



2022 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.

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 2022 election, you will be voting for 5 candidates:

- Three Teachers
- 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.

Anne Bartow – Teacher

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

I am interested in serving a second term on the ERA Board of Directors because I would like to continue to represent and support Eagle Ridge Academy staff members, students, and their families. Over the past 6 years, I have served as a 2nd grade teacher, peer coach, and a member of the Board of Directors. I am interested in running again to continue and continue impacting the school community.

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

I have already served 2 years on the Board of Directors, therefore I have experience in not only how the Board of Directors runs, but have also had training in financials, governance, and strategic planning. This past year, I have served as Board Secretary and been a member of the Board Leadership team.

This year is my 6th year as a 2nd Grade teacher at Eagle Ridge Academy and my 13th year teaching in Charter Schools. I have also completed the ERA's Master in Classics Class and completed The Charter School Leadership Certificate program through Eagle Ridge and SMSU. These trainings have not only strengthened my knowledge for Board Leadership but have also given me tools to grow as a leader and have helped me understand the importance between a strong Board and Administration Team.

Additionally, I served on the Board of Directors during the COVID 19 pandemic. During that time, I have navigated making decisions while weighing the opinions and the impacts on all stakeholders. These decisions while difficult, were often what I thought were the best options for our students while keeping true to the mission and vision of Eagle Ridge.

Finally, I am a parent of 2 school age boys, one with whom has special needs. As a Board Member feel I can relate not only to parents and their needs in education, but can also be an advocate for students with special needs and ensure their voice is heard.

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

As with many things, the Covid-19 Pandemic changed many aspects of education. Students are in different places both academically and socially than they were in 2020.

As we venture into a post pandemic Eagle Ridge Academy, we need to think critically how we can maintain the strong programs we already had and face new challenges that emerged from the pandemic. One of the aspects that I think is important to maintain is the CIPHER Pillar Program but also expand it to include more social and emotional support for students. The CIPHER program is an integral piece of ERA and it upholds the mission and vision of the school. However, with students needing an increase in social and emotional supports since the pandemic, I would love to see the CIPHER program grow and include more training for staff on how to meet the needs for the students.

Another area of ERA I would like to maintain is the foundation of Classical Education. Eagle Ridge Academy has an exceptional reputation around the Twin Cities for its strong classical education values and implementation.

However, only a small portion of the staff have completed the Classical Certificate program. I would like to help staff find ways to see the value in the program and connect it with their teaching. I would also like to see ERA continue hold seminars for both parents and teachers on what Classical Education can look like in 2022 while still upholding the values and mission of the school

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

Now that the dust has settled from the expansion and we are getting our feet back under us from the pandemic, I would like to continue working with the Board on Strategic planning and where we see the school headed in the next 3-5 years. I believe that there are some wonderful opportunities to bridge the School of Grammar and the School of Logic and Rhetoric together that would help strengthen our school from youngest to oldest.

I also see a need for our school to continue to find ways to give back to the community. The Pandemic temporarily sidelined some of that planning, but I am confident we are ready to move forward.

Finally, the Board of Directors will also to continue to address the needs of our staff. At ERA we strive to hold a high expectation for our students and staff, but we also want staff to uphold a strong work life balance. I know this has been a priority over the past two years by both the administration and Board of Directors, and there is still work to be done. I hope to be a part of that conversation on the Board moving forward. At ERA we pride ourselves that we have retention staff retention rate over 90% rate and I want to continue to find ways to help our staff feel supported.

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

I believe the best way to evaluate the school is look at the overall morale and culture of the school. Although tests scores and high academic achievement are important do give us valuable information, they are only one part of the picture. The mission and vision at ERA focuses not only on academic achievement, but also fostering the love of learning in students. This is done by keeping a strong collaborative community where staff and students feel valuable and heard and where students feel they are a part of the greater good. I feel ERA has some great systems in place already such as parent and staff surveys, coaching check ins and student counseling. Moving forward, I would like to see these systems evolve to include more student led committees, cross grade and cross school interactions and opportunities for parents and teachers to build stronger relationships. By doing this we are able to not only meet the academic mission of the school but the collaborative one was well.

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

In 2017, ERA staff took time to explore the book Strength Finders by Tom Rath and we took the strength finder test to learn about our own personal strength and how we can use them in a professional setting. I learned my two biggest strengths are Strategic Thinking and Relationship Building. As a Strategic thinker, I am a person who absorbs and analyzes information before deciding and I am constantly looking at the bigger picture and impact of those decisions before making them. According to the book, people with this strength “continually stretch our thinking for the future.” I feel this strength would be beneficial for me because I would begin by hearing different based on what is best for ERA. According to the Strength Finders, my other strongest

strength is Relationship Building. This means I am able to form strong connections with others and use their feedback to help keep teams together and make decisions.

In my time at ERA, I have formed many strong connections that go beyond my classroom and my own team. I have strong connections with grade level teams and staff, specialists, students and their families. I work hard to get to know others on personal level and look at things from their perspective when decision making or helping them through a problem. This will help me weigh decisions on the Board of Directors because I know the people and their stories behind the decision that needs to be made

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

The Mission and Vision at Eagle Ridge Academy is to provide a structured and rigorous liberal arts education for K-12 students. It is our job as a staff to uphold the classical and education our school was founded on to create well rounded students who are not only great thinkers, but citizens of the world. At ERA we strive to build strong relationships and a sense of community among students, parents, staff and community leaders around us. It is with those strong relationships that students are able to build on the foundation they at ERA and take it with them on their next endeavors

Elliot Loutsch – Parent

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

I have two daughters that are finishing grades 7 and 8 at ERA. They, their friends, and the teachers and administrators that helped shape them are my primary reasons for being interested in serving on the Board of Directors. I want to give back to the ERA community as a thank you, but also to provide support and a strong work ethic for the upcoming opportunities and challenges facing ERA. One of the primary challenges consistently facing ERA is student retention in the upper school which has been attributed to limited offerings for courses, athletics and activities. As class offerings continue to improve and activities expand, preparation must be made for the larger class sizes about to enter the upper school. The larger class sizes could highlight potential shortcomings in addition to increasing demand for physical space. I'm enthusiastic about our athletic programs and ERA has experienced a large amount of growth over the last couple of years in participation and sports offered. I'm interested in serving on the Board of Directors to help foster and support this exciting expansion.

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

I have been involved in real estate as an appraiser for over 20 years. Half of my career was spent in the field completing appraisals on residential and commercial properties. The other half of my career has been as a collateral risk analyst reviewing appraisals completed for a national bank and regional bank. My career experiences have allowed me to gain and hone skills such as time management, attention to detail, client and vendor relations, communication, collaboration and leadership. These skills and real estate experience will be valuable for strategic planning, risk analysis, and potential negotiation when ERA begins exploring real estate options for lease or purchase to satisfy growth demand in academics, activities and athletics. The priority will be to locate real estate options that accommodate the school's need for a variety of class and activities spaces and athletic facilities while limiting collateral risk.

I have been a coach and team manager for my daughters' hockey, soccer and volleyball teams which require organization, communication, and leadership. In addition, I've been playing volleyball and participated in a volleyball league in the Twin Cities for over 20 years. To give back to the league, I've been a volunteer board member and president of the league including the last two years during COVID. These experiences have been valuable in learning how to build relationships and bring together individuals and personalities to navigate the league through the pandemic. Last year, I was a volunteer coach and assistant for the ERA volleyball program

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

The aspects most important for ERA to maintain is the commitment to academic excellence through a traditional, Classical education. This offering provides families an alternative for a rigorous education supported by a community committed the success and achievement of our students.

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

The Board of Directors will need to address how to accommodate and retain the larger class sizes entering the upper school. This issue is both exciting and daunting because of the areas of need it creates. One of the difficult tasks facing the Board will be the hiring of additional teachers and staff while remaining focused on their well-being during challenging times. Teacher input will be vital in the planning for additional space for classrooms, labs, and activity areas for a growing arts program. Finally, the growth already experienced in the athletic department and at the youth sports level has resulted in increased demand for athletic fields and facilities.

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

I would evaluate Eagle Ridge Academy as succeeding at delivering on its intended mission of providing 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. This is evidenced by the ranking of #3 school district on schooldigger.com, #5 school district on niche.com and #3 high school in Minnesota by US World Report where ERA is achieving a 98% graduation rate with a 93% reading proficiency and 81% math proficiency. That said, improving course offerings, including advanced placement courses, should be a goal for not only education purposes but also in an effort to retain students with a desire for higher education achievement.

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

Input from all interested parties is paramount to making the best decision on a topic. It is important for the Board to actively engage all parties in order to understand all perspectives and communicate the value their point of view may have on a topic. While a specific group should not be given greater weight or influence than another, the topic under consideration may require additional discussion and discernment regarding the impacts the decision may have on any or all of the interested parties.

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

The mission and vision of Eagle Ridge Academy is to provide our students with a traditional, Classical education to nurture academic excellence and good citizenship through integrity and perseverance while exhibiting honor and respect as they strive to attain their highest potential.

Farhiya Roble – Parent

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

It was a spontaneous decision, I saw the email and decided why not. I have this desire and passion to make a difference in my community and the world at large. This platform will enable me to contribute and hopefully benefit the Eagle Ridge community.

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

I am hard working, intelligent, understanding, and open minded. As a working parent of four kids, life has equipped me with experience and patience. I am a student of life and am always eager to improve in all aspects of my life.

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

The rigor and discipline

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

From personal experience, I would say integrating and addressing the needs of students that come from non English speaking households. These families have more hurdles to overcome and I hope we can be the voice for them.

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

The school's performance and the attitude of the staff.

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

I would consider all input and work with the team to come up with decisions. I believe a great team is able to make great decisions.

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

Our mission is to provide excellent education in a safe, positive environment so all children can reach their full potential.