

# CSC Voting Ballot

Please vote for 1 candidate. Ballots are due FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2019.

Jake Dresden

Erin Huizenga

Mary Thomas

Elizabeth Valeski

**Please find the 4 candidates' responses included with this ballot.**

## Mary Thomas

**1) Please briefly state your name and why you would like to be on the Collaborative School Committee.** My name is Mary Thomas and I'd love the opportunity to join the CSC as I am excited to increase my commitment at Steele. The environment is one that I'm attracted to and the school's continued success is important to our family.

**2) Please list the information about yourself that you would like to appear on the CSC ballot.**

I'm thrilled about the possibility of a CSC position because our family loves Steele (Lucille – 2<sup>nd</sup> grader, Rosie – Kindergartener). I am already fairly involved and am ready to serve in additional capacity. I have volunteered on panels similar to this in the past and always enjoy the participation, responsibility and impact made by committees who care. I'm excited and available to take feedback from surrounding parents/guardians back to the CSC and represent the position with authenticity. Please consider me as a Parent Member for the Collaborative School Committee position as it's important to me that our community – already rich in love- continue to grow on the same trajectory!

## Jake Dresden

**1) Please briefly state your name and why you would like to be on the Collaborative School Committee.**

I would like to serve on the Steele CSC because I have a wealth of information about school culture having worked both in public and private schools over the last two decades. I also have a middle school background and, as such, feel like that would be helpful in an elementary advisor role so that I can provide perspective on what the next stage of the academic journey is like. Having been both a teacher and now an administrator has given insight into a multitude of different issues that affect schools from schedules to curriculum design to student wellness, etc. I hope to serve Steele in this capacity.

**2) Please list the information about yourself that you would like to appear on the CSC ballot.**

I am the parent of Margo (Class of 2019) and Etta (Class of 2022) at Steele.

Current Dean of Students and High School Placement Counselor at Graland Country Day School and former history teacher.

## Erin Huizenga

### **1) Please briefly state your name and why you would like to be on the Collaborative School Committee.**

I'm Erin Huizenga and would like to participate because I feel I can bring a unique perspective to our school's future due to previous experiences both professionally and personally. I run a human-centered design firm focused on learning and education initiatives and our son Knox, who will be in 4th grade at Steele, was in Montessori before Steele since he was 4-years-old. I was also in Montessori when I was in K-1st grades. I'm eager to share ideas and experiences from being engaged with K12, higher education, and independent schools.

### **2) Please list the information about yourself that you would like to appear on the CSC ballot.**

Erin designs to help people learn. Believing solutions are best found in true collaboration with the people who will benefit from them, she helps organizational leaders connect learner-centered research insights with design thinking to build new programs and tools. She has partnered with national organizations to design learning programs for public health and diversity initiatives, designed tools for higher education institutions and public schools, and designed a program to empower high school students to build a portfolio of project-based work. Before founding Borough + Block she worked with firms like IDEO and Gensler on projects with Northwestern Medicine, Motorola, PNC Bank, OfficeMax, Wilson, and Best Buy. She's been a nationally featured speaker at CreativeMornings and the HOW Conference and created curriculum and taught courses at the IIT Institute of Design and Northwestern University.

## Elizabeth Valeski

### **1) Please briefly state your name and why you would like to be on the Collaborative School Committee.**

My name is Elizabeth Valeski and I strive to be an active member of the Steele community and to help make important decisions that will nurture and grow my kids, the teachers and the community at large. It takes a village of passionate, well-intentioned people to help make Steele the school we know and love!

### **2) Please list the information about yourself that you would like to appear on the CSC ballot.**

I have two children at Steele - William in 4th grade and Sarah in 1st grade. I am extremely passionate about education and childhood development and am proud of our Steele community. I was raised by an elementary school teacher and have a background in public relations/corporate communications, as well as a masters in counseling psychology. As a parent it is my intention to let my kids be kids, and to encourage them to be curious, explore and make mistakes. At Steele, I volunteer on the Home Tour committee, in the classrooms, and as a room parent. I do what I can for the teachers and aim to help the kids feel appreciated and challenged. If on the CSC, I would further build relationships with the Steele community and help make decisions to keep Steele the fun, socially-responsible, challenging, tight-knit school we are all proud to be a part of.