

Respondent Name
Gwendy Gabelein
Complainant Name
Joseph Greenheron
Complaint Description
Joe Greenheron reported via the portal (Sun, 26 Oct 2025 at 5:29 PM) I received a mass-mailing postcard which fails to include the required sponsor ID and address listed as required by the state code: RCW 42.17A.320 & WAC 390-18-010. Pictures of the front and back of the postcard are attached. The postcard has a QR code and URL for a website (QR code and URL are for the same address): https://gwendy4swsd.com/. This site itself also does not include the required sponsor ID and address on its homepage or any of the other pages of the website (as today, 26 Oct 2025).
What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?
One of the primary purposes of the public disclosure law is to provide citizens of this state, and especially voters, with the means for becoming informed about the financing of political campaigns. The public disclosure law was enacted through voter approval of Initiative 276 in 1972 to ensure campaign transparency. The impact of these multiple violations is that voters are prevented from learning who provides the financial support to pay for multiple channels of communication from this candidate.
List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found
Photos of the front and back of the postcard mailed to me which is missing a "paid for" statement. Screenshots of the website (this file got too big for the PDC system, so it does not show every page of the website). All were taken on 26 Oct 2025.
List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them
Certification (Complainant)
I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Gwendy Gabelein

Excellence in Education

"For balanced voice, Gwendy's your choice!"**Dear South Whidbey Community,**

My name is Gwendy Gabelein, and I am excited to announce my candidacy for the South Whidbey School Board. As a lifelong islander and a graduate of South Whidbey High School, my deep-rooted connection to this community, combined with a passion for education and service, has shaped my commitment to our schools.

I was moved to run after hearing from numerous parents and staff who feel unheard by the current school board regarding their children's needs. I believe I am uniquely qualified to be a strong advocate for parents, ensuring their voices—and the needs of our students—are prioritized in all decision-making.

About Me

A Dedicated Mother and Student Advocate

I am a proud mother of two boys—one a graduate of our district and the other beginning high school next year. I have navigated various educational paths, including public and private schools, as well as homeschooling. As the parent of a special needs child, I have continuously fought for my son's educational rights and worked to ensure that all students receive the support and services that they deserve and are legally entitled to.

A Leader in Community Service

Giving back has always been an integral part of my life. My parents instilled within my siblings and I the importance of community involvement. Over the years, I have served on the Fairgrounds Advisory Committee, Island County Fair Association board, South Whidbey Wellness Coalition (since 2019), and the Autism Partnership of Island County (APIC, since 2019). My volunteer work spans HOPE Therapeutic Riding, 4H, youth ministries, and other local community organizations. I currently work as a substance use clinician—where I advocate for both youth and adults.

Education and Experience

I hold a bachelor's degree in health and human services, earned while balancing family life, my career, and community service. My professional background includes experience as a private school teacher and a district para substitute for our district. I come from a family legacy of educators—my mother taught in our district for over 30 years, and my brother currently teaches in Coupeville.

Engaged and Informed

For years, I have remained actively involved in school district meetings and workshops to stay informed about the challenges and opportunities facing our students. Previously, as a member of the para education committee, I've seen firsthand the positive impact that engaged community members can have on our students. It is one of my goals to bring back the para education committee to our district and create more committees to give a voice to the staff and students alike.

My Vision

As a school board member, I will bring a balanced, non-partisan voice to the board and prioritize listening to parents, staff, and students. My goal is to foster transparent and inclusive decision-making, ensuring that politics do not overshadow what matters most—education. As educators, our task is to teach students how to think, not what to think. Every child, regardless of background or ability, deserves access to a high-quality education that equips them for a bright future, whatever path they choose.

Working together, we can improve our district, advocate for necessary resources, and create an environment where students and staff can thrive. I invite you to be part of this journey. Let's come together at town hall meetings and community forums to shape the future of our school district. I believe our district has the potential to be outstanding—one that attracts families to our community seeking a high-quality education.

Please continue to share your thoughts, ideas, and concerns. Together, with your vote and support, we can drive change for our district.

With gratitude and determination,

Gwendy Gabelein

Candidate for South Whidbey School Board Position 5

Let's Clear the Air on Where Gwendy Stands on the Issues





Throughout the campaign, I have remained focused on the real issues facing our students, families, and staff in our district. Unfortunately, my opponent has chosen to misrepresent my views, so I feel compelled to set the record straight. As I always say, it's best to get information directly from the source.

Many people have reached out to me with questions about my positions, and I truly value those conversations. Below, I share my actual views on the topics my opponent tried to speak for me. As most of you know, I am a vocal advocate for open dialogue on matters that affect our district and community.

This situation highlights why it is so important to have a board that welcomes and encourages diverse perspectives. When we bring together different viewpoints, we make better decisions that reflect the needs and values of our entire community. A well-balanced board ensures that every voice is heard, and that our schools serve all students and families.

I invite you to join me in fostering honest conversations and advocating for thoughtful, inclusive leadership. Let's work together to build a school district where diversity of thought is not only respected, but celebrated—because that's how we create the strongest foundation for our students' success.

South Whidbey School Bond

On her website, my opponent says: ~~Gwendy opposed the bond, while offering no other solution to the pressing need for capital funding for repairs and upgrades.~~

I firmly believe our community deserves better than simply accepting costly solutions without exploring alternatives. While the school bond eventually passed, it's crucial to remember it failed multiple times—largely because the district neglected regular maintenance and failed to provide adequate oversight. Years of understaffed maintenance led to the deterioration of our school buildings, and this avoidable neglect forced taxpayers to shoulder an unnecessarily high financial burden.

I voted against the bond not because I oppose improvements, but because the amount was excessive and there was a clear lack of accountability in how maintenance was managed. We must demand transparency and fiscal responsibility from our district leaders. The improvements funded by this bond are unlikely to last as long as the payments, which is simply not a sustainable or responsible approach.

There are better ways forward. For example, Oak Harbor School District secured financial support through collaboration with State Senator Ron Muzzall in 2023. Our district could have pursued similar partnerships with local and state representatives, seeking creative funding solutions rather than relying solely on taxpayers. By working together, we can ensure our schools are safe and well-maintained—without sacrificing fiscal responsibility or transparency.

Let's insist on smarter solutions and real accountability, so our investments truly benefit students and our community for years to come.

Federal censorship of our curriculum

On her website, my opponent says: ~~Gwendy has spoken at school board meetings urging compliance with the Administration's overreach and rollbacks of multicultural education.~~

I am genuinely perplexed by these statements, as they do not reflect my actions or beliefs. I have never spoken at board meetings about multicultural education, nor do I support book bans in our schools. My perspective is shaped by my upbringing—my mother was a librarian, and she instilled in me a deep appreciation for the freedom to explore diverse ideas through books.

Restricting reading materials in school libraries through federal mandates is not only unnecessary, but it undermines the very foundation of education and intellectual growth. Decisions about curriculum and library selections should be made locally, by those who understand our community's needs—not dictated by distant federal authorities.

At the same time, I strongly believe parents should have a voice in what literature is available to students. By fostering open dialogue and collaboration between families and educators, we can ensure our libraries and curriculum reflect our shared values while protecting the freedom to learn.

Let's stand together for transparency, local control, and the right of every student to access a rich and diverse education—free from unnecessary restrictions and overreach.

South Whidbey Superintendent Search

On her website, my opponent says: ~~Gwendy criticized it in school board meetings and did not collaborate in any meaningful way.~~

The SWSD superintendent search was deeply disappointing in its lack of true inclusivity. While my opponent is correct that parents, community leaders, students, and staff were invited to participate, the process ultimately failed to honor their voices. Despite the majority of feedback favoring one candidate, the board chose another, leaving those who invested their time and energy feeling unheard and dismissed.

Community members even filed public records requests, which revealed a troubling absence of collaboration in the final decision. The situation became so concerning that the district union had to intervene just to obtain answers from the board about their choice.

This experience underscores a critical need for transparency, open communication, and genuine trust in our leadership. Our community deserves a process where every voice is valued and decisions are made with integrity. **It is time for the board to be held accountable for their actions and decisions. We must demand that our leaders listen to the community, act transparently, and earn our trust through responsible and inclusive governance.**

We owe it to our students, families, and staff to insist on better—so that every decision truly reflects the will and best interests of our community.

Student Privacy and WA HB 1296

On her website, my opponent says: ~~Gwendy has publicly opposed HB 1296.~~

There are aspects of HB 1296 that I both support and question. To be clear, I do not recall the board or myself ever discussing this bill in a board meeting or workshop, so I am genuinely perplexed by my opponent's accusation.

Importantly, HB 1296 does **not** explicitly mention "pronouns" or "nicknames." Instead, the bill expands protections for students, including the right to express their gender identity and gender expression—provisions I fully support. The legislation is designed to promote a safe and supportive public education system, free from discrimination, and specifically includes gender identity and gender expression among protected characteristics.

I believe it is essential to protect all students' rights and ensure our schools remain welcoming and inclusive environments. At the same time, transparency and open communication with families must remain a priority. My position is rooted in supporting student protections while also respecting the role of parents and the local community in shaping our schools.

High School Pride and BLM Banners

On her website, my opponent says: ~~Gwendy urged the new Superintendent, Dr. Becky Clifford, not to replace the stolen banners, calling them "divisive."~~

Let's seize this opportunity to build true unity and inclusiveness in our schools. When the banners were stolen, I urged the new superintendent not to simply replace them, because they were divisive and didn't represent our entire student body. My goal has always been to ensure that every student feels seen, valued, and supported—not just a select group.

Instead, I proposed more inclusive alternatives, inspired by successful approaches in other districts. When we choose unity, we send a powerful message: every student matters, and every voice counts.

Supporting all populations fosters a sense of belonging, encourages mutual respect, and strengthens our school community as a whole.

I believe that raising concerns should always come with offering solutions. That's why I encouraged open conversations with our community, students, and staff. Now, I invite everyone—families, educators, and leaders—to join in these discussions. Together, we can create an environment where differences are respected, and every student feels they belong.

Unity isn't just an ideal—it's the foundation for a thriving, supportive, and successful school. Let's work together to make sure every student benefits from a culture of inclusion and respect.

Comprehensive Sexual Health Education (CSHE)

On her website, my opponent says: ~~Gwendy has spoken up against comprehensive health education at board meetings and in community forums:~~

This accusation actually made me laugh, given my background in community health. I regularly discuss STD prevention with clients of all ages, so I understand firsthand the importance of accurate, age-appropriate health education. When the district began discussing comprehensive sexual health education, they invited parents and caregivers to be part of the conversation. I attended the meeting, asked questions about the curriculum and its delivery, and was pleased to see the district actively seeking family input. Interestingly, I did not see my opponent at this meeting.

As both a parent and a professional, I was thrilled that our district was valuing the voices of families in shaping our children's education. But this process only works if we all show up and participate. I urge every parent and caregiver to get involved in these conversations. When we engage, we help ensure our children's education is age-appropriate and reflects the values of our community.

Let's continue to show up, ask questions, and work together. Our involvement is essential to building a school environment that supports every child's growth and well-being. Join me in making sure our voices are heard and our children's needs are met—your participation truly makes a difference.

Thank you for your continued support! Your voice, your support, and your vote matter!

What the Community is Saying About Gwendy

"It is with enthusiasm that I write this letter of recommendation for Gwendy Gabelein in support of her candidacy for a position on the School Board. I have had the privilege of working alongside Gwendy on the Opioid Prevention Committee I can say without hesitation that she is a dedicated, thoughtful, and community-driven individual who I've had the pleasure of collaborating with.

Gwendy brings a rare combination of compassion, strategic thinking, and advocacy to initiatives that she undertakes. On the Opioid Prevention Committee (OPC) & South Whidbey Community Advancing Resilience Education & Support (SWCARES), she consistently demonstrates a deep understanding of the challenges facing our community and worked diligently implementing and volunteering for programs that not only addressed immediate needs but also laid the groundwork for long-term prevention and education.

Through her personal work, Gwendy's commitment to behavioral health is displayed. She has a unique talent for connecting with families, educators, and community leaders, always ensuring that the voices of those most impacted are heard and respected.

I have greatly enjoyed working with her to better serve our community. Her honesty and openness serve with a distinction that is lost to some. I appreciate that I always know that she will be direct with me and respectful with her opinion.

Gwendy's integrity, collaborative spirit, and unwavering dedication to the well-being of our youth make her an ideal candidate for the School Board. I am confident that she will bring the same level of excellence, empathy, and vision to this role as she has with every endeavor I have heard she has been a part of.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like further insight into Gwendy's qualifications and character. I wholeheartedly support her candidacy and look forward to the positive impact she will undoubtedly make."

Sincerely ~ **Tavier Wasser**, Langley Police Chief

"Gwendy is the most passionate, engaged, and proactive person when it comes to addressing issues at our schools. She brings a powerful voice of the community to every interaction with the school board. I can't wait for her to be part of the system she is trying so tirelessly to improve! She definitely has my vote!" ~ Dimitri Rabinovich

*"Gwendy is the right person for the job at the right time. We need change in our schools and she will support common sense changes to improve our schools and education. Want to see meaningful improvement? Vote Gwendy!" ~ **Andy Valrosa***

*"Good work Gwendy! Transparency is such a key word that our current school board lacks. I appreciate you demanding answers and looking deeper into things like costly band aids...there IS Federal and/or State money available but our current board is too lazy to go after it. Thank you Gwendy for sticking up for our kids! I can add that I have been friends with Gwendy for nearly 20 years and know she stands for family and community. Gwendy blessed me by allowing me to be one of the few to watch her youngest as a baby. She is doing this for her precious one and everyone else's. Gwendy has been going to school board meetings for as long as I can remember and knows the culture and chaos that has happened over the years, from the audiences. Gwendy is the change this district needs to get community support behind the schools again." ~ **Johnna Ross Dow***

*"Ann's signs say she is a voice for "all" and that is not true. She is a deflector and a seat taker to protect the interests of the rest of the board. They all think the same, speak the same, and promote the same. I have forever liked Brook W. (Still do), since he was a young boy, and I thought when he ran he would be balanced, listening and bringing families together in our community ...especially since he was born and raised here... but I was wrong. He has leaned more to his personal life style choices and those who think and carry his "belief system" rather than the community as a whole. Gwendy is a perfect example of trying to speak up as a parent and consistently being shut down by the board. I understand the logistics of a board and if people can't speak then at least provide other opportunities for healthy dialogue. I am voting for Gwendy." ~ **Morgan Cooper***

*"Thank you, Gwendy for being a true center. You have never spoken about your political beliefs. Politics need to stay out of our schools, and I don't want any of these freaking people trying to shove any more down my kids' throat! Anything that is polarizing, needs to be gone. I don't know why it's so hard for this group of people to understand." ~ **Leigh Whitney Bunch-Kuschnerreit***

*"South Whidbey school district needs new voices. I am rooting for Gwendy. A committed mom and long standing community member. The tactic of smearing someone based on an assumption of their political beliefs is silly and I think most of us are sick of it. people who divide us by opinions do not have the wisdom to be representing our students or our community." and "I know Gwendy from South Whidbey school years as well. I attended her Q & A this evening, which was intended to be a debate but the two other candidates had last minute conflicting commitments. I was really impressed. Gwendy is a gifted communicator. The community and school district would be lucky to have her." ~ **Alison Johnson***

*"Our current school board is definitely far left but as a very political person myself, I can say that Gwendy is the only person I've met who is truly an independent. I don't know how that's possible in our severely divided country but they DO exist." ~ **Stina Wilson***

*"For my South Whidbey friends, consider Gwendy – the board needs a fresh perspective after years of the same people. I've never seen a school board so stagnant where the seats never change, year after year. Nothing changes in that district. I could write an entire book on SWSD and how all they care about is money and playing Buzzword Bingo. I wish my kids could go to public school. I really do. But I felt so failed I've been homeschooling now since March of 2020 one child, and 2 years the other. They illegally "graduated" my youngest out of special Ed services in the fall of 2020 since school was remote. I've had many conversations with Dr Jo and the board. They simply do not care at all. They preach equity and racial but don't actually practice it in reality. The sad part is Langley folk who are not invested (those with children in school) will believe the lies presented to them by the incumbent. And vote for them, even though it is time for a fresh perspective in the SWSD board. Gwendy has my vote!" ~ **Sarah Kirkconnell***

*"I believe in Gwendy Gabelein!" ~ **Nikki Scott***

*"I will not be voting this year due to our move. But if I was, I'd be voting for **Gwendy For School Board!** The SWSD and School Board are full of corrupt and incompetent individuals that care more about ideology than actual inclusivity and more importantly providing a safe environment for quality education! The current school board, past superintendent, certain current administrators, some current teachers and coaches are one of the reasons my family is moving out of state. I'll be praying for our friends and family that still have kids in this school district! The current school board only represents half of our community, parents, and students. They do not speak for everyone and definitely don't listen to everyone. The school board should be an accurate representation of the ENTIRE school district! Period!" ~ **Bethany Flister***

*"From another nonpartisan island education advocate--Thank you!! Grateful for your willingness to lead." ~ **Sue Forbes***

*"Our Kids have gone to school together since kindergarten and Gwendy honestly is "all about what's best for our kids and families" and always has been. She had a conversation with me and another family at a tennis match not that long ago and asked us some questions and concerns and was very well educated and concerned about what is going on in the school and wants to help. I Think she could be great voice for our Kids!" ~ **Kristin Huffine***

*"It's concerning that our school board doesn't reflect a diversity of opinion. A range of perspectives leads to stronger, more balanced decisions for our students and community. When everyone on a school board thinks the same way, important voices get left out. Our community deserves real diversity of opinion and open dialogue. Gwendy would help bring that. I have known her for many years; we were in 4-H together. Although we are not close, I have never known her to be anything other than kind and caring of others. Her mom was a teacher and Gwendy went through school at South Whidbey and is very involved in the community. She would very much be an asset to the board and community. It shows by the other two dropping out of the Grange debate and Gwendy still showing up to speak, how much she cares and is committed to making changes that are desperately needed. Go Gwendy! She has my vote." ~ **Bree Smith***

"I will proudly cast my vote for Gwendy Gabelein for position #5 on the school board. I have worked on Gwendy's campaign and have learned firsthand that she stands for what is very important to me:

- 1. I believe the SWSD can match the grade level scores of Skyline HS (Issaquah School District) where I taught for 15 years. 94% for math and 86.3% for reading, according to OSPI. Our kids can do this.*
- 2. I worked in a district where teachers and parents were heard and respected. Our teachers and parents can lead our kids to those percentages if they are supported.*

*This is what Gwendy stands for. Her honesty, energy, respect for current board members and sincere caring for all kids have been constantly apparent to me as she has navigated the demands of campaigning." ~ **Marky Olson***

*"Gwendy Gabelein will receive my vote for School Board position #5. Gwendy is a long time islander who has the pulse of our community. She has been a consistent presence at every school board meeting for the past ten years. She has served on numerous committees in our community and is now stepping up to run for the school board. Her campaign focuses on boosting educational outcomes/raising test scores for all students and being a true listening ear for both parents and teachers, aiming to create a stronger and more supportive environment for all students. She will hear your voice! And is committed to making our students shine and prepare them for the future." ~ **Penny Jo***

*"Have you ever wondered how South Whidbey school district ranks among other schools within Washington state? Overall we are below average. Have you ever wondered what our South Whidbey reading and math test scores are? 50% of our students are one or more grade levels below the national average. Our college readiness scores are a dismal 25 points out of 100. The education of our South Whitby students need improvement and I vote for Gwendy Gabelein to make a change. ~ **Steve***

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION



VOTE

**GWENDY
GABELEIN**

**FOR SOUTH WHIDBEY
SCHOOL BOARD
POSITION 5**



Provide non-partisan leadership, focused on students' academic outcomes.



Ensure fiscal responsibility and transparency



Support our educators and strengthen our para-education



Include community voice, collaboration, and shared values.



I am a parent—not a politician.

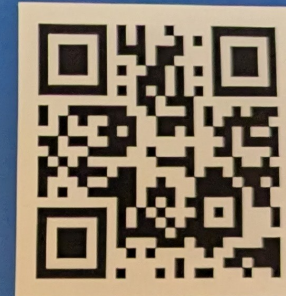
I am a proud mom of two boys—one a district graduate, the other entering high school. I've navigated and taught in public, private, and homeschool systems, and as a special needs parent, I've fought to ensure all students receive the support and services they deserve. My educational background is in Health and Human Services. As a former educator and now as a substance use counselor, my primary role has always been advocating for others.

I am a lifelong islander with deep-rooted connections to this community, with a passion for education. Our district deserves balanced leadership that puts students before an agenda. I am running as a non-partisan candidate who values fiscal responsibility, community voice, and excellence in education.

This election is too important to sit out—your vote matters!

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www.gwendy4swsd.com 