

August 6, 2026

Dear Members of the Isle of Wight County Board of Education,

Please accept this letter as my expression of interest in being appointed to the Isle of Wight County School Board.

Throughout my professional career, I have had the privilege of serving public education. For more than twelve years, I worked alongside school boards, superintendents, teachers, and staff to help school divisions provide the very best educational opportunities possible for their students. My role was centered on finance and operations, but the mission was always much larger than budgets. Every financial decision ultimately affected classrooms, teachers, families, and the future of the community. That perspective has shaped both my career and my appreciation for the important role that thoughtful school board governance plays in the success of a school division.

When the opportunity arose to serve on the Isle of Wight County School Board, I knew it was one I wanted to pursue. My wife and I have chosen Isle of Wight County as our home, and although I have retired from full-time employment, I have no desire to retire from serving others. I have been blessed with a career that allowed me to contribute to public education across multiple school divisions. I would now consider it both an honor and a privilege to devote that experience to serving the students, families, educators, and taxpayers of the community that I now call home.

During my career, I have presented at over 150 school board meetings, helped develop and oversee budgets ranging from tens of thousands to tens of millions of dollars, participated in difficult union negotiations (in Illinois), negotiated difficult financial issues, and worked to ensure transparency and accountability in the stewardship of public resources.

In preparing this letter, I took time to review recent Isle of Wight County School Board meetings and board materials. I was encouraged by the Board's commitment to responsible financial stewardship, long-range planning, student achievement, and supporting the employees who serve our children each day. Those priorities reflect many of the same challenges and opportunities I have worked with throughout my career, and I believe my experience would allow me to contribute in a meaningful and constructive manner while always respecting the distinction between governance and administration.

I believe there comes a point in every career when the greatest contribution one can make is not building a résumé, but investing that experience back into the community.

For me, this opportunity represents the beginning of that next chapter.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to our community.

Respectfully,

Jeff Ryder

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District 1

JEFF RYDER

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PROFILE

Finance executive and thought leader with more than ten years of progressive experience in educational organizations and private companies. Background includes overseeing all financial functions within large operations and administering multimillion-dollar budgets. Well-versed in US GAAP. Record of success includes saving and recovering significant costs, completing numerous audits with zero findings, facilitating effective negotiations, and spearheading numerous process improvements. Collaborative, methodical manager who utilizes data in decision making and provides the tools for each team member to succeed. Core competencies include:

Financial Statements | Reporting | Budgeting | Forecasting | Audit Oversight | Forensic Accounting | Financial Analysis
Procurement/Vendor Relationships | Profit Margin Protection | Cost Containment
Banking | Business Strategy Development | Dispute Resolution | Presentations/Public Speaking

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

GREENSVILLE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, Emporia, VA

March 2024 – August 2025

Internal Auditor

Assumed role of finance director in wake of incumbent leaving until permanent could be found.

Managed all financial activities of K-12 unit school district with 3 schools; 1000 students; 435 employees; 6 budget managers; and \$41 million in annual spend.

PETERSBURG CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, Petersburg, VA

December 2022 – March 2024

Assistant Superintendent of Finance

Manage all financial activities of K-12 unit school district with 6 schools; 4,200 students; 725 employees; 12 budget managers; and \$92 million in annual spend. Oversee buildings and grounds, transportation, food service, insurance, budget, financial analysis, and reporting. Oversee all state aid revenues and Grants. Participate in all federal, state, and local audits of grants and financial statements.

- Found \$ 2,361,000 in annual, recurring revenue division did not know they had due them.
- Saved annual \$ 3,200,000 in health insurance costs division was set to spend prior to my arrival
- Revamped entire financial reporting structure to board of education and city to streamline information making it more understandable for non-government laypersons.
- Oversaw completion of CAFR's from FY 2021 and FY 2022 - unqualified opinion both years
- Overhauled all accounting procedures for cash basis banking to operate within ERP instead of outside.
- Instituted monthly cash flow projection procedure to monitor and report to board.
- Instrumental in helping Superintendent secure sustainable funding to increase all employees' rates of pay to stem tide of resignations. Instituted teacher step scales making them competitive with surrounding divisions.
- Chair of the Finance Committee whereby I set the monthly agenda and present all division goings on in advance of board meetings.
- Present all financial goings on at all board meetings both in person and virtual.

FRANKLIN CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, Franklin City, VA

Aug 2019 – November 2022

Assistant Superintendent of Finance

Manage all financial activities of K-12 unit school district with 3 schools; 1000 students; 215 employees; 7 budget managers; and \$26 million in annual spend. Oversee buildings and grounds, transportation, food service, insurance, budget, financial analysis, and reporting. Oversee all state aid revenues and Grants. Participate in all federal, state, and local audits of grants and financial statements.

- Revamped entire financial reporting structure to board of education and city to streamline information making it more understandable for non-government laypersons.
- Corrected all audit findings from 2018 and rendered unqualified opinions every year
- Overhauled all accounting procedures for activity funds to correct audit findings

JEFF RYDER | PAGE 2

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- Instituted monthly cash flow projection procedure to monitor and report to city anticipated troughs
 - Overhauled all bus routes and instituted electronic routing program (Travel Tracker App-Garden)
 - Instrumental in helping Superintendent secure sustainable funding to increase all employees' rates of pay to stem tide of resignations. Instituted 2 back-to-back teacher step scales making them competitive with surrounding divisions.
 - Chair of the Finance Committee whereby I set the monthly agenda and presented all of the divisions issues in advance of work sessions both in person and virtual.
 - Present all financial goings on at all board meetings both in person and virtual
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

EAST AURORA UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 131, Aurora, IL

Jul 2018 – Aug 2019

Assistant Superintendent of Finance

Manage all financial activities of K-12 unit school district with 23 schools; 14,100 students; 2,400+ employees; 37 budget managers; and \$198 million in annual spend. Oversee buildings and grounds, transportation, food service, bond issuance, insurance, budget, financial analysis, and reporting. Secure state aid and calculate property tax levy. Participate in all federal, state, and local audits of grants and financial statements. Supervise six clerks and collaborate closely with grant managers and directors throughout the district.

- Shepherded audit of six federal and seven state grants in Sep 2018, with zero loss of aid dollars.
- Corrected financial statements soon after hire, allowing resolution of contentious union negotiations.
- Discovered district had neglected to migrate accounting data to new accounting software and quickly orchestrated data transfer in time to transition payroll processing to new vendor on schedule.
- Established internal reporting structure for grant managers, ensuring they spent or claimed reimbursement of grant monies in time for realization in the appropriate fiscal year.
- Identified outside investor to fund capital projects, eliminating need for district to issue bonds.

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 308, Oswego, IL

Jul 2013 – Jun 2018

Director of Finance, Apr 2014 – Jun 2018

Administered \$209 million budget for K-12 unit school district with 18,200 students; 2,100 employees; and 35 budget managers (school principals and other district directors). Created and filed tax levies in three counties. Maintained five-year rolling financial projections. Calculated attendance and claims for general state aid. Took part on management negotiation teams with transportation, teacher, custodian, and support staff associations. Provided all district information to external auditors for Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Supervised six office staff.

- Lobbied for adoption of state-allowed student fee collection actions; achieved Board of Education approval after three years of trying, resulting in payment hundreds of thousands of dollars in past-due student fees and safeguards against the scenario's repetition.
- Implemented PushCoin payment portal and restructured district's procedure for collecting student fees and lunch payment, increasing district revenue by \$520,000 in the first year.
- Planned and executed use of iStar in-state special education reporting system, which defined the way districts received funding.
- Instituted use of powerful Forecast5 financial projection platform that changed the way the district presented its five-year projection model to the school board and the public.
- Gained buy-in from school leadership, Board of Education, and employees for PushCoin, new collection procedures, and Forecast5 by providing data that demonstrated advantages of new processes.
- Rectified ethical violations committed by direct reports.

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 308, continued

Assistant Director of Finance, Jul 2013 – Apr 2014

Managed district level procurement, P Card transactions and student fee collections and reporting.

- Improved procurement by negotiating more cost-effective contracts and removing "evergreen" clauses, requiring all vendors to provide new quotes at the end of each term.
 - Saved \$1.2 million across seven vendors over three years.
 - Considered seven bidders for food service contract in 2014; saved \$420,000 over previous year.
 - Fielded bids from snow removal providers, maintaining steady payment across three years.
 - Achieved \$23,000 savings for student planner printing in first year and locked prices for two years.

JEFF RYDER | PAGE 3

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- Completed school cafeteria audits for state and USDA review, resulting in zero detrimental findings.
- Documented purchasing card procedures and onboarded additional \$11.9 million in vendor contracts to the purchasing card system, yielding \$120,000 growth in rebates that continues to increase.
- Initiated in-depth study of student fees; identified solution implemented later, as Financial Director.
- Streamlined procedures for processing fee waiver applications in accordance with new Board policy, saving time for business office staff.

EAST AURORA UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 131, Aurora, IL

Dec 2012 – Jun 2013

Accountant

Executed all accounting functions for 15 schools, five service centers, 27 local grants, 12 state funding programs, and seven federal funding programs.

- Reorganized financial processes following period of financial and operational upheaval. Adjusted purchasing and payables processes to accommodate new software; aligned payroll, deductions, direct deposit, tax filing, and other remittances from payroll to new Infinite Visions software.
- Spearheaded software conversion from AS/400 to Infinite Visions ERP, completing project on time and on budget.

Earlier experience: Controller/CFO, Central Ink Corporation

EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, DeKalb, IL

Master of Education (MEd), concentration in School Business

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY, Chicago, IL

Bachelor in Business Administration, minor in Accounting

Chief School Business Official Certification, Illinois State Board of Education

Registered Certified Public Accountant, Illinois Board of Examiners

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Virginia Association of School Business Officials (VASBO) | Formerly Certified Fraud Examiners

COMPUTER SKILLS

AS 400 (Bright) | Keystone | RDA Municipal Accounting Software | Munis | Infinite Visions ERP | Microsoft Excel, Word, PowerPoint

August 6, 2026

Dear Members of the Isle of Wight County School Board and Administration,

I am writing to enthusiastically support the appointment of Jeff Ryder to the Isle of Wight County School Board. As the elected Supervisor for District 1 — the district Jeff calls home — I have come to know him as a neighbor, and I believe his professional background makes him an exceptional candidate for this role.

Jeff brings more than twelve years of experience in school division finance and operations, having served as Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Director of Finance across multiple public school districts in Illinois and Virginia, including Petersburg City, Franklin City, and Greenville County Public Schools. Over the course of his career, he has administered budgets ranging from the tens of thousands to nearly \$200 million, presented at more than 150 school board meetings, navigated difficult union negotiations, and consistently delivered unqualified audit opinions and corrected financial reporting structures to increase transparency for the boards and communities he served.

What stands out most to me is not simply the scale of Jeff's experience, but the consistency of his impact: recovering millions in unclaimed revenue, saving millions more in avoidable costs, and building financial systems that hold up to scrutiny while remaining understandable to the public and elected officials who rely on them. That combination of technical expertise and genuine commitment to transparency and accountability is exactly what strong school board governance requires.

Having chosen Isle of Wight County as his home, Jeff has expressed a clear desire to invest his experience back into this community. I have every confidence that he would approach service on the School Board with the same diligence, integrity, and dedication to students, families, and taxpayers that defined his professional career. I know firsthand from my own work on the Board of Supervisors how valuable it is to have members who understand both the financial and human stakes behind every decision — Jeff embodies that balance.

I give Jeff Ryder my full and enthusiastic support for appointment to the Isle of Wight County School Board, and I am happy to answer any questions the Board may have.

Respectfully,

Renee Rountree, MHA, FACHE, CPXP Supervisor, District 1 Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors