



Board of Education Member Profile

Melissa Burkland

Name: Melissa Burkland

Board member since: 2022

Children: One son, one daughter

Occupation: Assistant United States Attorney

1. Tell us a little about yourself and your background.

I grew up in Fargo attending Fargo Public Schools. After graduating from Fargo South High, I attended the University of Nebraska and majored in English. I then attended law school at the University of North Dakota. After graduating from law school, I lived in Wisconsin (Milwaukee and Madison) for twelve years before coming back to Fargo in 2017 when I started my job as an Assistant United States Attorney in Fargo's United States Attorney's Office. I have two children, one dog, and one cat. I love to run, read, bake, spend time with my family at the lake, travel, and learn as much as I can about art.

2. What was the reason you ran for a Board position?

My mother worked for 40 years in the Fargo Public Schools as a classroom teacher, special education teacher, founder of the gifted and talented program, principal, and consultant following her retirement. She believed that public education was the most transformative public commodity we have and that a strong public education system benefits every single person in the community. She passed away in March 2022 and very shortly after her passing I wanted to embrace the values she held most dear -- supporting public education -- and run for the Board to have a voice at the table and be an advocate for teachers, students, and strong public schools.

3. What do you see as big challenges for the District going forward? Challenges for K-12 education in North Dakota?

I am very concerned about what appears to be an unprecedented teacher shortage as we are emerging from the pandemic. Recruiting and retaining excellent and diverse teachers will be a challenge. For K-12 education in North Dakota, it will be a challenge to obtain adequate funding to maintain strong public schools throughout all of North Dakota.

4. Something you're proud of as a representative of the Fargo Public Schools:

There is so much! I care so very deeply about this community and am a very proud alumna and now representative of this District. The outstanding teachers and staff are the engines behind our wonderful schools, and I am very proud of each and every one of them.

