

# GETTING **TO** KNOW KMSTAFF



**JOHN STELLMACHER** | Chief Financial Officer

**WHAT EXCITES YOU MOST ABOUT LEADING KMHS?**

The culture of this district really brought me to Kettle Moraine. We live in a complex era for public education, but as a new employee for KMSD, I feel blessed to be surrounded by critical thinkers and innovators who are committed to finding solutions for challenging problems. I am excited to contribute and learn more about the KM team, and now nearly three months into my position, I am thankful for the significant number of individuals who work hard daily to put me in a position to succeed in my new position.



**WHAT IS ONE AREA IN EDUCATION YOU ARE MOST PASSIONATE ABOUT WORKING ON?**

Equity and sustainability are extremely important to me. One of the reasons I became an educator was to ensure opportunities I was provided as a child/student are available to the students of today and of tomorrow. I ran for the Board of Directors of my profession and, most recently, ran for President of WASBO. I want to be a voice for equity and sustainability to ensure every student, regardless of their socioeconomic, ethnic background, or unique needs, is able to achieve a high-quality education.

Specifically, as a member of the WASBO leadership, I've advocated for equitable funding between school districts, for more resources to serve students with disabilities and English language learners, and look forward to being part of the Kettle Moraine team that helps light the way for our community and fellow school districts across the state to make equity and sustainability in public education a reality.

**HOW HAVE PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES IN EDUCATION PREPARED YOU FOR YOUR ROLE AT KMHS?**

Over the past 12 years, I've been privileged to learn from some of the best in my profession. My professional organization, WASBO, has provided numerous opportunities through conferences and mentoring to learn the technical portion of this position and also to develop leadership skills. Though business managers typically spent most of their time in the "non-instructional" side of district operations, being engaged in the community schools and classrooms has helped me understand "why" in public education. Those experiences, as well as serving as a basketball coach and having a deep personal friendship with an elementary SWD teacher at the Barron Area School District, have been crucial in grounding my values, learning how to prioritize, and learn empathy for students, staff, and members of the community who are looking for an advocate if they are unable to advocate for themselves.

**WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING WHEN YOU HAVE FREE TIME?**  
Ice Cream, all day and every day! My wife Laura and I are both avid runners (and former triathletes), and outside of work, you'll find me either enjoying nature and learning with my family (two daughters Catherine and Vera), or running to burn off any leftover passion and energy from the day.

I believe it is important to take a break and detach from time to time to bring focus to the work we're doing, and running off stress and escaping into the perspective of a child (through my daughters' learning) helps me gain perspective and appreciate the many blessings of working for this district and living in this community.

**IF YOU COULD HAVE LUNCH IN THE COMMONS WITH ANY FAMOUS PERSON, WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHY?**  
Eleanor Roosevelt. As the father of two daughters, I admire her courage, compassion, empathy and leadership in the United States during a difficult era. As someone who deeply believes in public service, her commitment to equity and opportunity for all Americans set a powerful example to follow and a reminder that through hard work and determination, humanity has tremendous capacity for good.

