

**KEYS TO THE CANDIDATES 2020**  
**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS – BLOOMINGTON MONROE COUNTY**

**About the Keys**

The League of Women Voters of Bloomington-Monroe County compiled candidates' views on selected issues. These are presented here as a service by the League and The Herald-Times. This printed compilation covers races where residents of Monroe County are a significant portion of the electorate. For information on candidates in national, state-wide, and uncontested races, and for additional information on candidates covered here, visit the League's online guide: <https://www.vote411.org>. Enter your address and click Submit, then Explore Now.

The League is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through advocacy and education.

For information on the November 3, 2020 election, contact Monroe County Election Central at <http://monroecountyvoters.us> or 812-349-2690. For information on the League of Women Voters go to <https://www.lwv-bmc.org> or call 812-727-8158.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** In each race, candidates are listed in alphabetical order by last name. Unopposed candidates are not included. No corrections or changes have made to the responses submitted.

Order of races presented:

U.S. House of Representatives, District 9  
Indiana Senate, District 44  
Indiana House of Representatives, District 60  
Indiana House of Representatives, District 62  
Indiana House of Representatives, District 65  
Monroe County Council at Large  
Monroe County Commissioner, District 2  
Monroe County Circuit Court Judge, Division 8, Seat 5  
Monroe County Circuit Court Judge, Division 1, Seat 9  
MCCSC Board, District 2  
MCCSC Board, District 4  
MCCSC Board, District 6

**NATIONAL OFFICE**

**U.S. House of Representatives, District 9**

- Trey Hollingsworth (R)
- Tonya Mullis (L)
- Andy Ruff (D)

1. Please describe the occupations, education/training, and experience that qualify you for this office.

**HOLLINGSWORTH:**

I was a small business owner in the real estate and manufacturing sectors. In business, I found myself constantly frustrated by the roadblocks created by the federal government demonstrating those who wrote these laws and regulations never actually had to feel their burden.

Now in Congress, I have mobilized that experience into better outcomes for hardworking Hoosiers and my mission continues to be empowering every American to live their American Dream including helping families during this difficult time, safeguarding our communities, ensuring our safety, and boosting the economy back to where we were in February (the best economy in generations).

**MULLIS:**

As a Real Estate Broker, I have been a leader in my industry by serving as President of the Board and serving in other positions. The work I have entailed involves contract negotiations and multi-tasking. I am a grandmother with life-long experiences as a Hoosier.

I have a detailed biography on my website, [www.tonyaforcongress.com](http://www.tonyaforcongress.com).

**RUFF:**

I am a former Bloomington City Council member with 20 years of service as an elected City of Bloomington council member, including multiple terms as president. I have tremendous experience building policies that improve the lives of ordinary Hoosiers at the local level. I have a master's degree in public & environmental affairs from Indiana University and a bachelor's in natural resource management from Cornell. My education and professional experiences have given me a deep understanding of the complexities and vulnerabilities of our world, setting me on a path of lifelong service and protection for the environment and my community.

2. Why are you running for this office?

**HOLLINGSWORTH:**

I am fighting for a government that is run by the people and for the people. Congress is filled with career politicians who worry more about their own careers than those they represent.

Washington for too long hasn't been concerned with us and our values despite hardworking Americans remitting over \$3.5 trillion to the federal government every year.

I signed a term limits promise to Hoosiers that I won't serve in the House more than four terms, and I've introduced legislation to make term limits law for everybody. Serving you, your family, and your future is my priority.

**MULLIS:**

I have watched our Country's freedoms and liberties slowly being whittled away over decades.

'We, the People' have watched our independence fading away. I feel compelled to stand up and serve. I intend to win this election, go to Washington D.C. with like-minded members of

Congress, and put a halt to the unconstitutional behavior that has been going on for years by both parties.

**RUFF:**

Right now the 9th District is poorly served and represented by a son of a billionaire with no ties to Indiana. I am a lifelong Hoosier with a decades-long political record of working selflessly to benefit the residents of our district and the people of our state. As a U.S. congressman, I will work with the same tireless devotion to provide 9th District residents with access to their federal government using the skills I sharpened as a counselor, educator and civic leader for over 20 years. Brown County deserves no less than someone whose values and challenges mirror their own.

3. Please discuss the current state of race relations in the U.S. and what actions, if any, Congress should take to address these.

**HOLLINGSWORTH:**

Our country aspires to treat everybody equally and judge us only by the sum of our actions, not the color of our skin. We have, as individuals and as a nation, in many places and many times fallen short of our aspirations. It is up to us as Americans, and in our capacity as parents, neighbors, and friends, to hold us to our own country's standards. To make a difference, we have to start one by one, and each take individual responsibility for our own actions. Let's continue to reach for better together.

**MULLIS:**

Over recent years, modern technology (cell phones w/video) has been shining a light on the dark wrong doings that has been going on for hundreds of years. Although the process for change has been too slow, communities and local leaders are bannng together to correct the problems. The 'people' are working together with their officials to weed out racism in our institutions. State's and townships (under Article 4 and 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment) are finally starting to work together to right the wrongs. The federal government (Congress) is limited under their constitutional authority while encouraging change needed across our Country.

**RUFF:**

The state of race relations in the U.S. is this: Huge problems exist, and too many people either refuse to acknowledge them or latch onto any excuse to blame the victims of systemic injustice for social unrest. While some politicians use their bully pulpit to help reassure and temper the masses rising up against injustice, others stoke fear while encouraging us to arm ourselves against our own countrymen. Many do nothing at all. Those in the latter two groups include my opponent. Real and substantive changes in our legal system and law enforcement can and must be done now.

4. COVID-19 has exposed strengths and weaknesses in public health and health care. What changes, if any, would you make to health care nationally that would benefit Indiana?

**HOLLINGSWORTH:**

Great healthcare starts with top-notch cures. This pandemic has been a reminder that we need to empower our healthcare researchers to develop the best cures, which this country has been the leader in for decades. I'm a strong supporter of biotech research and making advances in cures for Alzheimer's, diabetes, and cancer.

Also, ensuring access to affordable healthcare for Hoosiers is hugely important to me. While there are plenty of proposals that want to consolidate government control of healthcare, I believe the patient should be able to decide what provider they see and what cures they use.

**MULLIS:**

The coronavirus revealed the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) was unprepared for a crisis it was designed to handle. The CDC is an extremely large beaurocracy that is over-funded and outdated. When the C-19 outbreak hit the U.S., FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) took over and managed the responsibilities that were under the CDC's purview. It's time to reduce & streamline the CDC into FEMA for efficiency and to save the taxpayer millions of dollars. Today, most parents, businesses and patrons are using 'best practices' for safety as appropriate for their own situation. This has been a learning curve for everyone. As a member of Congress, I would encourage the recommendations of well-regarded scientists, and I would encourage 'the people' to be safe as reasonably possible while living their lives the best they can.

**RUFF:**

Over 200,000 citizens have died from COVID. Job losses rival the Great Depression, yet health insurance remains tied to employment. Millions lose coverage during a global pandemic while my opponent tells people to get "back to work." Big U.S. medical industries still care more about saving money than lives. Can there be any doubt any longer that we finally need to ditch the profit-driven system for a far cheaper public one that guarantees healthcare fit for the greatest nation on Earth? Universal healthcare will help all Hoosiers, and not just so they can get back to work.

5. Please explain what national actions, if any, should be taken to address our climate and related environmental concerns.

**HOLLINGSWORTH:**

America is the leading country in innovation, ideas, and technology, and the track record of American firms reducing emissions per dollar of GDP over the last two decades has been impressive. We must be mindful that long-term, sustainable solutions only work when we offer Americans the opportunity to improve their economic and environmental situations simultaneously, not try to mandate tens of trillions of dollars in regulations, taxes, and rules from the federal government stifling freedom and opportunity. Hoosiers want abundant opportunities for their kids not trillions more in debt on partisan mistakes like the Green New Deal.

**MULLIS:**

From my perspective, the majority of people want clean air. They want a safe & clean society for their families going well into the future. Congress should continue to inform the public of its findings and make recommendations, in general, while not infringing on the personal freedoms of each individual. There is a balance here. It doesn't matter your age, race or religion, on behalf of Indiana's District 9, I will have a voice in Washington D.C.

**RUFF:**

We don't need scientists to tell us man is destroying nature anymore. It's right outside our windows. Indiana may not have hurricanes or fire tornadoes, but the poisoning of our Hoosier

grounds and waters is causing extinctions and public health crises even in populated 9th District cities like Franklin, Martinsville and Bloomington. I'll protect our state through market incentives for green products and tech; a zero-emission and carbon-neutral government and military; protecting public lands from further exploitation; battling corporate influence in politics; strengthening the EPA; supporting relief for disaster victims and climate refugees; and especially lowering impacts on marginalized communities.

## **STATE OFFICES**

### **Indiana Senate, District 44**

- Eric A. Koch (R)
- Cynthia (Cinde) Wirth (D)

1. Please describe the occupations, education/training, and experience that qualify you for this office.

#### **KOCH:**

Through my experience in the Legislature, I am able to shape public policy and advocate effectively for our District. As Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I benefit from my 30 years in the private practice of law. As a small business owner who has created jobs for several decades, I understand how jobs are created and the importance of a skilled workforce.

#### **WIRTH:**

While teaching high school science, I earned a fellowship to Washington D.C. to gain experience with policy and how it shapes our lives. I served on Capitol Hill and am bringing back the policy knowledge and experience I gained to put into action in Indiana.

I have built knowledge in science, business, and education policy to complement my experiences as a biologist, anthropologist, classroom teacher, and small-business person. This gives me a foundation on which to build policy to increase sustainability and economic, healthcare, and social justice, support public education, and put people and lives back as a priority before profit.

2. Why are you running for this office?

#### **KOCH:**

I enjoy public service. I have had the privilege of serving Brown County in both the Indiana House and Senate, and over that time have developed an understanding of the unique nature and needs of Brown County. As a husband, father, and now recent grandfather, I care deeply about the future and quality of life of our state.

#### **WIRTH:**

I am an ordinary Hoosier. I was educated in local public schools, taught in local public schools, and am a life-long Hoosier. As a 7th generation Southern Indiana Hoosier, I'm as local as it gets. Our quality of life in Indiana has been hijacked by individuals putting personal profit and corporate profits first and exploiting the hard-working people of Indiana. Good policy that places people over profits can restore our Hoosier quality of life, ending the need for working families

to have multiple jobs to survive. I am running to support public education, sustainable environmental solutions, and equity in wages & healthcare.

3. What are three critical issues you see facing Indiana and your District? How would you address them as a member of the State Senate?

**KOCH:**

We need to continue to maintain our balanced budget and nationally-recognized tax and regulatory environment, while addressing school funding and healthcare reform challenges and supporting initiatives that improve the quality of life for all Hoosiers. Next session we will also have the additional challenge of the impact of COVID on the state budget and Indiana's health and economy.

**WIRTH:**

Indiana needs to retool the funding formula for public schools, especially rural schools, to create an even playing field for all students by ensuring public schools, and public-school teachers, have what they need to operate at the highest level possible.

Current healthcare programs can be expanded by building affordable, easy, comprehensive access to healthcare for all. Hoosiers should not live in fear that a health disaster will take away everything they have worked decades for.

Hoosiers deserve to be paid fair and equitable living wages for their jobs. Families suffer when it requires working multiple jobs just to survive. Fair and equitable wages are the key to rebuilding our communities and supporting working families across the state.

4. What are three priorities for State Senate District 44?

**KOCH:**

My top priority for District 44 is to continue to be an effective voice for our district and its unique needs. This is done by being active in the district and maintaining close working relationships with local officials. In particular, we need to continue our successful initiatives supporting rural broadband expansion and increased road funding in rural communities. As next session is a budget year, we need to make sure that rural areas of our state that are experiencing declining population have sufficient public school funding.

**WIRTH:**

Our public schools and public-school teachers are the foundation of our local communities and need to be supported and compensated at levels on par with other states.

Affordable and easily accessible healthcare programs should be available to all Hoosiers, regardless of employment status to keep our communities strong and healthy. Raising air quality standards and enforcing those standards will help many Hoosiers breathe better and lead healthier, more enjoyable lives.

Creating new job opportunities in new, higher-paying technology areas, along with training programs for displaced or underemployed workers, will increase the quality of life for our Hoosier workers.

**Indiana House of Representatives, District 60**

• Tiffany Grant (D)

• Peggy Mayfield (R)

1. What kinds of policies, if any, will you pursue to promote social and racial justice in our state?

**GRANT:**

Three policies that I will make a priority at the statehouse are increasing the minimum wage to a true living wage of at least \$15 per hour, passing hate crime legislation that provides specific guidelines and penalties, and budgeting state funds to provide equitable public school funding. So many Hoosiers are working multiple jobs to provide for themselves and their families or are living in less than safe communities or are sending their kids to schools that are not provided enough money to maintain smaller class sizes, accessible programming, and educational supplies. I will always advocate for providing equitable opportunities and justice for every Hoosier.

**MAYFIELD:** No response.

2. What measures would you support to address our climate and related environmental concerns?

**GRANT:**

I would support both resources to clean up our past mistakes and to make a pathway to better environmental practices in the future. We need better environmental policy that partners with groups such as the EPA to determine the current crises to be addressed and clear guidance on how to fund that clean up process. As we move toward better environmental practices in the future, that will mean a move away from coal as our primary energy source to more renewable energies. We need to provide a framework and support from the state government for job training for those persons moving from jobs in the coal industry to new jobs in greener sources of energy.

**MAYFIELD:** No response.

3. COVID-19 has exposed strengths and weaknesses in healthcare. What will be your priorities for improving health care and public health for Indiana residents?

**GRANT:** It has become increasingly clear that Hoosiers need health care options that do not depend on job status. Every Indiana resident needs to have access to affordable health care options, including mental health care, with respect to both location and cost. Better health care options in Indiana directly leads to healthier families, lower maternal and infant mortality rates, lower rates of drug misuse and overdose, stronger workforces, and ultimately lower health care costs for everyone as we provide more prevention and require less treatment.

**MAYFIELD:** No response.

4. What should the state do, if anything, to provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12?

**GRANT:**

First, we need to redesign the equitable spending calculator (complexity index) to ensure that schools in areas of greater need actually get an appropriate share of the funds in relation to schools in more affluent areas. Then, we need to end standardized testing and awarding school letter grades based on test scores and teacher evaluations. Finally, we need to re-evaluate the choice voucher and charter systems. All public school funding should be monitored and held accountable using the same measures. Overall, we need to prioritize funding within the education budget in a way that levels the playing field for children across Indiana.

**MAYFIELD:** No response.

### **Indiana House of Representatives, District 62**

- Alyssa Bailey (D)
- Jeff Ellington (R)

1. What kinds of policies, if any, will you pursue to promote social and racial justice in our state?

**BAILEY:**

I will work to ensure that every voice in my district is not just heard, but represented at the statehouse. This includes working to education people about the injustices that are occurring and work towards finding solutions to promote social and racial justice in Indiana. A start to this is ensuring that hate crimes are punished. We need to stand united to show that hate crimes are unacceptable and that we will not turn a blind eye. We also need to ensure that diversity is promoted throughout our communities, from our classrooms to our workplaces. When we begin to accept one another as people first, we are able to come together and build a stronger foundation to support our communities.

**ELLINGTON:** No response.

2. What measures would you support to address our climate and related environmental concerns?

**BAILEY:**

According to a state report, nearly 60 percent of Indiana's rivers and lakes are unsafe for human health and wildlife. Climate change is no longer a future possibility, it is a very present reality. We must do what we can to reduce our carbon footprint and allow a safe environment for future generations. We can do this by expanding renewable energy production in our state, ensuring regulations are enforced to protect our soil and water, and supporting clean-up efforts in areas that need it. Clean air and water is a necessity...and it is one that our families deserve but we can't wait until it is too late to start making changes.

**ELLINGTON:** No response.

3. COVID-19 has exposed strengths and weaknesses in healthcare. What will be your priorities for improving health care and public health for Indiana residents?

**BAILEY:**

One of my first priorities would be to replicate successful programs, such as the state recognized perinatal navigator program, for other vulnerable populations such as people with chronic diseases, mental illness, and substance abuse disorders. I also want to focus on making healthcare services affordable including for mental health visits. No one should forgo a visit to the doctor because they are worried about the costs. Capping prescription costs is a start, but there is more work to be done. The Monroe County WIC program is doing great work in being accessible to residents who need those services. We need to continue to support and expand those types of services for Hoosiers who need this type of support at such a vulnerable time.

**ELLINGTON:** No response.

4. What should the state do, if anything, to provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12?

**BAILEY:**

The state should start with appropriately funding public education. This does NOT mean raising taxes, but instead, let's look at the current educational budget and ensure that funds are not being wasted on things like standardized testing, and instead, focus on better programming and supports. Also, if charter and voucher schools are to be state or federally funded, they need to be held accountable under the same rules and regulations as public schools. We also need to uncomplicated the school funding formula to ensure that it is fair. Pre-K, appropriately funded schools, and a good education should not be a privilege for families who can afford it.

**ELLINGTON:** No response.

### **Indiana House of Representatives, District 65**

- Chris May (R)
- Paula Staley (D)

1. Please describe the occupations, education/training and experience that qualify you for this office.

**MAY:**

I'm your current state representative, small-business owner, and former three-term County Commissioner. A graduate of Bedford North Lawrence High School and Vincennes University, currently working at Whitney Tool as a sales engineer while owning and operating Hoosier Tech Properties. Served on several boards including: Solid Waste Management District, Dunn Memorial Hospital, Boys and Girls Club, Economic Growth Council, Redevelopment Commission, and also served as chair of the County Insurance Steering Committee. I was named the 2017 Indiana Assisted Living Association Legislator of the Year. In June 2018, I participated in the 64th annual U.S. Army War College National Security Seminar.

**STALEY:**

Following the first half of my career working in hospitals and medical facilities in Indiana, I found my passion in serving state and federal public health agencies, making a difference in the lives of families by developing environmental and family health policy. Working at the Centers

for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, I developed federal guidance for parts of the Affordable Healthcare Act. The CDC experience gave me public health and policy experience needed in the Statehouse to get us through this COVID-19 pandemic, restore our economy, and ensure we are well-prepared for the future.

2. Why are you running for this office?

**MAY:**

As your representative, I'm motivated by the continued focus on our shared values while passing laws that are good for our citizens, communities and state rather than fighting through partisan talking points and ideology. My experience serving on the Local Government, Judiciary, Veterans Affairs and Public Safety, and Interstate/International Committees has provided me with firsthand knowledge of the fundamentals needed to effectively work with the Indiana Legislature. Above all else, I believe in Indiana!

**STALEY:**

I am running for office because I see that the current administration has failed us. Failed us by prioritizing big-moneyed interests, at the expense of our public schools, our health, and our environment. Recovering from this pandemic and restoring our economy will require a bottom up approach, not a top down (which never works, anyway.) That is, that the state should prioritize support for workers, families, and our public schools. The economy can recover only after we get the pandemic under control. Still, today, there is no penalty for not wearing a mask in public in Indiana.

3. What are three critical issues you see facing Indiana and your District? How would you address them as a member of the State House?

**MAY:**

Wasteful and out-of-control spending hinders our economic growth. We must end deficits, reduce our national debt, and continue to make smart reforms to our tax code to promote growth and investment here in Indiana. Governmental overreach consistently costs Hoosiers good jobs while raising our energy bills and operating costs for businesses. We must continue to support efforts to protect businesses from unnecessary costs and regulatory burdens. We must prepare our students and our workforce for the demands of 21st century careers and encourage the spirit of innovation that has and will continue to make Indiana great. As our economy continues to grow, we must also focus our efforts on workforce development while getting underemployed Hoosiers even better careers.

**STALEY:**

The critical issue facing Indiana is the failure of the current administration to prevent over 104,000 cases of COVID-19 and over 3,000 deaths. Many of these cases and deaths could have been prevented with early action and contact tracing efforts by adequately funded, prepared state and local public health agencies. Only after the pandemic is under control can we focus on the recovery of the economy. District 65 is in critical need of the state dollars that are currently going into the big-moneyed interests' pockets. Dollars for support of public schools, family farms, healthcare, internet fiber and communication infrastructure.

#### 4. What are three priorities for Indiana District 65?

##### **MAY:**

We must ensure that we continue to foster a business climate that insures economic growth. As a conservative, I'm focused on right sizing the regulatory burden and finding innovative solutions to real problems. Indiana is leading the nation on a variety of measurements and reforms, but we must drive these successes in jobs and economic growth throughout the rural areas of our state.

##### **STALEY:**

As an under-served rural area, many issues concern voters in District 65. In addition to the primary focus on controlling the pandemic, I would focus on ensuring that District 65 gets its fair share of state funding. Support for public schools, placing a moratorium on vouchers; support for workers by mandating a living wage, pay equity for women, ending right to work, reinstating the common construction wage; supporting families with affordable childcare; access to public transportation, availability of affordable healthcare, increasing numbers of mental health and addiction treatment providers; support for continuation of family farms.

#### **LOCAL OFFICES**

##### **Monroe County Council At Large**

- James Allen (R)
- Janna Arthur (I)
- Trent Deckard (D)
- Geoff McKim (D)
- Cheryl Munson (D)
- Larrin Wampler (R)

#### 1. What measures would you support to address our climate and related environmental concerns?

##### **ALLEN:**

We must use more energy efficient and renewable energy sources. We need to get everyone involved in recycling materials. There are many sources available to help with environmental issues. Renewable energy is a source that many do not understand or simply refuse to use for various reasons. Electric and or hybrid vehicles are a step in the right direction. Replacing current lighting with LED lighting is another easy step we can take to help. Solar panels can be used to collect and store energy helping to reduce electric usage. We must think of our children and grandchildren and the future we are leaving for them. Public transportation and bicycling can also be a help as well as car pooling when available.

**ARTHUR:** No response.

##### **DECKARD:**

I believe in science, which tells us that every entity must be serious about climate change before effects are irreversible. The 20 warmest years on record have been in the last 22 years. A comprehensive climate change response must come both public and private entities, and every level of government – Monroe County cannot do it alone. No one envies drought, erratic weather, flooding, famine, and rising health scares due to climate change. We can have serious

conversations moving forward, strengthen our environmental commission filled with community leaders, and take realistic, affordable measures to expand transit access across the community.

**MCKIM:**

Measures include: Actively monitoring county building utility usage and enforcing efficiency standards; Investing in an energy-efficient fleet; Zoning that encourages access to transit, and walkable neighborhoods; Funding to improve sidewalks and bike paths; Funding an employee cash-out benefit that encourage County employees to carpool, walk, bike, or take the bus; Supporting public transit in urbanized areas where the density supports fixed route service; Encourage public-private partnerships to fund transit expansion; Supporting rural transit, to help our vulnerable population, participate fully in community life; Preserving greenspace; Creating, following, and reporting against a data-driven Climate Resiliency Plan.

**MUNSON:**

Continued funding support for:  
energy-efficient vehicles in county government fleet;  
building and HVAC improvements for energy-efficiency in county buildings, including solar panels and rain barrels wherever these can be effectively installed; and  
community education provided by Soil & Water Conservation District and Purdue Extension Services.

Develop long-term management plan for the Lake Monroe watershed.

Increase public transportation routes and bike paths for greater functionality and efficiency to decrease carbon footprint.

**WAMPLER:** No response.

2. What policies, if any, will you pursue to promote social and racial justice in Monroe county?

**ALLEN:**

We need to educate the public more on these issues. We need to be more civil and respectful to our fellow residents. We must realize everyone should be treated equally and with respect. More training for public agencies regarding mental health issues and understanding of others and their beliefs. I do believe we as a community can and should be more understanding of others beliefs. We must be tolerant and understanding to everyone regardless of their race, religion, and sexual orientation. We must have programs in place and urge people to use them to be more understanding on these issues. I would like to see a commission established for residents to turn to for guidance and education on these issues. More training for police as well.

**ARTHUR:** No response.

**DECKARD:**

Every resident should be able to look at elected officials, boards, and other public servants and see representation that looks like them, lives like them, loves like them, and a government that is accessible, no matter their race, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity, income, and background. I start each day knowing that as a white, straight, protestant male, my experience is not the same as the experiences of other community members. I support anti-racist efforts to

improve county policies, procedures, data, and training, ensuring everyone feels safe and has access to equity and justice in a community I love.

**MCKIM:**

Monroe County is in the process of a strategic re-evaluation of the effectiveness and equity of our justice system; we anticipate making multiple investments in treatment facilities and services. In addition, we should: Support the Stride Center, funding additional wraparound services and evolution to non-law-enforcement-related usage; Work with the Commissioners to strengthen the role of the Human Rights Commission for documenting and investigating incidents of discrimination in the county, including in provision of county services; Participate in anti-racism training; Actively recruit Black folks and other people of color so that Monroe County boards and elected bodies better represent the diversity of our community.

**MUNSON:**

Social and racial justice is closely linked to economic justice. One of the key economic issues for families is affordable housing. County government can help increase affordable housing through revised zoning codes (which are planned to be completed in the near future), as well as through streamlining construction permitting processes for affordable housing. Additionally, I hope to gain insight through racial justice training into how to infuse anti-racism into County policies.

**WAMPLER:** No response.

3. COVID-19 has exposed strengths and weaknesses in healthcare. What will be your priorities for improving health care and public health for Monroe County residents?

**ALLEN:**

Covid-19 has exposed many areas that in my opinion we were not prepared for. Many people do not trust government and that needs to change. We need people to believe in what is being asked of them and work together for a common goal. Many businesses have closed some forever. Health care costs have sky rocketed and so has the cost of insurance. Many rely on various clinics for treatment and support. We need to focus on the needs of the community and help as much as possible with funding for programs that help families in need. Homelessness is a huge problem for us and we need to put our heads together and find a workable solution to help get people off the streets and into housing and help them secure and keep jobs.

**ARTHUR:** No response.

**DECKARD:**

The biggest thing we can do is support our county health department and emergency management as they follow science in seeking information and resources, and in implementing continued best practices to help lead our community in this awful time. With the pandemic, people are dealing with financial concerns such as job insecurity, potential for foreclosure or eviction, higher costs of living, staggering childcare costs, student loans, and healthcare debt that deepen systemic poverty. To address this, I will continue to support funding that improves access to health care, nonprofits providing key social services, and efforts to protect our workforce.

**MCKIM:**

The role of county government in health care is limited; however, within those constraints our priorities should include: Funding budgetary needs for the Health Department, including new positions and resources requested in the 2021 budget proposal; Continuing to fund HealthNet (formerly Volunteers in Medicine), which provides primary health care, dental, and pediatric care to residents of all income levels; Supporting the county's Futures Family Planning Clinic; Supporting additional partnerships with Centerstone to provide addictions and mental health care and treatment; Supporting strategic partnership between the Monroe County Health Department and IU Health to improve our epidemic-response capacity.

**MUNSON:**

Fully support Monroe County Health Department's staffing needs (including an epidemiologist and contact tracers).

Maintain and promote County's Futures Family Planning Clinic.

Mental health is part of public health, and services to be provided should be managed through the Health Department and advised and overseen by the County Board of Health; in this vein, I will promote continued and expanded support for crisis services (e.g. the Stride Center).

Continue County government funds as a match for multiple grants to support Health Department services.

**WAMPLER:** No response.

4. What can the County Council do to help restart and strengthen the local economy?

**ALLEN:**

Work with area leaders to establish the issues that residents are most concerned with. Discover areas where residents want change and feel they need change.

Listen to constituents and their concerns with an open and bipartisan mind set. Provide help and guidance to businesses that have suffered due to the Covid-19 pandemic and work with them provide help and guidance to get their business open again.

We have lost a lot of revenue due to the pandemic that quite frankly we will not be able to overcome. Budgets are going to have to be looked at very closely and priorities set. Some projects will have to go to the back burner so to speak for the time being until we are through this crisis.

The County Council will be making some tough decisions

**ARTHUR:** No response.

**DECKARD:**

The county moved quickly at the outset of this crisis to offer financial support to relief funds led by United Way of Monroe County while also directly supporting businesses and workforces that were severely affected through grants. We partnered with our township government in supporting funding to assist with rent and mortgage payments, which is even more important as the pandemic continues. In coming days, the county must continue to be strong stewards of county revenues and resources to ensure that we are able to react quickly to local needs and challenges faced in the community.

**MCKIM:**

The Monroe County Council can: Support efforts to rewrite our zoning code to be more predictable and flexible to support housing choices and increase employment opportunities; Look for opportunities to expand sewer infrastructure, in order to increase stock of workforce housing; Work with local providers to expand broadband, and install equipment on public properties to provide additional connectivity opportunities; Expand public transit in rural and urbanized areas, to allow residents of all income levels to improve their employment potential and help local employers better recruit employees; Continue, as long as the state allows, appropriating Food and Beverage tax for relief for local businesses affected by the pandemic.

**MUNSON:**

Promote growth of affordable housing, bringing construction jobs and new neighborhoods. Provide grant or loan programs to local businesses needing help to reopen, as well as assistance to both renters and small-business landlords who are trying to stay afloat.

Support workforce training.

Wisely use the County's financial resources to maintain and sustain government services as available revenue contracts.

Continue to promote economic development by emphasizing the safety and vitality of Monroe County for both residents and visitors.

**WAMPLER:** No response.

**Monroe County Commissioner, District 2**

- Randy Paul (G)
- Julie Thomas (D)

1. What personal qualities and experiences qualify you for this office?

**PAUL:**

I have lived in Monroe County since 1975. I have been a volunteer advocate for a wide range of social and political issues my entire life. I helped form unions at MCPL, and for the drivers of Area 10. I have fought for ADA compliance at the city/county level. I also authored and passed a "Living Wage" ordinance at MCPL. The most important attribute I offer voters is that I have 30+ years of fighting for causes I believe in. I will be a commissioner who will fight for people who are disenfranchised in our current government.

**THOMAS:**

I have been an elected official since 2009 (County Councilor 2009-2012; County Commissioner since 2012). As a public servant, I work effectively with other government officials find the best solutions for Monroe County. Extensive, long-term experience with social service agencies (Middle Way House, Planned Parenthood, Circles Program, WFHB, etc.) informs my understanding of the community's needs. In the college classroom, my experience reflects an ability to conduct research, engage in critical, reflective, and realistic thinking, and to communicate effectively. I have demonstrated compassionate, thoughtful, and tireless leadership as a Commissioner, as exemplified by my work during the pandemic.

2. What are your priorities for the coming term?

**PAUL:**

I have 3 main goals if elected as commissioner. (1) To help end and heal the wounds of institutional racism. (2) Aggressive action on the threats of climate change, and (3) A “living wage” for county employees. I think these 3 goals will help unite our community, save our environment for our kids and grandchildren, and start the process of implementing a wage that provides the most basic needs to support a family. I have pledged to serve only one term if elected, these goals will keep me plenty busy over the next 4 years.

**THOMAS:**

The pandemic requires monumental effort. This unexpected and unrelenting priority led to a response of organizational and community leadership while collaborating with key leaders (IU, the hospital, and the county health department) to protect our residents and businesses. On-going priorities include first, a focus on community participation in government. I worked extensively with county residents to fight the City’s annexation effort and recognize community input will be essential for the County Development Ordinance process (Planning and Zoning). Second, I will work to protect and sustain of our county’s environment – for example, current litigation to protect the Lake Monroe water supply.

3. How can the Board of Commissioners help restart and strengthen the local economy in a post-COVID-19 future?

**PAUL:**

We need to focus on a long term program to help individuals through this crisis. The county should be cooperating with the city and their “moving forward” initiative. If county and city government would pool their ideas and resources, the economic impact would be much greater than if we did a separate stimulus package. In a Pandemic, people don’t only live in the city, or only in the county, we all live in one community that needs leadership. The only acceptable death in this Pandemic is the death of petty politics between our city and county government.

**THOMAS:**

As a team, the Commissioners work tirelessly behind the scenes to coordinate and protect residents and businesses from the impact of the pandemic. We worked with the Council to secure Food & Beverage funds for county businesses and social service organizations – nearly \$400,000 in grants – NOT loans. Current voluntary distribution of CARES funding is directed to county businesses / non-profits covers COVID-related expenses. We provided emergency funding to the United Way and to local food banks and, with the Council, are funding townships to help residents with shelter and utilities. Together we will strengthen and heal Monroe County.

4. What policies, if any, will you pursue to promote social and racial justice in Monroe county?

**PAUL:**

I think this will be the greatest challenge facing our community. I think everything starts with anti-racism training. We should accept the proposal submitted by BLM and let our local organization help us learn through their experience. We need to diversify our government by aggressively recruiting people of color to serve in elected office. We need to change our WHITE

government into a government of COLOR. I think all new legislation passed by county government should be viewed through an anti-racist lens before passage. Only then will we help solve the racial divide in our community.

**THOMAS:**

The Commissioners began the Criminal Justice Reform study in 2019 with conversations throughout the county, developing a deeper understanding of our community's needs. I will work with county officials and under-represented populations to implement resultant recommendations - for a fair and more equitable justice system for all. We are organizing county-wide employee training to address implicit bias. I am committed to ensuring diverse appointments to our boards and commissions, to incorporate diverse voices and experiences to guide county government. My ongoing commitment to equitable economic development and environmental protection will help ensure a more just future for all residents.

**Monroe County Judge 10th Circuit, Division 8, Seat 5**

- Judith Benckart (R)
- Kara Elaine Krothe (D)

1. What personal qualities and experiences qualify you to be a Judge in the circuit court?

**BENCKART:**

I am a good listener, honest, compassionate, fair, logical, analytical, and have a strong work ethic. I believe in doing what is right, not what is easy. The experience I bring is that I currently serve as Judge of Circuit Court 8, having been appointed almost 2 years ago by Governor Holcomb. It is a civil law court handling divorces, child custody, small claims, and civil protective orders. My 35 years of legal experience is based primarily on civil law but also includes criminal law. I have varied non-legal work experience, have lived in Bloomington for 32 years, have raised 3 children, all of which gives me the insight and compassion to offer a courtroom where both parties can tell their stories while being treated with respect and integrity. In one matter, divorcing parents were struggling to determine whether or not their child was dyslexic. They didn't know how or where to obtain testing. Having struggled with the same issue with one of my children, I was able to share with them that special testing was necessary and the name of the individual in Bloomington who could provide it!

**KROTHER:**

Most of my career has involved working in the court system. Prior to law school, I was a court reporter for Judge Randy Bridges in Monroe Circuit Court V. Our court handled all types of cases. It was that work that strengthened my interest in attending law school. Upon graduation from Indiana University School of Law, I was sworn in to practice law in November of 2000. After three years working in private practice focusing on civil law, I accepted my current position at the Monroe County Public Defender's Office.

I have spent 16 years helping my clients navigate felony, misdemeanor, juvenile and civil cases (CHINS). Being a public defender is a difficult but important job and requires handling large caseloads in an efficient manner. I strive to treat all of my clients fairly and with compassion. My experience and integrity lend themselves to upholding the law in a fair and impartial manner.

2. How will you handle any increased demands on the court resulting from COVID-19?

**BENCKART:**

Since the COVID-19 shutdown began it has presented extensive challenges to the court system. I have worked diligently to stay up-to-date on the Court's ever-changing landscape. I have educated myself and my staff about the technology that allows court hearings to take place via video conferencing. I have taken part in the education programs provided to Judges to obtain ideas from others on how to be flexible and continue to set and hold hearings within the restrictions set by the Indiana Supreme Court and the Governor. I was involved with the 2019 forming of the Housing Eviction Prevention Program (HEPP) and continue to work with HEPP, which has proven invaluable to the tenants and landlords of Monroe County who are facing eviction and financial struggles due to the virus. I have been on the "ground floor" of handling the demands imposed by COVID-19 and stand ready to continue to do so.

**KROTHER:**

As a judge it is important to be efficient, but it is also important to give each case adequate time so that you have all of the facts you need to make a fair ruling. The COVID-19 shutdown slowed our dockets, but courts are essential, so we have adjusted. In my job as a public defender I am used to handling large caseloads, and I have learned to be flexible and expect the unexpected. The criminal and civil judges have taken different approaches to this pandemic with the criminal courts holding hearings that are mostly attorneys only and the civil courts holding the majority of their hearings via Zoom. My top priority would be to work with the Board of Judges and other elected officials to keep court staff, participants and the public as safe as possible by following recommendations from public health experts and the Indiana Supreme Court.

**Monroe County Judge 10th Circuit, Division 1, Seat 9**

- Geoff Bradley (D)
- Carl Lamb (R)

1. What personal qualities and experiences qualify you to be a Judge in the circuit court?

**BRADLEY:**

Over the past 26 years I have served in a diverse range of public service roles and community organizations. As an attorney, I have experience in a wide array of legal matters, including criminal, juvenile delinquency, children in need of services, child support, small claims, contract, appellate, tax and bankruptcy law. At the University of Kentucky, I worked as a student conduct administrator and hearing officer. I held supervisory roles, worked collaboratively on budget issues, served as a liaison with various stakeholders, and participated in the evaluation and implementation of programs and services. I have also worked with a range of community groups that have allowed me to positively engage with and impact my community. These professional roles allowed me to hone the necessary courtroom experience, temperament, flexibility and adaptability to various workload demands, integrity and character that are essential to serve as a judge.

**LAMB:**

Life and Legal Experience -- 36 years of experience in the law practice has allowed me to become highly knowledgeable in all areas of legal and court proceedings. I have been fighting

for justice for all types of people most of my life and the role of judge would allow me to continue this passion in a different, but more impactful way. My willingness to serve people, whether that be in the US Marine Corps, as an attorney serving thousands of clients through the years, or as founder of many charities which have benefited many Hoosiers - are great qualifications for the role of a judge. I have been living in Monroe County for over 42 years and I have developed close relationships with people from all walks of life and political parties. I am and can maintain impartiality in all aspects of what I do.

2. How will you handle any increased demands on the court resulting from COVID-19?

**BRADLEY:**

While the duration and impact of COVID-19 is still unknown, we must identify the strengths and gaps in services provided by our court system during the pandemic. In doing so it is important to recognize that judges do not work in isolation. If elected, my work as a judge will be interconnected with a broad range of partners including members of the judicial system, local and state government, community agencies and medical professionals.

As a member of the Board of Judges I will collaboratively identify ways to improve the efficiency of our courts so that they function in a fair, timely, and effective manner while safeguarding the rights of litigants, court participants and the public. Whether changes involve streamlining and prioritizing court proceedings, utilizing technology or providing equipment and training we must ensure that the court system be fair, accessible, and equitable to all members of the community.

**LAMB:**

I personally know the impact of COVID-19 on families. I have witnessed first hand how the COVID-19 Pandemic has affected families and individuals in our community. As the workload and demands of the courts increase, the citizens of Monroe County deserve the same, equal, impartial, and fair treatment as is mandated in the Constitution. One way to handle the increase would be to continue to hold virtual or telephonic pretrials, hearings, and other proceedings to minimize potential exposure to the people of Monroe County. In fact, by moving some basic proceedings to virtual hearings, it will be very advantageous to the parties, the attorneys and overall to the administration of justice. I would use "case management plans," to keep cases moving in a more consistent and organized manner.

**Monroe County Community School Corporation, District 2**

- April Hennessey
- Matthew Smith
- Sue Wanzer

1. What personal qualities and experiences qualify you to serve on the school board?

**HENNESSEY:**

I am a former MCCSC teacher and a parent of children currently in the school system. I know firsthand the challenges that we face as a district and a community. Often, I was a teacher first and parent second because many of the kids that entered my classroom had needs that far outweighed the needs of my own children, who I knew were safe, full-bellied, and supported.

My commitment to MCCSC's families, teachers, and staff didn't end when I left the classroom; it's been a through-line of my life and heart.

**SMITH:** No response.

**WANZER:**

I have served on many boards and been elected several times to the MCCSC board, based on my progressive work, my commitment to engage with all and because constituents know that, even when we disagree, I will always listen and discuss with honesty. I am a lifelong and outspoken advocate for public education as the great equalizer and oppose voucher and charter funding that takes funds away from public schools. My service to MCCSC started over 20 years ago as a Fairview volunteer. Most importantly, through my years serving, I have learned the essence of a school board member and how to lead the MCCSC.

2. The school corporation will face financial strains in the coming years. What strategies and/or sources do you recommend for increasing the available funds? What actions could the corporation take to economize?

**HENNESSEY:**

Many institutions have addressed financial strain with top-down reductions in pay and "administrative bloat." MCCSC has seen a decrease in full-time equivalent teachers (FTE) in buildings over the past several years and an uptick in administrative or district level positions. We must return money for FTE back to our buildings. Smaller classes improve outcomes for students and generate more funding for the district. As a district, MCCSC hasn't yet balanced budgets and long-term sustainability of projects and programs. While grants can be excellent sources of funding, they also prove problematic when the money runs out.

**SMITH:** No response.

**WANZER:**

I oppose efforts to increase state funding for vouchers and charters, as it decreases public education funds. The 2022 State tax outlook looks bleak. My past experience in trimming the MCCSC budgets will prove helpful as I ask the critical questions and seek out experts towards making the most beneficial decision. Since staffing comprises over 90% of our general fund, economizing is very difficult without cutting staff. Yet my priority is always to avoid that path. Therefore we must ensure we continue to pass the referendum and explore raising the rate minimally in order to match state losses. My experience involving all stakeholders in the process, will be invaluable.

3. What do you see as the top three priorities to help students and school personnel adjust to learning and teaching through the COVID-19 pandemic? How will you approach these challenges?

**HENNESSEY:**

We must consider innovative and unconventional solutions. We might offer Wi-Fi infrastructure in neighborhood parks where students and teachers would gather and, simultaneously, need-

based re-entry in buildings to ensure that the inequities that already exist in our district aren't exacerbated by the current crisis. Second, we have to support all teachers and staff by being transparent decision-makers and valuing them as individuals with their own set of challenges, concerns, and risk-levels. Last, our solutions must consider the health and safety needs of the entire MCCSC community and the communities we affect by extension.

**SMITH:** No response.

**WANZER:**

My priorities include:

Listening to concerns and supporting our administration as they lead through COVID to create strategies for online learning and in person learning.

Ensuring our schools are as safe as possible, and that our online approaches are supported with adequate staff, technology, and strategies for a new style of teaching and learning. Above all we must stress grace, patience, and understanding.

Assigning the Superintendent, who is responsible for leading all staff, with the task of creating a corporation wide audit to assess needs of students and staff and creating appropriate support, including offering needed mental health support for staff and families.

4. What are your top three criteria for selecting a new superintendent? Why are these important?

**HENNESSEY:**

While the superintendent selection is already underway, I hope that the current school board will consider the candidate's proven success in addressing issues of equity in measurable ways; their deep respect for teachers as educators and individuals; and their desire to collaborate with families, teachers, and staff to offer them a seat at the table in transparent and empowering ways. Beyond these three criteria, they must have a clear vision for transformation in our district that can only come with the unwavering and courageous commitment to amplify the voices of underrepresented, marginalized, and at-risk groups.

**SMITH:** No response.

**WANZER:**

Having participated in this process before I've learned much. My criteria include:

Open and transparent communication with community and staff

Practices shared leadership

Experience in a variety of public education administrative roles, with a preference for superintendent experience as it is such a complex role.

On a board with four members in their first term my insight, familiarity with this process and proven willingness to seek input will be very vital and will help guide that transition. I will rely on the upcoming community surveys and focus groups to create a leadership audit for a new superintendent.

**Monroe County Community School Corporation, District 4**

- Cathy Fuentes-Rohwer
- Marsha Lovejoy

1. What personal qualities and experiences qualify you to serve on the school board?

**FUENTES-ROHWER:**

I am finishing my first term of being an MCCSC school board trustee which has given me an understanding, not only of the role of being a school board member, but the complexities and meaningful work of our school system. I am a mother of 4 children—3 proud graduates of MCCSC and one current high schooler—as well as a former early childhood educator. I have a passion for and deep understanding of the big picture of public education through my advocacy as a co-founder of the Indiana Coalition for Public Education (ICPE)—Monroe County and now as the state ICPE president.

**LOVEJOY:**

I am a working parent of three young children and a full-time communications professional. I understand the unique challenges that come with juggling work and parenting responsibilities and will advocate for the needs of families.

Being a communications professional for over a decade, I will bring this expertise to the school board and help to build trust with our community to ensure a healthy future of public education in Monroe County.

As a first-generation college student, I understand the many barriers that can stand in a student's way and the power of a high-quality education. I will be a tireless advocate working to ensure equitable opportunities for all students.

2. The school corporation will face financial strains in the coming years. What strategies and/or sources do you recommend for increasing the available funds? What actions could the corporation take to economize?

**FUENTES-ROHWER:**

The financial crisis that is coming to public education is coming to schools already in crisis over the pandemic and its fallout, already struggling with a teacher shortage, and already in need of better funding. The renewal of our referendum is going to be essential to the health and well-being of our schools—as well as our children's future. The most important thing we will need is to be connecting with our community, communicating clearly on the financial situation/budget, listening to stakeholders, and making decisions that will center our students, particularly the most vulnerable kids in our district.

**LOVEJOY:**

As a school board, we must ensure that we can support students, teachers and staff as we manage financial strains in the years to come. To address these upcoming challenges, we must ensure expenses align to student value and resource stewardship. We would need to continually review how funds are allocated against these goals.

3. What do you see as the top three priorities to help students and school personnel adjust to learning and teaching through the COVID-19 pandemic? How will you approach these challenges?

**FUENTES-ROHWER:**

The first priority for helping everyone adjust to learning and teaching during the pandemic is to provide as safe-as-possible an environment for all. We must make those safety decisions based on the science that we have—with the guidance of state and local experts and public health authorities. Secondly, we must communicate as clearly as possible and be transparent about the decisions made. With compassion and listening, we must also provide resources to those dealing with pandemic-related trauma and coping with the overall stress of our current situation—as well as resources for the new emphasis on virtual learning.

**LOVEJOY:**

The board needs to adjust long-term plans for budget, objectives and metrics, and continued equity across MCCSC ensuring access to high quality education for students who may have been hit hardest by a learning gap due to COVID-19.

With COVID-19, we've learned that we must continually evolve to meet the needs of students, regardless of our ability to be physically together. It is likely that COVID-19 has forever changed the landscape of public education. As a school board, we must ensure that we can adapt to support students and clearly communicate to parents and families as we evolve.

4. What are your top three criteria for selecting a new superintendent? Why are these important?

**FUENTES-ROHWER:**

As a board, we will be working with those within MCCSC and our broader community to create a composite profile of what we all want to see in a superintendent. As we go forward in the search, this will be what we keep foremost in mind. For myself, I value someone who shares a vision regarding equity in which we can identify the data and create a plan with action steps to continue this work and monitor progress. I value someone who is a good communicator, creates connections, and is interested in creating processes and ways of hearing back from various members of our school community. I also want to see someone who is strong leader focused on student achievement and the whole child.

**LOVEJOY:**

One of the most important tasks in front of the next school board is to interview and hire a superintendent following Dr. DeMuth's retirement. Having the right senior executive in place is critical to MCCSC's ability to deliver high quality education that meets the needs of the students in the community. The new superintendent should be someone who is able to listen to the needs of families, students and teachers, set a clear vision for the future of the school system leading through COVID-19 and beyond, and be an advocate for equity for all students.

**Monroe County Community School Corporation, District 6**

- Philip Eskew Jr.
- Jacinda Townsend Gides

1. What personal qualities and experiences qualify you to serve on the school board?

**ESKEW:**

I have a strong and unique background with public school administration. I attended high school as a Superintendent's son. I served as a member of the Carmel-Clay School Board for 12 years. I

was elected by the Alumni to serve 12 years as an Indiana University Trustee. These experiences provided me with a unique ability to support the administration and serve the students and the Bloomington community.

**TOWNSEND GIDES:**

As the daughter of a public high school teacher, I grew up holding quality public education as one of my highest values. When making the decision to move my children to Bloomington in 2011, my primary consideration was that I held MCCSC in such high regard; my family left in 2016 but moved back in 2018, seeking the diversity that my children had experienced as MCCSC students. I was appointed to the Board of Trustees in 2020, and am so very pleased and honored to be serving the school district that has served my children so well and so comprehensively

2. The school corporation will face financial strains in the coming years. What strategies and/or sources do you recommend for increasing the available funds? What actions could the corporation take to economize?

**ESKEW:**

We must work with the new Superintendent to evaluate the financial needs of MCCSC, both looking at ways to economize but also, if needed to pursue a needed referendum. Working with business manager, assess different ways to economize such as school insurance, teacher benefits, utilities, and repair and renovation of existing buildings.

**TOWNSEND GIDES:**

The school corporation will face financial strains in the coming years. What strategies and/or sources do you recommend for increasing the available funds? What actions could the corporation take to economize? (750 characters/~100 words)

Our teachers and staff are gold; they are our strength. As a trustee, I hope to help navigate a process that preserves the jobs of as many teachers and staff as we possibly can. MCCSC also has some incredible programming for its students, and I hope to help find innovative ways to hold on to that programming, even if it means consolidating it between middle and high schools.

3. What do you see as the top three priorities to help students and school personnel adjust to learning and teaching through the COVID-19 pandemic? How will you approach these challenges?

**ESKEW:**

We must provide educational skills to enable our teachers to educate in a virtual medium. This could include improved technological skills, new technology materials and assistance in the art of teaching virtually.

Teachers must learn to teach with their students learning while practicing social distancing. We should collaborate with the IU School of Education for assistance.

**TOWNSEND GIDES:**

First and foremost, we need to respect the voices of teachers. Teachers, principals, and staff have done an extraordinary job of adapting: they've gone above and beyond contract specifications,

working into the night to ensure that they were ready for whatever was coming down the pike. As this pandemic wears on, we need to listen to them.

Second, we need to respect the need for flexibility. As we've seen recently, our county's COVID numbers can turn on a dime. We need to prepare parents by being transparent about the ways in which we are using metrics.

Lastly, we need to facilitate technological innovations and ensure everyone—students, parents, and teachers are trained on the apps to make this a streamlined process.

4. What are your top three criteria for selecting a new superintendent? Why are these important?

**ESKEW:**

Experience in different size school systems. Each size school offers different challenges and unique opportunities to provide quality education.

Communication skills. The need to communicate with teachers, students and our local community can be critical as we encounter new methods of teaching and financing our schools.

Business background. It is necessary to understand the financial needs of a large school corporation. This includes the ability to economize as well as the need to enhance our educational tools and technology needs.

**TOWNSEND GIDES:**

Dr. DeMuth leaves some big shoes to fill, and I believe that in our next superintendent, we are searching for 1) a person who values equity and justice in the educational arena—not just as window dressing, but as a true value.

We are also looking for someone who comes with their own terrific ideas but also shapes ideas about the needs and desires of our community. We need someone who doesn't just give output, but is able to take input, as well.

Finally, we need a superintendent with a proven record of delivering academic excellence. In the post-pandemic world, we will be pressed to do so despite budget cuts, and someone with that experience will be invaluable.