

Elizabeth (Betsy) Lawrence - School Board Candidate Speech

Hello, my name is Betsy Lawrence. I grew up outside of Buffalo, New York and moved to Maine in 2009 to start my residency in emergency medicine at Maine Medical Center. In 2012 my husband, Caleb and I move to St. George. Our daughters, Emily and Helen attend the St. George School, and both have had overwhelmingly positive experiences the last eight years.

My interest in running for school board stems from my volunteering in classrooms and both of my children attending the school. Some of the standout moments include volunteering in Ms. Albright's kindergarten classroom, chaperoning the 5th grade overnight at Tanglewood, helping to run yearly field-day celebrations, and coaching Girls on the Run, which focuses on building confidence as well as mental & physical endurance.

Over the past two years, I have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to be a Dragon Heart volunteer. Two to three times a week I read with first and second graders. The amount of growth and joy these students experience as they learn to read is priceless.

I love so many things about the St. George School – I love that there are small crews or homerooms; I love that there are House Crews, like Harry Potter, which are a blend of pre-K to 8th grade students competing in monthly events. I love the reading and innovative wellness challenges. I love the Math Carnival night - who knew math could be so fun?! **But most of all**, I love the teachers, administration, and support staff at the St. George School. The teachers know their students' strengths and support their individual learning styles. The teachers frequently integrate educational field trips, cultural activities, and unique hands-on learning opportunities at the GRACE Innovation Center and Herring Gut into their curriculum. My goal is to sustain these programs while being fiscally responsible. I look forward to partnering with non-profit organizations, such as the St. George CDC, as well as seeking grants to grow these programs without burdening taxpayers.

In my professional life, I have been working as an Emergency Medicine Attending at PenBay Medical Center since 2012. I have served as Department Chair and head of Peer Review Committee. Additionally, I mentor 3rd year medical students in the Tufts Medical School Maine Track. These experiences have strengthened my leadership and communication skills.

The St. George School has been a highly positive, welcoming, and friendly community, where perseverance and collaboration are recognized. I love cheering for students as they win awards and are celebrated for demonstrating these St. George values at the monthly community meetings. If elected to serve on the school board, I hope to continue to foster this environment of kindness, positivity,