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Four vying for three seats on Hoopeston Area school board

Editor's note: This is the second in a series on candidates in the April 1 election. The series covers Hoopeston and Rossville city and school candidates.

Three incumbents and one newcomer are running for three seats on the Hoopeston Area School Board.

Incumbents Mike Pemberton and Steve Unger are being challenged by Mark Wagoner. Mark Eighner, representing the area outside the former Hoopeston School District, is running unopposed.

Unger, 52, has served on the board for eight years. He is a farmer, rural mail carrier and co-owner Unger's Jewelry. He has a BS degree from Central Missouri State University.



UNGER

The major issue facing the district is finances, Unger said. "To provide for the education of this community's youth, we must develop a plan which may include cutting programs, higher taxes, joining neighboring school districts or a combination of all of these."

Hoopeston Area is already cutting staff



where possible, joining Rossville in some sports and busing students between Hoopeston and Rossville as savings measures, and investigating a tax referendum, he said.

"The most effective way to raise income is to increase the number of students in the district and we believe we need to join other school districts to secure our future."

"I believe this will be a difficult and challenging next four years and I hope to bring experience, open thinking and the ability to make the best decisions for education and the taxpayers."

Pemberton, 41, is seeking his second term on the school board. A graduate of Illinois State University, he is self-employed as the Hoopeston State Farm agent.

Assets Pemberton said he brings to his position include four years' experience, during which he has chaired the finance committee, been a member of two contract negotiations teams and has served as board secretary. Other assets include management experience with 16 years associated with State Farm and community service, which includes serving as president of the Multi Agency board, as well as being a member of the United Fund board and Holy Name Men's Society of St. Anthony Catholic Church.

Pemberton said issues facing the district include funding and the need for unification between Hoopeston Area and Rossville-Alvin.

"Due to the huge budget deficit Illinois faces, school districts need to plan on receiving no additional state dollars above current levels and, quite possibly, a cut in

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