

# GRANDVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD

## BOARD VACANCY



Hello,

I'm pleased to apply for the vacant position available on the Grandville Public School Board. Having recently ran for election in 2024, I have spent the greater part of the last year sharing with the community why I am interested in serving Grandville Public Schools. My story begins as a Grandville student myself, having attended Grandville for my K-12 education, graduating in 2001. Grandville Public Schools gave me a wonderful foundation which has served me well in my adult life. Which brings me to the heart of my desire to serve - my own children, aged 6 and 4, are embarking on their own journeys as Grandville Bulldogs. I want my kids, and ALL of the kids in Grandville Public, to have an amazing public school experience - like myself and many others have experienced throughout the years.

My priorities as a Grandville School Board member would focus on maintaining the high level of academic excellence that Grandville is known for and continuing to focus on safety and support for all students, teachers, and administration. I believe my education, career history, and being a current business owner would allow me to make significant contributions to Grandville Public Schools. I also believe I represent an important and crucial part of the Grandville Schools community - Moms with younger children in our district who are facing a fast-paced and ever changing world. My appointment to the Board would bring a unique perspective of our district - bridging the past, present, and future.

Enclosed you will find my resume, which further details my skills, experience, and qualifications. Thank you for the consideration!

Sincerely,

Mary Gunther

616-644-4569

mary@thesocialgo.com

5825 Powderhorn Ct SW  
Wyoming, MI 49419



# MARY GUNTHER

Seasoned professional with experience in organizational development and utilizing change management techniques to move companies and people forward. Passionate about building relationships and creating the best systems to meet organizational goals and aspirations.

## CONTACT

- ✉ [mary@thesocialgco.com](mailto:mary@thesocialgco.com)
- ☎ 616-644-4569
- 📍 5825 Powderhorn Ct. SW
- 🌐 [www.thesocialgco.com](http://www.thesocialgco.com)

## SKILLS

- Leadership/Management
- Human Resources
- Business and People Development
- Marketing Strategy
- Board Administration

## EDUCATION

**M.A. in Organizational Learning and Performance**

Western Michigan University, 2011

**B.A. in English Language and Literature**

Grand Valley State University, 2005

## COMMUNITY

- Grand View PTC Board, Secretary and Fundraising Lead
- Bayberry Farms Board Member, Secretary/Treasurer

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

### Founder & CEO

The Social G Co. | Jan 2021 - present

- Social Media Marketing agency serving small-mid sized businesses in West Michigan and beyond.
- Develop tailored social media marketing strategies resulting in an elevated and recognizable online presence for businesses, with the goal of driving sales and growth.

### Director of Human Resources

Grand Rapids Downtown Market

Aug 2015 - May 2019

- Managed all aspects of Human Resources including strategic planning, benefits administration, performance evaluations, employee coaching and counseling, training, recruiting, design and implementation of team building activities, awards and recognition programs, and professional development opportunities for all team members.

### Human Resources and Office Manager

Downtown Grand Rapids Inc.

Sep 2012 - July 2015

- From the ground-up, created and managed all Human Resources and Office Operations for newly formed entity, Downtown Grand Rapids Inc., formerly the Grand Rapids Downtown Development Authority. Worked closely with the DDA Board, Committees, Downtown Businesses and community members.

**Nicole Cushman**

4705 Rushfield Dr SW

Grandville, MI 49418

NicoleCushman2@gmail.com

616.648.4700

2.11.25

Grandville School Board

Grandville, MI

**Subject: Recommendation for Mary Gunther – Grandville School Board Election**

Dear Members of the Grandville School Board and Community,

I am honored to write this letter in strong support of Mary Gunther for the Grandville School Board. As a dedicated mother of two children currently attending Grandville schools, a successful small business owner, and a proud Grandville alumna, Mary Gunther embodies the values, commitment, and leadership necessary to serve our schools and community with excellence.

Her deep-rooted connection to Grandville gives her a unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities within our district. As both a parent and a business owner, she understands the importance of strong educational foundations, fiscal responsibility, and policies that promote academic success while respecting parental rights. Her conservative values guide her unwavering advocacy for students and parents, ensuring that Grandville schools remain a place where every child receives a high-quality education in a safe and supportive environment.

Mary Gunther is a tireless advocate for transparency, accountability, and community engagement. She is passionate about fostering an educational system that prioritizes academic excellence, upholds strong moral and ethical values, and equips students with the skills necessary for a successful future. Her leadership, integrity, and firsthand experience navigating our school system as both a parent and an alumna make her an invaluable asset to the board.

As a woman dedicated to empowering and supporting our children, Mary Gunther will bring a fresh perspective to the board—one that reflects the voices of parents, teachers, and students. Her ability to listen, collaborate, and take decisive action will make a meaningful difference in shaping the future of Grandville schools.

I wholeheartedly endorse Mary Gunther for the Grandville School Board and encourage our community to vote for a leader who truly has the best interests of our children at heart. Her passion, experience, and unwavering commitment make her the right choice to help guide our schools toward continued success.

Sincerely,

Nicole Cushman

To Whom It May Concern:

I've been following the news that our school board has an unplanned vacancy. It would make sense to review the next in line based on the community votes from the last election. That said, I very much support and strongly encourage our board to honor those votes by filling that position with Mary Gunther. If we truly have a board that is all about putting our kids first, then Mary is the most qualified person. Not only does her educational background shine and would be an amazing addition to our board, but her passion for knowledge, experience in management and leadership, also make her a huge asset. It's not everyday that we find a person with such a variety of skills that are willing to contribute their time. It's so important to be able to have this position filled with someone that can bring to the table, the ability to communicate effectively with both their team and our community. We all know, this is often a thankless and trying position but ever so important. We applaud all who give of their time in this manner!

As parents with 4 young adults that participated in Grandville Schools, I can confidently say we would be honored to have Mary Gunther part of the Grandville Schools Board!

Sincerely

Kim Boer  
Jacob St.  
Grandville

February 11, 2025

To: Grandville Public School Board Members

Subject: Open Board Seat

Dear Board members-

This letter is in regard to the open board seat that has been created with Barb Palmer stepping down. I'd like to formally thank Barb for all her years of service to the community.

I understand this next step in filling a board seat comes with many challenges. Finding the right fit for Grandville is a big decision. Let us call upon the Grandville motto of "improving lives by producing successful, lifelong learners".

I'd like to show my support for Mary Gunther.

Mary is a Grandville girl, through and through. She has deep roots here and no plans to leave. Having a young family gives her a great perspective on what she sees for future learners. Of course being a business owner and having a degree in organizational development, only adds to her appeal. I can imagine she may have some fresh ideas on improving the lives of our students.

I myself came to live in Grandville as a young child. My parents were Grandville business owners, I graduated from Grandville, I'm a Grandville School employee and my boys are Grandville grads. I believe Mary would keep the spirit of Grandville with her common sense and would make an excellent addition to the board.

Best wishes in your decision. Grandville is counting on you!

Sincerely,  
Amy (Girschle) Davis  
Resident of 50 years

Rob Cepeda  
Grandville, MI 49418  
616-821-2011  
2/11/2025

Grandville Public School Board of Education

To Whom this may Concern,

I am writing to wholeheartedly recommend Mary Gunther for a position on the Grandville Public School Board of Education. Having known Mary for several years, both through community involvement and professional interactions, I can attest to her outstanding character, leadership, and dedication to education.

Mary Gunther is a proud alumna of Grandville Public Schools, and her deep-rooted connection to our community is evident in her commitment to its future. As a mother of two, she understands the pivotal role education plays in the lives of our children. Her firsthand experience with the school system has shaped her student first approach, ensuring that educational policies and decisions prioritize the needs and welfare of students.

Beyond her role as a parent, Mary is a successful Small business owner, demonstrating her capability in leadership, management, and strategic thinking. These skills are essential for navigating the complex responsibilities of a school board member, especially in making decisions that affect curriculum, budget, and community relations.

Mary holds values that strongly support children and women, advocating for environments where all students can thrive and where women are empowered as leaders and role models. Her moral compass is impeccable; she is known for her integrity, transparency, and fairness in all her dealings. These qualities would undoubtedly make her an asset to the board, fostering a culture of trust and respect among board members, educators, parents, and students.

Her vision for education in Grandville includes:

**Student-Centric Policies:** Mary advocates for educational strategies that place the student at the center, focusing on their holistic development rather than just academic achievements.

**Community Engagement:** She believes in strengthening the bond between schools and the community, ensuring that parents and local stakeholders have a voice in educational matters.

**Support for Teachers:** Understanding that quality education begins with quality educators, Mary supports initiatives that empower and resource our teachers effectively.

Mary Gunther's dedication to education, combined with her practical experience and community involvement, makes her an exemplary candidate for the Grandville Public School Board of Education. I am confident that her contributions will lead to significant positive impacts for our students and the broader community.

Please feel free to contact me if you require any further information or insight regarding Mary's qualifications and character. I am eager to see her join the board and contribute to the continued success and excellence of Grandville Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Rob Cepeda

**RUTH RONDON**

2650 56<sup>th</sup> St. SW  
Wyoming, MI 49418  
616-813-6733

February 11, 2025

Grandville Public Schools Administration  
3539 Prairie St. SW  
Grandville, MI 49418

Dear Members of the Grandville Community,

I am writing to enthusiastically endorse Mary Gunther as a candidate for the Grandville Public School Board.

As a lifelong Bulldog, Mary has a deep-rooted connection to our community and an unwavering passion for serving Grandville Public Schools. Mary's dedication to our schools goes beyond her personal experience as a parent of students currently attending Grandville Public Schools. With a history deeply intertwined with Grandville, Mary brings a unique perspective to the table that reflects both the evolution of our district and its future potential. She understands the needs of the community, as well as the importance of ensuring that our schools remain a place where students can thrive.

Having been supported by the community and educators throughout her own upbringing, Mary is now driven to give back in a meaningful way. Her desire to serve on the school board is rooted in a genuine commitment to ensuring that every student in our district has access to the highest quality education, and she is ready to work collaboratively with parents, teachers, and fellow board members to address the challenges and opportunities facing our schools today.

Mary is someone who is not only approachable but also open to engaging in conversations across the aisle. She understands the importance of communication and compromise when it comes to addressing the issues and concerns that affect our students, teachers, and the broader community.

I wholeheartedly support Mary Gunther for the Grandville Public School Board and believe that her experience, passion, and dedication will be invaluable in shaping the future of our schools.

Sincerely,



Ruth Rondon



February 12, 2025

Hello,

I think Mary would be a fantastic addition to the board. She is obviously invested in the community, as she ran for a position in the fall spending countless hours and I'm sure plenty of her own money to do so. It also says something for her character that she still wants to serve alongside those she ran against. She is a Grandville native, she has two small children, and she is a business owner. She is clearly invested in the community now and well into the future. When you are a business owner, you are dealing with all sorts of folks of different backgrounds and world views, so she has some diplomacy as well. She has been a bulldog since she was a little girl, and I know she will be a bulldog looking for our children in the district.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,  
Brenda Bargaquast  
mother of four Grandville alumni

February 12, 2025

Dear Grandville Public School Board of Education Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for Mary Gunther to be appointed as the next member of the Grandville Public School Board of Education. Her qualifications, experience, and community support make her the ideal choice to help guide the future of our schools.

First, Mary would bring a fresh, young perspective to the board. As the only member with elementary-age children currently in the district, she offers a valuable and much-needed voice for families with younger students. Her firsthand experience navigating the current elementary school system allows her to bring unique insights to the decisions that impact our youngest learners.

Second, Mary possesses exceptional organizational and structural planning skills. Her ability to analyze complex issues, develop strategic solutions, and bring efficiency to decision-making would be a tremendous asset to the board. As school boards make critical choices about curriculum, budgeting, and policy, having someone with her level of organization and strategic thinking would strengthen the board's overall effectiveness.

Lastly, Mary had the next highest amount of public support in the most recent election. While she was not elected at that time, the overwhelming number of votes she received demonstrates the trust and confidence our community already has in her leadership. Appointing her to the board would be a direct reflection of the will of the voters, ensuring that their voices are heard and represented.

Mary Gunther is the right choice for this position. Her perspective as a parent of elementary-age students, her outstanding organizational skills, and the strong public support she has already earned make her the most qualified candidate to serve our district. I respectfully urge the board to select her for this important role.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Julie Doll

February 11, 2025

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jennifer Hans I live in Grandville, my 2 kids graduated from Grandville and I have a granddaughter that goes to Grandville.

I want to recommend Mary Gunther to be on the School board. Mary is a mom of two, a small business owner, Grandville alumni, She is the leader of her kid's school PTC at Grandview. I believe she is hard-working and honest and genuinely cares about all kids. I believe she will do a great job!

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hans

Kathy Hart Fouch & Eric Fouch  
4455 41 st St SW  
Grandville, MI 49418

February 11, 2025

Grandville School Board:

We hope this letter finds everyone well. We are writing today to lend our full support for a vote for Mary Gunther for Grandville School Board. Mary is a small business owner, parent of two, and a Grandville alumni. We voted for Mary in the fall and we still stand by that decision.

Thank you for her consideration.  
Your neighbors,  
Kathy & Eric

February 11, 2025

Dear GPS School Board

I understand there is an opening on the Grandville School Board. I would like to recommend placing Mary Gunther back on the board. She is a good advocate for our kids.

Sue Richards

February 11, 2025

Dear Grandville School Board and Community,

I am writing to give endorsement for Mary Gunther to be elected to the school board. She is a great leader and will bring unity and fresh ideas to the schools. She is a mother of two, hardworking and dedicated community member and I feel would serve our kids, staff and community very well.

Sincerely,

Dena Talmage

February 9, 2025

To whom it may concern:

I'm writing this to express my support for Mary Gunther. We are long overdue to have a good person like Mary on the board. She shares a lot of values most here in Grandville have. I feel like with the way this country voted this past election should send a message that we are tired of the nonsense and want things back to where we have a more family oriented school board!! We want Mary. Thank you Roger Whisman.

February 9, 2025

Dear Grandville School Board Members,

I voted for Mary Gunther in November and was very disappointed when she didn't get the position on the GPS board. Mary is a devoted community member who would compliment the board well with her experience with people and parents in the district. She knows what kids need in Grandville schools because her kids go to GPS! She is a voice for them at their school being on the PTC and valued by many staff and parents at Grandview! Please strongly consider voting for Mary Gunther to be on the school board for Grandville Public Schools! She is the parents choice!!

Thank you,  
Mary Polavin

February 8, 2025

Dear GPS School Board, I'd like to start by saying thank you for your service to the community, our students, and your dedication to education in the Grandville community. I'm writing to urge you to appoint Mary Gunther to the recently vacated school board seat. Like you, I believe Mary shares your passion for education in this community. Mary campaigned hard during the election and while she didn't win (congrats to those that did) she did display a strong desire to serve on the board. Mary did receive strong support even in defeat. I believe Mary would serve her community well and should be the primary candidate for the open seat. Thanks again for your dedication to our community and our children!

Kind regards,

Dan Wagner