

St, Tammany School Board District 3

Adaline Villneurve Rutherford
Rebecca Stogner

Republican
No Party

Questions and Answers:

- 1) **What experience in your background prepares you to effectively ensure transparency and accountability as a school board member in setting and achieving sound educational goals?**

Adaline Villneurve Rutherford

Especially in today's educational system, there is no one who is held more accountable than a classroom teacher. Having that experience for 23 years trained me to LIVE those on a daily basis. The biggest problems in education stem from individuals making decisions, yet they are not in touch with the reality of life in the classroom.

Rebecca Stogner

I have been a teacher/administrator for over thirty-nine years. If you were to speak with any parent, employee, or student, they will tell you that I was honest and open with all areas of the school. A parent was always able to call/text me for any reason at any time of the day, and I answered! The parents, employees and even grown students have encouraged me to run for this position. (One of my largest obstacles is that I served in schools other than this district.)

Parents call me personally (all 39 years in teaching/administration, parents had my phone number in their phones) and still do for advice with their children both professionally and personally. My background of being a loan officer, a teacher, a counselor, a technology resource teacher, an assistant principal, and just retiring from administration speaks volumes for my knowledge of every aspect of the school needs. I am honest to a fault and will openly say that you may not agree with my advice, but eventually you will see the reason for the answers I have given you. Remember that even our own mistakes will benefit those we serve as we age

I am hesitant to tell anyone during this campaign exactly what I will do, but what I feel is my vision for the school board position, because I am a realist and know that you do not make promises you cannot keep. I am not running against my opponent, but as a person who knows that I am so aware of the needed changes that need to be done to improve not only this system but our educational field, and someone needs to speak for those changes.

- 2) **Despite pay raises and the new certification program, the significant teacher shortage in St. Tammany schools continues. Until the vacancies are filled with qualified teachers, what measures will you take to staff classes and ensure all students receive the highest quality of education?**

Adaline Villneurve Rutherford

Teacher pay raises are important, but most want respect from parents and disciplined students. If parents understand their support role, teachers will be more confident and able to raise the quality of education by raising expectations.

The teacher shortage has no quick fixes, but allowing retired teachers to come back is a positive step in the right direction

Rebecca Stogner

Teacher shortage is critical in all areas of the country. As I speak, I am helping people who I know personally to complete certification to get into these positions. Many four-year degree people have the knowledge and the personality to be great teachers. Through support to get them into some teacher education classes, they are working towards filling these spots. Until we can get these people the needed course work, we need to utilize our current staff to fill these vacant positions.

Our SWE program can support these positions through including our students into the classrooms with our SWE teachers as support. We also need to utilize our SWE teachers to allow for smaller settings with our behavior students. This would allow our teachers to have larger classes with students without interruptions. Teachers would be able to move through the curriculum at a faster pace if the settings were appropriate.

One option would be to look at more paraprofessional personnel to support our classrooms with areas of extra needs.

- 3) **St. Tammany teachers reportedly consider that the administration does not support them and that they are being asked to do more daily tasks than they can handle with their teaching responsibilities. How will you address the perception that teachers lack the support they need?**

Adaline Villneurve Rutherford

It isn't merely a perception; it is a fact that tasks have multiplied for teachers and continue to do so, increasing their level of stress to perform beyond their capability in any given day. A strong PTA with a volunteer base can show appreciation and also help on campus in many ways. Administrators and parents should also support teachers by communicating the importance of all they do.

Rebecca Stogner

I am in contact with many educators currently asking these questions. I am asking the "right" questions and listening carefully to carefully evaluate what might be truth on what the difference between administration requirements are, central office requirements, or state requirements. Many state/central office requirements could also be different than building administrator requirements. This is where I am extremely valuable to be able to distinguish the needs of the classroom teacher. Classroom teachers who are top educators at each school would be a valuable tool to tap into (without fear of retaliation) for suggestions on how to address the requirements with the least amount of burden on the teacher. It would need to be current teachers in the classrooms, and not those who have left for any amount of time.

Changes in requirements of our teachers have changed drastically, so a classroom teacher is the best tool to know what is best for implementing any type of requirements. Administration has the task to see all points of view and follow up with a plan that teachers feel supports the instruction of the students.

- 4) **Many of the schools in St Tammany were built with a design in which open corridors connect adjacent wings of the buildings. Considering this building design could expose children to threats from outside the school campus, what will you do to address the critical problem of ensuring school safety now and permanent changes for the future? How do you propose paying for the changes or measures you identify as a necessary solution to school safety?**

Adaline Villneurve Rutherford

Security for our students and staff should be our utmost priority. It is important that all doors should remained locked with only one entrance that allows visitors to be cleared. We need to have some type of construction done on campuses that have open corridors to ensure safety. Cameras should be installed to monitor all entrances, hallways, and stairwells, and administrators and security officers should be strategically positioned, especially during class changes. Other school districts around the country have mandated the use of clear book bags in middle schools and higher grades. Uniforms help to identify who should be on campus. It's easier to see who belongs on campus, if they are in a school uniform. These are some safety measures St. Tammany needs to look into implementing. These minor changes would help to ensure student and staff safety.

I would propose re-evaluating budgeted expenditures to see where re-allocations of monies could be made to focus on increased monitoring and safety measures.

Rebecca Stogner

My discussion of this problem has been ongoing for years since I served as an administrator in two schools that have buildings that led to the outside without a one-point entry. A fencing project plan that will ensure that all visitors had to go through the one-point entry was introduced to our support team, and from my understanding, they are working on the plans to be completed. As far as the payment for these projects, they should come before any other projects. I am not convinced this is the total answer to these concerns, but it is the beginning of safety as we continue to work through these issues. SRO officers should be available at the one-point entry and ensure all visitors are cleared.

Mental health counseling should be available for students/parents without fear of labeling. Issues in the home are obvious during the school age years of children. Offering support through student concerns would introduce mental health supports to homes that cannot afford it or otherwise would not seek this type of assistance.