**Candidate Questionnaire for**

**Stillwater Gazette**

**(Please limit answers to 150 words per question)**

Name: Jessica L Johnson

Age:

Family:

Occupation: Real Estate Consultant / Sales

Education: Associate in Science of Law Enforcement, POST Qualified 2002

Associate in Applied Arts with focus on Social Studies

60+ Credits in Business Management education

1. What past experience makes you qualified for this position?

By experience, I have learned that: 1) through elections we are a self-governing people; 2) electing our neighbors, and sometimes running for office ourselves, ensures that all of us are represented; and 3) parents and voters must not surrender our responsibilities to elitist “experts” or insiders.

Effective School Board members require independence from those they are overseeing, as well as experience in management and negotiations, construction finance and auditing, contract writing and practical application of state statutes and rules. I’ve decades of this experience applied in the real world. I have no conflicts with my oversight responsibilities.

Community engagement is essential, and mine has given me deep roots here. I have coached youth basketball, participated in the Greater Stillwater Chamber’s Leadership in the Valley program, volunteered with many non-profits, and engaged with both private and public educational systems.

1. What is your No. 1 goal as a board member?

Academic success for every student beginning with reading at grade-level. This will support math, science and historical literacy equipping all of our students to pursue meaningful lives through the trades, college or other paths of their choosing. Abandoning 4 in 10 of Stillwater students to below grade level reading is a failure. We must turn this around. Instead of excusing over a decade of failed reading competency in our schools, our new School Board must instill a vision and goals for change. I look forward to helping provide the leadership, goals and strategic plan to help our superintendent, principals, teachers and students succeed. Our children are counting on us. Together, we can do better.

1. Is there a specific issue that caused you to seek office?

Yes, over a decade of academic decline and almost no discussion of it by the current Board or those they oversee. This is the essential issue that must be addressed. Continuing to ignore and excuse such on-going failure would only ensure more of the same. Change is needed.

1. How involved should the board be with curriculum development?

Ensuring accountability for results is an essential aspect of the Board’s role with curriculum. With guidance from the community, the School Board must set clear guidelines and goals for curriculum development. After its use, the Board must have the means to assess what was effective and what was not. When things work, the Board should encourage doing more of those things. When they don’t, the Board must pause and consider what should be done differently and give guidance.

To ensure public confidence and support of what is used in our classrooms, the Board can ensure there is transparency in the curriculum development process. Recognizing increasing imposition of curriculum by the state and federal government, our elected School Board members retain important responsibility and authority. When the School Board delegates oversight responsibilities specified in state statues and rules to the school bureaucracy it shirks its supervisory role. When such delegation precludes public input and explanation it undermines public confidence.

Clear goals, clear guidelines, clear methods of measurement, clear oversight and transparency from the Board will help ensure an effective curriculum, public confidence in it, and timely adjustments in cooperation with teachers and the education community.

1. Are there classes being taught that concern you? Why?

No. I am concerned about the academic success for every student beginning with reading at grade-level and math, science, and historical literacy to equip them to pursue meaningful lives through the trades, college or other paths of their choosing.