

Salmon River Central School Board of Education Candidates

“ Our students have unique needs, both culturally and socially. Our families have a rich cultural heritage, traditions and Mohawk values. Having a native role model is being culturally responsive to meet the unique educational needs of our students. When you speak to a native, you don’t have to explain yourself. We understand one another, who we are, where we came from, and where we need to go.” - Stephanie I. Cook, Executive Director of Education

Election Date: May 20, 2014

Sheila Marshall

Sheila Marshall is seeking re-election for the Salmon River Central School Board of Education seat she was appointed to in 2012. Sheila is running to ensure our district provides the very best for our students through solid Board leadership. She strongly believes in sticking to her principles, a value she demonstrated in seeking to pass the controversial Capital Project, which supported a safe classroom environment and updated ventilation, an imperative for air quality. Sheila is rewarded, personally, by working with the Curriculum Sub-Committee influencing decisions made to benefit teachers and students facing the Common Core Modules. “It’s imperative we make every effort to allow our students to be successful in their chosen path post-graduation. Our decisions should be the driving force behind everything we do. I’m committed to keep learning and achievement for all students as my primary focus.”



Sheila has been involved in the education field for over twenty years and has experience working with students from middle school through post-secondary. The early days of her career started as the Director of the Higher Education Program for the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe. She transitioned from this position to manage an educational outreach program administered at SUNY Potsdam. Sheila is currently the Director of the Center for Diversity at SUNY Potsdam. As a higher education professional, Sheila’s goal is “to offer guidance and support for students throughout their educational journey, ultimately supporting our student’s career goals”.

Sheila has earned a Bachelors of Arts degree from SUNY Plattsburgh and a Masters of Education from St. Lawrence University.



Jason McDonald

Jason McDonald feels it is important to his family that he represents our community youth in their education. Jason has three children in the school system, a 12, 10 and 6 year old. Jason wants our children to learn to take advantage of the education that is offered in our school systems to develop career planning post-graduation. Jason wants to help students connect to educational resources through vocational, technical or collegiate access, in pursuit of their career goals. Considering the substantial population of our Akwesasno:ron students learning at the Salmon River Central School system, it is incumbent upon our community to ensure our youth have a voice on the Board of Education.

Jason was born and raised in Akwesasne. He is the son of Edith and the late Dave McDonald. Jason graduated from Salmon River in 1993. Jason began employment at the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe in July of 1999. He is currently the Division Director to Community and Family Services, working with our Akwesasne community members with physical and developmental disabilities. This is a position Jason has held since October of 2011. Jason has been an active member of the Hogsburg Akwesasne Volunteer Fire Department for 20 years, currently serving as the Treasurer.

Michael Connors

Michael Connors is running for the Salmon River Central School Board in an effort to attain adequate representation for our Mohawk children and families. Our current student enrollment is almost 70%, our native employment is 20% and our Board member representation is 22%. Our Mohawk students are unacceptably under-represented. As a graduate of the Salmon River Central School system, Michael is compelled to give back to the system by representing our children. Michael and his wife have 3 grown children who have graduated from the SRCS system, and have 3 younger children in grades 2, 4, and 6. He is firmly committed to representing all students, employees, and families of the Salmon River Central School district.



Michael is a member of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council, and a Board member of Mohawk Gaming Enterprises, the Tribal corporate entity that operates and owns the Tribe's Class II and III gaming operations. Prior to being elected to the Tribal Council in June 2011, Michael spent 8 years as the Finance Director of the Tribe's Class II gaming operation, the Mohawk Bingo Palace, 1.5 years as Finance Manager for the Tribe's Class III Operation, Akwesasne Mohawk Casino, and 2 Years as Internal Auditor for the Tribal Gaming Commission. He has a background in Accounting, graduating from SUNY Plattsburgh, in December 1999.