Board of Education, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

Motivation to run for school board is based upon my experience as a public-school teacher for 35 years. I have experienced and witnessed how the decisions from state and local mandates affect the teachers, who on a daily/yearly basis, educate our students.

How will you ensure the Board maintains open and effective communication with parents, staff, and students?

Open communication. Do not try to hide what you are doing, you will always get caught. Also ... My former colleagues will all agree that I have no problem speaking my mind.

What strategies can or should our district implement to improve early literacy rates among struggling students?

Much more reading at home ... especially in the summer.

Establish a community summer reading program.

Also ... This is the charge of the Administration and is also a mandate by the State of Ohio ORC 3313.608, the 3rd Grade Guarantee and the mandated Science of Reading that is required of all teachers.

Westerville City Council Candidates

Daniela Beckett

Email: danielabeckettforwesterville@gmail.com

Website: www.danielabeckett.com

Facebook: Daniela Beckett for Westerville City Council.

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I decided to run for Westerville City Council because I believe our city is at a critical moment. Westerville is growing rapidly, and with growth comes both opportunities and challenges. We need leaders who will make decisions that keep our community safe, affordable, and welcoming for all. As a Colombian immigrant, small business manager, and mom, I bring a unique perspective shaped by hard work, resilience, and a deep commitment to family and community.

My professional experience managing budgets, operations, and teams has taught me the importance of fiscal responsibility and problem-solving. As someone who listens first and leads with integrity, I understand that the government works best when it works for people. My goal is to ensure that residents' voices are heard and that growth is managed responsibly — without leaving behind the values that make Westerville special. I am running to bring common-sense leadership, fresh perspective, and a people-first approach to City Council.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the council's decision-making process?

Transparency and accountability are essential to good governance. If elected, I will prioritize open communication between the City Council and the residents of Westerville. That means making information about council decisions easily accessible, providing clear explanations for how and why decisions are made, and creating more opportunities for public input before votes are taken.

I will advocate for stronger community engagement through town halls, listening sessions, and digital platforms where residents can ask questions and share feedback. I also believe accountability starts with being present and approachable — I will always be available to answer questions, explain my votes, and listen to concerns.

To build trust, I will push for more proactive sharing of financial information, project updates, and policy changes so that residents never feel “in the dark.” Above all, I will lead with honesty and integrity, ensuring every decision is made with the people of Westerville in mind.

Coutanya Coombs

Email: Coutanya.Coombs@westerville.org

Website: coombs4westerville.com

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I chose to run for re-election to City Council because I believe Westerville deserves steady, responsible leadership that reflects our community's values. During my first term, I have worked to guide our city with a clear vision of smart growth, inclusive opportunity, and fiscal responsibility. My motivation comes from a deep commitment to service—I have called Westerville home since 2005, and I want to continue building on the progress we've made together. This election is not about starting over; it is about sustaining the momentum, protecting what makes Westerville strong, and ensuring that every resident has a voice in our future. I am running because I believe in Westerville, I believe in its people, and I know that together we can keep moving forward.

My educational background has provided me with a comprehensive skill set that directly aligns with the responsibilities of a City Council member. I have a Ph.D. in Public Policy & Administration, a Master of Science degree in Training and Development, and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. Through my professional experiences, I have developed strong analytical abilities, which are crucial for evaluating complex issues and making informed decisions on behalf of the community. I am adept at problem-solving, consistently seeking innovative and practical solutions to challenges.

Furthermore, my involvement in various community initiatives has fostered a deep understanding of the diverse needs and concerns of Westerville residents. I have a proven track record of collaborating with diverse groups, building consensus, and advocating effectively for shared goals. This experience has honed my communication and interpersonal skills, enabling me to engage constructively with constituents, fellow council members, and city staff.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the council's decision-making process?

I have served on the financial boards of WICC (Westerville Industry and Commerce Corporation) and the Finance Audit committee as a Council representative, and I am fully knowledgeable of what it takes financially for the City to run effectively. I am committed to public service work and consider the output of these financial boards as a personal reflection of my professional work. My commitment, coupled with my ability to navigate intricate policy landscapes, makes me a well-prepared candidate to contribute positively to the City Council. I

am confident that my practical experience and dedication to the well-being of our community will allow me to serve effectively and transparently. Transparency and accountability are ensured by submitting the "why" and "how" decisions of the Boards via our reporting of outputs.

Matt Erney

Email: friendsoferney@gmail.com

Website: <https://MattErney.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/friendsoferney>

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I'm running for Westerville City Council because I believe our city thrives when we focus on what matters most: listening to residents, providing excellent services, and keeping divisive national politics out of the spotlight. Westerville is at a turning point with longtime leader Mike Heyeck retiring, and it is time for younger voices to step up and help shape the future of our community.

My background has prepared me to serve. For 15 years, I have built and grown my small business, which taught me how to ask the right questions, manage budgets, solve problems, and build strong relationships. I serve on the board of Angelworks, a nonprofit that supports children with cancer and their families, and I bring more than 13 years of leadership experience through Vistage International. Earlier in my career, I worked as a law clerk, gaining valuable skills in research, analysis, and attention to detail.

Most importantly, I am a father of four. I want my children to grow up in a safe, welcoming, and affordable city they are proud to call home. I did not want to just sit back and complain about what could be better. I chose to step forward and do something about it. I will bring intentional, proactive leadership focused on service beyond self, and I will work every day to keep Westerville strong, united, and thriving for generations to come.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the councils decision-making process?

Transparency and accountability start with listening and communication. If elected to council, I will ensure residents know not only what decisions are being made, but also why. That means making sure council discussions are open, easy to follow, and supported with clear data. I will provide regular updates to the community, meet directly with residents and business owners, and use multiple channels to make information accessible.

Accountability also means being proactive, doing the research, and making decisions that serve the entire community, not just a vocal minority. My background as a business owner has taught me the importance of asking the right questions and being transparent with decisions that affect others. As a council member, I will carry that same commitment by leading with integrity, keeping the process open, and ensuring residents feel heard, informed, and respected in every step of decision-making.

Mark Faubel

Email: mark@faubelforwesterville.com

Website: faubelforwesterville.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FaubelforWesterville>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/faubelfortheville/>

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

Over the last 20+ years I have been committed to serving Westerville through boards, committees, events, and financial contributions. My family lives in Westerville. I own a small business in Westerville. I love the community. Over the last 15 years or so politics have become a very divisive tool on the national level. Unfortunately, I have seen these divisive politics show up in Westerville. I want Westerville to be a community that welcomes every person's viewpoint but can respectfully disagree and still be friends. I don't think that taxpayer resources should ever be used to limit rights of citizens, support political movements, or restrict free speech. I decided to run for City Council to help steer Westerville away from the political activist lane and back into the lane that City Council was chartered to perform.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the councils decision-making process?

If elected to City Council I WILL STAY IN MY LANE. City Council plays a role in prudent financial management of taxpayer resources and provides sound guidance on the vision of our city. If elected I would like to create a regularly scheduled forum where citizens can interact with city leaders in a conversational setting. I would like to have a prominent space dedicated within the city website where proposed/voted ordinances and budget items are clearly explained and the council member's votes and comments are displayed. I would like to have a real time solution board on the city website. This 'solution board' would identify each specific issue and in real time all actions to resolve the issue would be posted. I believe this process and others like it would create transparency and accountability from our City Council and city leaders.

John Gatiss

Email: info@gatissforwesterville.com

Website: <https://www.gatissforwesterville.com>

Bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/gatissforwesterville.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GatissForWesterville>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/GatissForWesterville>

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

With the current dysfunction at the federal and state levels of government, we need a city government that will protect people and defend our shared values. We need new bold leaders who will fight for improvements in quality of life, for good government, and for our future. As an activist and advocate who has attended Westerville City Council meetings for years, I know the current issues facing the council and the city. Having helped lead the effort to pass Westerville's nondiscrimination ordinance, I also know how to get things done.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the council's decision-making process?

When a quorum of Westerville City Council met at Koblé after a council meeting last year, I confronted the members of council and helped land the story on the front page of the Columbus Dispatch. No other candidate has that kind of track record holding council accountable and fighting for transparency. As a member of council, I would continue my work to bring greater transparency and accountability to Westerville's city government.

Aaron Glasglow

Email: glasgowforcouncil2023@gmail.com

Website: www.aaronglasgow.com

Facebook: Aaron Glasgow for Westerville City Council

Instagram: [instagram.com/aaron_glasgow_for_council](https://www.instagram.com/aaron_glasgow_for_council)

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

What motivated me to run for City Council is simple: I love the City of Westerville. As a lifelong resident, I have seen firsthand the qualities that make our community special—its strong neighborhoods, excellent schools, welcoming spirit, and the leadership that has guided its growth while preserving its character. I have benefited from that leadership, and now I want to give back by serving the community that has given me so much.

I am in a unique position to do that. For 23 years, I have practiced law representing local governments across Ohio. That work has given me a deep understanding of how cities function—budgeting, land use, public safety, infrastructure, and the laws that govern open meetings and public records. I know the challenges cities face, but also the opportunities that come from careful planning, collaboration, and responsive leadership.

In addition to my professional background, I served on several City boards and commissions and now as a member of City Council, experiences that have allowed me to engage directly with Westerville's residents, businesses, and civic organizations. These roles have shown me the importance of listening to diverse perspectives and working toward solutions that reflect the community's values.

I am running to remain on City Council because I have the experience, knowledge, and skills to contribute meaningfully. My goal is to support the services that keep our community safe, promote smart and balanced economic growth, and ensure that Westerville remains a welcoming place for current and future generations of residents.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the council's decision-making process?

Transparency and accountability are not just principles I value, they are areas in which I have extensive professional experience. As an attorney, much of my work has centered on ensuring compliance with Ohio's Open Meetings Act and Public Records Act. That background has given me a deep understanding of both the legal requirements and the broader importance of making government decisions open, accessible, and trustworthy.

Accountability requires a culture of openness, where Council members embrace the responsibility to explain their decisions to the community. I hold myself to that standard by

listening to residents, responding directly to their concerns, and being willing to publicly articulate why I voted a certain way. I vow to make myself regularly available in the community because open, face-to-face conversations are the best way to listen, build trust, and ensure that residents' voices guide my work on Council.

I believe real transparency comes from engagement. I will continue to encourage residents to participate in public comment, serve on City boards and commissions, and connect with me directly. Government is most accountable when it is closest to the people, and I see my role as making that connection as strong as possible. I also support the establishment of a strong local news source, because an informed community is essential to transparency, accountability, and effective civic engagement.

If re-elected to City Council, I will continue to make transparency and accountability central to every decision. By keeping information accessible, explaining the reasoning behind council actions, and being available to residents, I will work to strengthen trust in local government and ensure Westerville remains a community we are all proud to call home.

Megan Reamsnyder

Facebook/Instagram : WestervillewithMegan

Website: MeganReamsnyder.com

Email: Megan.Reamsnyder@westerville.org

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I believe in the power of community to bring us together and move us forward. I am running for reelection to Westerville City Council because I believe I can continue to steward a strong sense of community here in Westerville by advocating for programs, policies, and services that allow all residents the opportunity to connect, succeed, and feel at home in our community.

My background in social work from The Ohio State University, combined with years of community engagement, has provided a strong foundation for public service. I have served on Westerville City Council for the past 3.5 years, including 1.5 years as Vice-Chair, where I've built a reputation for being well-prepared, collaborative, and community-focused. My council appointments have included the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Uptown Westerville Inc., the Joint Economic Development Board with Blendon Township, and the Ohio Municipal Electric Association. Prior to my election, I was appointed to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the 2020 Charter Review Commission, and completed the Westerville Citizen's Police Academy. My professional role at Otterbein University further strengthens my understanding of the vital relationship between the City and the University. In addition to my elected service, I have held leadership roles in numerous community organizations, including the Rotary Club of Westerville, Whittier Elementary PTA, and several nonprofit boards. I have also helped lead major civic events such as the Fourth of July Parade. These experiences have allowed me to cultivate a broad, diverse network and a deep understanding of the needs and values of our community—preparing me to continue serving effectively on City Council.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the council's decision-making process?

I believe transparency and accountability start with being open and accessible. I'm always willing to listen to resident feedback and make it a priority to connect with people in a variety of settings—whether that's at community events, out in the neighborhood, or during council business. I've also been supportive of our city clerk in finding new and more efficient ways to handle public records requests so residents can get information in a timely manner. Recently, I shared about my time on council and my campaign on the *American Motherhood* podcast as another way to keep people informed and engaged. My goal is to meet residents where they are and ensure their voices are truly reflected in council decisions.

Preston Stapleton

Email: preston4westerville@gmail.com

Facebook: @preston4westerville

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I have always had a desire to run for public office since I was younger. With two of my daughters off to college this year and going through the Westerville Leadership Program this past year, it has rekindled my desire to run for office. I can listen to others and understand what they are saying. I have been in leadership roles since my days in High School and enjoy helping others succeed and achieve their own goals. I can separate personal feelings from decisions that impact the community to uphold the moral and ethical code that is required by a city council member.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the councils decision-making process?

I hold myself accountable for my actions and won't change that attitude if elected to city council. As a citizen, I expect those in a public leadership position to hold themselves to a higher standard and do what is right by their community and not their agenda. I can and will do that. I believe that the citizens of Westerville should have transparent leaders, and without this, progress and growth cannot occur. There must be trust between the community and its leaders if we want Westerville to continue to be a destination for those who live outside of Westerville. We have to continue to look forward so that the hard work that has been done in the past is not lost.

Kelley Stocker

Email: stockerforcouncil@gmail.com

Website: www.kelleystocker.com

Facebook: Kelley For Council Facebook

What motivated you to run for City Council, and how does your background prepare you for this role?

I was inspired to run for Westerville City Council after a series of exciting opportunities I said "yes" to—each deepening my connection to our community. Running for Council is my answer to the question, "What can I do right now to help?" As a 12-year teacher in the Westerville City School District and a parent to a first grader, I'm deeply invested in this city's future. My family will be here for years to come, and I'm committed to helping Westerville remain true to its motto, "A City Within a Park." That means supporting sustainable, healthy development and ensuring we continue to provide outstanding public services for all residents.

My background in teaching has uniquely prepared me for this role. Not only have I dedicated my career to public service, but I teach government—a subject rooted in civic responsibility, policy, and community impact. Every day, I talk with students about how they can be engaged citizens and the importance of stepping up when you can make a difference. This campaign is an opportunity for me to live the very values I teach.

Serving on Westerville City Council is something I can step up and do—and something I believe I can do well.

If elected to council, how will you ensure transparency and accountability in the councils decision-making process?

If elected to Westerville City Council, I will prioritize transparency and accountability by ensuring residents have clear, consistent access to information and meaningful opportunities to be heard. As a teacher, I know how important it is to communicate complex information in a way that people can understand and engage with—and I bring that skill to this role.

I will advocate for more accessible and frequent communication from Council, including plain-language summaries of major decisions and improved outreach through different platforms for greater accessibility. I want residents to feel informed before decisions are made—not just after.

Accountability also means being available and responsive. I will maintain open lines of communication with residents, whether through public meetings, email, social media, or one-on-

one conversations. I would love to meet residents in their neighborhoods for a community walk and talk series. Listening is one of the most important functions of a City Council member.

Finally, I'll approach every decision with transparency in mind—asking: Who does this benefit? Who was consulted? What are the short- and long-term impacts? Public trust is earned through consistency, openness, and follow-through, and I am committed to building that trust every step of the way.