

Hoopeston Education Association
Board Candidate Forum
7 p.m. March 20
The Lorraine Theatre
 Come hear Hoopeston Area CUSD #110
 Board of Education candidates respond to questions
 from the community, students and teachers.
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 Dylan Swank at dyroswank@gmail.com

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Business owners are final candidates for school board seats

Editor's note: This is the third in a series of articles profiling candidates for Hoopeston Area School Board and Hoopeston City Council in the April 2 election. Voters will choose two people from four candidates seeking seats inside Grant Township 23N Range 12W, the congressional township in which the district was established. Today, the final candidates, Dave McFadden and Lee Cox, are profiled.

The final two candidates for Hoopeston Area School Board are both business owners, but their takes on how they would lead the district are quite different.

Dave McFadden, 56, and Lee Cox, 36, are two of four people running for two openings for the "in" portion of the board.

Asked why he is running, McFadden answered that he cares deeply about the community, the school district and the people in it. "Through my time in the military and as a business owner, I have learned many things," he said. "Not the least of which is that a successful organization is built around empowered people working towards a shared vision. I am passionate about this and am eager to use these skills in service to our district."

In response to the same question, Cox said, "I feel we need a change in the status quo in our district and I believe I have the necessary skills to foster positive change throughout the district."

Cox listed the skills he will bring to the board as "youth, fiscal responsibility and a mixture of traditional values and new ideas," along with his personal business experience.

Also, as a prior high school and college student athlete, I understand the values of the hard work required for

personal success, as well as the success of our extracurricular programs."

McFadden said skills he will bring include strong financial management and leadership skills focusing on helping achieve personal growth and development. Also, effective communication in all directions of an organization, "including a shared mission and vision, performance

feedback, expectations, and appreciation for daily contributions at all levels."

McFadden said two issues he would prioritize if elected are how to better reach and educate children in low-income families and teacher retention.

"Low income" is defined as students in families receiving public aid, who are living in substitute care or who are eligible to receive free or reduced price for school lunches.

At Hoopeston Area, 66 percent of students are considered low income, compared to 49 percent statewide. "I consider the effect of this on educating our students to be the greatest issue faced by our district because dropout rates, absenteeism, developmental delays and learning disabilities are all higher in this group than those of kids from families with higher income," McFadden said. He would seek a strategic plan to find other schools where high percentages of low-income students are achieving positive outcomes. "Helping to provide our staff with effective tools to address this issue would be a priority for me," he added.

As for teacher retention, McFadden said there has been a "significant" drop in the district's three-year average percentage of teachers returning. From 2014-17 school

See CANDIDATES on other side



COX



McFADDEN

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- ✓ **Student Mentor**
Hoopeston Area Schools
- ✓ **Father of 4 Cornjerker Alumni**



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Dave McFadden

School Board

Paid political ad

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 3:13 p.m. Wednesday at Fourth St. and Lincoln. Police said Thesha Shackelford, 51, of Hoopeston, in a 2006 Toyota utility vehicle, was beginning to drive southbound. Meanwhile, Chelsea Rutledge, 27, also of Hoopeston, in a 2016 Chevrolet utility vehicle, turned southbound and the two collided.

Amelia Young, 23, of Hoopeston, was arrested after police and firemen were called at 8:22 p.m. to the 400 block of South Third St. for a possible structure fire. Young was cited for illegal burn for burning inside her garage.

She was released on the scene with a notice to appear in Hoopeston City Court.

Candidates continued from other side

years, HA was in line with or greater than the state average but fell in 2018 to 70 percent, compared to 85 percent for the state. Finding why the rate dropped and overall satisfaction of teachers, is another of his priorities. "As a business owner, I understand well that having people who are happy in their workplace, feel valued and find fulfillment in their work are the key to low turnover."

For Cox, issues are basic: leadership and finances.

Saying Hoopeston Area has "some excellent administrators," he believes some areas need to be reevaluated. "I would be a proactive voice in hiring the right personnel that reflect our rural small town and community values," he said. "Also, we need to have administration who stand by our teachers when it comes to discipline in the classroom and their educational needs and concerns."

Cox said he believes "our tax dollars as a district have been misused in the past. As a fiscally responsible business and property owner who built my business from the ground up, I will be a watchdog for the taxpayer and property owners of the school district."

Cox, owner of Cox Memorials, is a 2000 graduate of HAHS and received a bachelor's degree from Purdue University in airline management/with a commercial pilot's license. He and his wife, Katrina, have three children: Brylie, 12, Gemma, seven, and Ronan, two.

McFadden, owner of Anthem Chevrolet Buick, is a graduate of Georgetown High School. He and his wife, Stacy, have four grown daughters - Randi, Casey, Jordan and Devin - all HAHS alumnae. This is his second campaign for the board. Appointed in 2015, he ran in 2017 but was defeated.

From the Blotter

Lonnie Davis, 44, of Hoopeston, was arrested after police received a report at 9:59 p.m. Wednesday of someone spinning tires at Budget Mini Storage, 710 W. Orange. An investigation allegedly resulted in cannabis, drug paraphernalia and open alcohol found.

Davis was charged with illegal transportation of alcohol and received a notice to appear in Vermilion County traffic court. He was also issued notices to appear for possession of cannabis and possession of drug paraphernalia.

A **15-year-old** Hoopeston girl was arrested after police were called at 12:04 p.m. Thursday to Hoopeston Area Middle School, 615 E. Orange. The girl was charged with battery on a complaint from a 51-year-old Hoopeston woman. She was taken to the police station, then released to her mother.

Sawyer Neal, 25, of Hoopeston, was arrested after he was stopped for a traffic violation at 8:39 p.m. Thursday in the 300 block of North Third St. He was charged with driving while license suspended and was

Lunch Menus

Hoopeston Area grade schools

MONDAY: Chicken strips, broccoli/cheese, cucumber slices, applesauce milk

TUESDAY: Cheese quesadilla, refried beans, chips & salsa, salad, peaches, milk

WEDNESDAY: Pancake & sausage nuggets, hash browns, celery sticks, mandarin orange, milk

THURSDAY: BBQ/bun, fries, Dragon Juice, pineapple, milk

FRIDAY: No school until April 1

Hoopeston Area Middle School

MONDAY: Chicken wrap, corn, salad bar, applesauce, milk

TUESDAY-THURSDAY: Cook's choice

FRIDAY: No school until April 1

Hoopeston Area High School

MONDAY: Chicken wrap or ham & cheese, corn, salad bar, applesauce, milk, juice

TUESDAY-THURSDAY: Cook's choice

FRIDAY: No school until April 1

Weather

Mostly sunny today. High 45. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 26. Tomorrow, mostly sunny, chance of showers late. High 50, low 35.

released on a notice to appear in Vermilion County traffic court.

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