

Saratoga County School District Board of Education Elections 2018

Use district website links for more information like district office contact information, polling location and times, proposed budget and propositions.

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Ballston Spa Central School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 3):

Eric Davenport

Candidate profile not available.

Christiane Farnan

Candidate profile not available.

Jason Fernau

Candidate profile not available.

Michael O'Donnell

Candidate profile not available.

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Central School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 2):

Lisa M. Morse

Experience & Qualifications:

Resident and parent of BHBL students for 16 years. Currently, Special Education Aide for BSCSD. Development and Special Events Coordinator for the CDYMCA from May, 2013-June, 2016. Named 2016 ABR Book of Ranking as #1 for non-profit fundraising events. Community and Financial Development for the Glenville YMCA from September, 2006-May 2013.

Community Involvement:

BHBL Bond Referendum Committee Member, February, 2013 to July 2013. Current BHBL Bond Referendum Committee Member, March 2018-August, 2018. Past President of BHBL Field Hockey Booster Club for 7 years, current Treasurer. Member of the Church of the Immaculate Conception for 15 years. Past Baptism Ministry Instructor from June 2008 to January 2018 and current substitute teacher for K-6 Religious Instruction. USA Swim Official.

Education:

Paralegal, Associate Degree from Herkimer Community College.

E-mail: lmorse20@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: At the Capital District YMCA, I was a member of many resource groups and received training in the engagement of these different community groups. The resource networks included, Women, African American, Asian and Pacific Rim Islanders. I received Darkness to Light training (recognizing the signs of child abuse) and Listen First training (a communication and engagement training.) Together with these trainings and the conversations shared with so many in the BHBL clubs and teams our family has been a part of, I hope to ensure that all have a voice in making educational and administrative decisions.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: Dialogue, inclusiveness, and openness in the decision-making process are essential. Respecting, listening, and acknowledging others' perspectives not only builds trust between members, but will aid in building a consensus, even when the subject matter is sensitive or controversial.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: During my term, I hope to gain insight and have a direct impact on the overall quality of education for the students in our district by advocating for all students, whether those students are in need of assistance, students who are differently-abled, or students who

aspire for an opportunity to further their education. Additionally, I hope to help build stronger ties and create an atmosphere of congeniality for our students, their parents, staff and administrators, and all members of the community.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: After sixteen years with BHBL, our five children have been given the opportunity to transition from elementary school through high school. During this journey, we have been welcomed and included in many special moments of families in our District, I hope to help offer similar experiences to those parents who are just beginning their journey.

David Versocki

Experience & Qualifications:

Twenty-six of my twenty-eight professional working years have been spent serving as a teacher, coach and School District Administrator for Christian Brothers Academy, Scotia-Glenville and North Colonie Schools as well as Capital Region BOCES. As a teacher and coach my lens was always on how to provide opportunities for student success. As a Director of Technology for Scotia-Glenville Schools and Capital Region BOCES, that lens has been focused on how to provide support and structure for districts, buildings, departments, divisions and leadership, so they may focus on delivering instructional programs that allow students to be successful. This latter role has provided me opportunities to work with all walks of the K-12 ecosystem from both a local, regional and state-wide perspective.

Community Involvement:

I served as the Co-Chair of the BH-BL 2013 Facilities Referendum that informed the Board of Education's decision to put forward a \$34.2 million vote to the community to support 21st Century Learning environments. While raising a daughter I have had the privilege of being involved as a coach of youth softball, basketball and lacrosse. Also, as an avid cyclist, I have used that interest to participate in several fund-raising campaigns to support diabetes and cancer research.

Education:

B.A. Mathematics, Master of Science in Teaching, School District Administrator Certification

E-mail: dversockiBOE@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: Having served in a leadership role for several organizations, I can offer expertise in the shared visioning process required to provide a technology ecosystem for our students

and staff. Additionally, my administrative experiences will provide a perspective that translates across many constituent groups.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: The Board of Education has well-defined procedures that govern regularly scheduled opportunities for public comment and sharing of information, In addition, the BOE should provide the community alternate channels to allow for varying constituent input. That feedback can come in various forms depending on the information needed. Sub-committees, PTA groups and surveys are just a few examples of feedback mechanisms. The collective body of information should be considered and shared during the decision making process.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: I would like to help continue the momentum the Board of Education has built in providing as many opportunities for students to be connected to the school community beyond their classroom experiences. Also, I want to insure we continue to provide a first-class education by supporting the updating of our facilities and exercise fiscal responsibility, while being able to attract and retain the highest quality educators.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A:

Corinth Central School District

Website

Candidates (Vote for 3):

Andy Kelley

Candidate profile not available.

Arthur Lozier III

Candidate profile not available.

Cheri Sullivan

Candidate profile not available.

Edinburg Common School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 2):

Michael Evans Candidate profile not available.

James Lowerre Candidate profile not available.

Galway Central School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 1):

Joan Slagle Candidate profile not available.

Hadley-Luzerne Central School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 2):

Lia Braico Candidate profile not available.

Joseph Hanlon Candidate profile not available.

Mary Visscher Candidate profile not available.

Mechanicville City School District

Website

Candidates (Vote for 2):

Daniel O'Connor Candidate profile not available.

Michael R. Raucci Candidate profile not available.

Adelynne Waldie

Experience & Qualifications:

Organizations I have been associated with have benefited from my developed professional leadership skills. My proven track record includes: increased membership retention and engagement, increased sponsorship and project funding, strategic planning, organizational growth and sustainability, and project management.

As a Certified Meeting Professional, skilled in development, association and volunteer management; Mechanicville City School District will benefit from my attributes of being a consensus builder, focused community leader, effective communicator, decision maker, team player, and information processor.

Community Involvement:

I have served the MES PTA, the Cub Scouts, March of Dimes, Special Olympics New York, GLSEN, the Mechanicville Planning and Zoning Board, the Meeting Professional International NENY, the Saratoga County Historical Society, and MS/HS PTO.

Education:

SUNY SCCC, UCF, SUNY DELHI

E-mail: addywaldieforschoolboard@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: - Organized, confident leader that thrives and adapts in a fast-paced work environment, utilizing effective communication skills and a strong work ethic to accomplish set objectives.

- Skilled in analyzing, developing, and directing branded efforts through events and client services. Effectively builds team spirit and support to establish a strong foundation of successful work environments to achieve revenue and investment goals.

- Highly developed inter-personal skills to build strong business relationships. Achieves results by partnering with decision-makers, encouraging staff autonomy, and fostering goal-directed teamwork.

- Experienced in all facets of budgeting to include bench marking and projections based on historical and accounting data. Consistently exceeds expectations by pro-actively anticipating and adjusting the budget needs while maintaining profitability.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: Transparency within the District is necessary for increased engagement and growth. Innovation, creativity and learning occur in a healthy environment. Creating and supporting a strong culture is vital to the success of the teachers and students. It is critical for teachers to receive the support they need to be more effective; I believe if teachers feel supported they will support the students. Empowering partners in education is necessary for the success and sustainability to our school district.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: - Monthly Board meetings should be taped and broadcast for our community.

- The development and implementation of a District Communication Plan and Organizational Chart would aid all stakeholders: parents, staff, faculty and students in navigating our district infrastructure, code of conduct and academic tracks.

- Activate and maximize the impact of school board committees; in-depth committee work builds governing expertise while strengthening the sense of ownership and commitment. Committees also offer all stakeholders the opportunity to be represented in the decision making process.

- Act as a financial steward; ensuring that our taxpayer money is wisely and well spent.

- Improvement of Curriculum and Program Development; set higher learning objectives and outcomes to ensure students' preparedness for college and career requirements.

- Advancements to the District physical education program; develop new standards for health and wellness for the entire student base.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: I am motivated to run for the school board because of my dedication to the District and to its students. My husband and I are invested in the community and are raising two Mechanicville Red Raiders; currently both at the middle school. I have had the pleasure to work with great groups of parents, friends and neighbors while serving our community. We need to make our school district better for both present and future students.

The strength and sustainability of our community is directly connected to the success of the school district. The relationship between education and economic development is key to the continued growth of our region and the achievements of our students and graduates.

Saratoga Springs City School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 3):

John Ellis

Experience & Qualifications:

I have had the honor to serve on the Saratoga Springs school board for the past three years. I have worked for the past twenty five years in the Ballston Spa School District.

Community Involvement:

I serve on the Saratoga Springs City Ethics Board.

Education:

I graduated from Central Islip High School in 1982.

E-mail: jellis591212@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: I grew up in a very diverse community, both ethnically and economically.

I have worked in a school setting for twenty-five years as a custodian, groundskeeper. I was the CSEA representative for many years. My experience with union and contractual issues gives me excellent knowledge in this aspect.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: My experience with the board of education is that we are very open. There is many discussions during the meetings amongst trustee's and administrator's,

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: To continually improve programs, especially with our Special Needs children. Raise the graduation rate for all students and to make sure we provide choices for those who do not go onto college.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: I am hopeful to the community of Saratoga Springs City School District, gives me the chance to serve as board trustee for another three years as we continue to provide excellent education moving forward into the 21st century.

Thank you,

John Ellis

Steve Grandin

Experience & Qualifications:

I have spent virtually all of my life involved in organizational administration and educational activities. As a newspaper editor (1977-85), most of my time involved dealing with high schools. As senior account executive, I have run national and state organizations, working closely with their boards of education, as well as administering statewide and regional professional examinations (1987-present). The combination of these experiences makes me uniquely qualified to continue my time on the Saratoga Springs City School Board.

I have also been a resident of Saratoga Springs for 36 years. My wife, Renee, have lived in the Geysers Crest neighborhood the entire time, and our three sons -- Philip (2001), Alex (2006) and Will (2008) -- are all graduates of Saratoga Springs High School and Geysers Road Elementary School. Philip is an experienced high school Physics teacher in Massachusetts, where Alex previously served as a Latin teacher.

Community Involvement:

Saratoga Springs City School District Board of Education (2009-present)

Saratoga Springs City School District Facilities and Space Planning community committee (1999-2000), responsible for planning for \$60 million reconstruction of high school, addition of wing at middle school, additions to all six elementary schools, and relocation of administration offices

Saratoga Springs City School District Blue Streak Hall of Fame organizational and induction committees (2010-present)

Capital Region Football Hall of Fame organizational and induction committees (2010-present)

New York State Sports Writers Association all-state coordinator (football & boys basketball), regional poll contributor (1977-present)

Education:

Cornell University, Bachelor of Science, Communication Arts

E-mail: sgrandin55@aol.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: I have spent most of my working life coordinating the actions of professional organizations. One of the major components is working with boards of directors, helping them to achieve the results that will allow the organizations reach their desired goals. This has proven exceptionally important in my three terms on the Saratoga Springs City School Board, working with other members and their diverse opinions and backgrounds to help to meld our talents to improve our schools.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: As with any board of directors, the group is only as good as the individual talents of its members. While many people think of Saratoga Springs as a rich community, they don't realize that great diversity in our school district -- yes, there are millionaires, but the median family income in our district is \$63,000, which is about \$15/hr for a two-income family. We do have mansions but we also have one of the highest level of student homelessness in the Suburban Council. It is crucial to be able to understand -- and represent -- those across this spectrum and we, as a Board, need to be able to come to conclusions that will allow for the best schooling for all the children of our district.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: I believe my nine years as a school board member have been successful as we have weathered bleak economic times without cutting staff or programs, while maintaining the lowest taxes in the Suburban Council and remaining one of the premier schools in upstate New York. It is crucial for the School Board to maintain a balance between offering top-flight education with an affordable tax structure. We need to continue this success but continue to look toward the future to ensure that all aspects of our school district are constantly improving.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: In my first years on the school board, nearly half of the Board had more than a decade of experience; this proved crucial as Saratoga Springs improved at a rapid pace. Now, however, we do not have any members who have been on the Board that long, but I hope that my nine years can help provide the experience and historical context that will allow our district to continue to provide the exceptional level of education our children deserve, while, at the same time, continue to move boldly into the future.

JoAnne Kiernan

Experience & Qualifications:

A school board trustee for the last six years and president of the board for the last two years

Community Involvement:

Past treasurer of Caroline Street PTSO and Watersedge/Woodlands HOA; served on the board for Kelly's Angles and various committees for Double H ranch

Education:

Siena College grad

E-mail: tjawkiernan@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: I am a CPA and have worked at Questar BOCES auditing school districts so I understand the complex finances of the district. As a current trustee I have been very involved in learning about the changes in education and how our district continues to meet the demands of the ever changing landscape of education and our students and staff needs. I attend school board conferences and seminars to better educate myself on various education topics.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: I think it is important to keep lines of communication open with the community. Community input is critical when the district is making decisions and it is important that we are transparent on why we made the decisions we did.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: I want to continue to support the district in educating our students to become good citizens and life long learners.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A:

Patricia Morrison

Experience & Qualifications:

2018 - present, Product Marketing Manager, CommerceHub, Albany, NY 2007 - 2017, Senior Marketing Manager, Panasonic, USA

2006, Marketing Consultant, Citibank

-Toastmasters International, Turf Talk Chapter, Saratoga Springs, NY-

- Panasonic Path to Excellence Corporate Training Program Graduate

- Mediation training, through Schenectady mediation services

Community Involvement:

PRESENT

-Urban Forestry Project & Community Outreach, leadership committee member

Sustainable Saratoga, Saratoga, NY

-Member, Soroptimist International of Saratoga County

-Grants & Marketing Committees, The Capital Region Women Employment Resource Center (WERC), Albany, NY

PAST

-S.T.R.I.D.E. Adaptive Sports, ski, sailing and camp instructor

Education:

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration, Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY

E-mail: PatriciaMarieMorrison@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: As a Marketing & Communications leader, I'm a strategic and critical thinker with a "can do" attitude. I listen, ask questions, and have a history of delivering results through shared decision-making.

I believe in the power of teamwork and the resulting synergy created by teams to elevate successful outcomes. I plan on earning respect by treating all stakeholders with respect, thus building cross-functional relationships at all levels throughout the district. Reaching successful decisions is important, but so too is the process to get there. Only with buy in from all can we move forward together as a district.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: In all matters overseen by the Board of Education, the team should invite open dialogue with the school community as well as the community at large. We should be doing everything we can to foster input, feedback, and insight. Successful outcomes begin by first building an open environment of transparent communications and collaborative decision making.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: The Saratoga School district is large and with its size comes certain obstacles regarding personal connections with all students. A successful term as a board member will nurture an environment where each student feels an "individual" connection to the school no matter where they are in their academic development. Sometimes it just takes one person at the right time in a kid's life to make all the difference in the world.

Whether that person is a teacher, a guidance counselor, an administrator, a coach, or a bus driver, I want to make sure I implement policies that continue to put each student's needs above all else, creating as many opportunities as possible for these connections to happen.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A:

Schuylerville Central School District

Website

Candidates (Vote for 2):

Matthias Donnelly

Experience & Qualifications:

I have spent the last 11 years in the insurance industry with State Farm Insurance in Ballston Spa, NY. My job mainly entails communication with customers and investigating of auto accidents. It has taught me to be patient and open-minded during all interactions. It has required me to be confident and clear in my decision making skills. I have also handled high-value complex lawsuits to maturity including investigation, negotiation and settlement. Prior to this, I was employed by the Greenwich School District in the technology department. I assisted in the implementation of new networks systems, installation of computer labs and the roll out of the SchoolTool student information system. In addition to my professional background, I obtained a BS in Finance from Marist College. Most recently, I obtained the Associate in Claims (AIC) and Associate in General Insurance (AINS) designations which have given me a more diverse background in business function and keys to success.

Community Involvement:

I am currently the Treasurer and Social Media Coordinator of the Brampton Woods Homeowners' Association.

Education:

South Glens Falls Central School (2003), BS in Finance from Marist College (2007)

E-mail: Matthias.donnelly@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: My college degree and work history have given me exposure to many different experiences that would benefit me as a member of the board. My background includes a degree in Finance, customer service experience, negotiating of settlements, making decisions on extension or disclaimer of policy coverage and implementation of technology systems into a school district setting. In addition, my daughters Olivia and Scarlett are beginning Kindergarten in September 2018 at Schuylerville. I feel that this is

an ideal time for me to give back to the community and ensure that our school continues to be the safest place possible for all of our children.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: In the meetings I have attended, I feel that the dialogue that occurs is very open and candid. Community members are always welcome to express the joys they have experienced or any concerns they may have. This feedback is always welcome and responded to in a professional manner. This is how I plan to continue things should I be elected to the board. I believe that being transparent and open to the community is very important. Tax Payers have high expectations for the school regardless of whether they have students enrolled or not. Continuing to give them a voice at all meetings is very important to the success of the school.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: I want to focus on collaborating with the current board members and all administration to continue to make sure our school is safe and that the students are afforded every educational opportunity possible. I also want to continue ensure that the budget remains balanced while having the smallest effect on taxpayers possible.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: I feel very fortunate to be a member of this community and that my children are going to be attending Schuylerville soon. My wife Mallory and I moved into the district specifically because we loved the sense of community and the vast opportunities that the school offers to their students. I grew up around Schuylerville with my Dad (Matthias Donnelly) having been a teacher for 21+ years and a high school administrator. I always knew this is where I wanted to end up and raise a family. Running for the board is my opportunity to give back to the community and be a part of the continual growth of a school district that already has so many great things going on. Thank you to everyone for their consideration with electing me to the Schuylerville Board of Education.

Louis Maggiore

Experience & Qualifications:

Currently on School Board.

Community Involvement:

5th grade church school teacher notre dame visitation Schuylerville.

I own a business in Schuylerville called Sweet Lou's Deli

Member of the Small Business Association in Schuylerville

Education:

Associate Degree in Hotel Restaurant Management Schenectady Community College

E-mail: sweetlousdeli@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: I always listen first. Then i make my decision based on what is best for the students then the district

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: As I said earlier listen to the voice of the student first then the voice of the district, the voice of the community and the voice of the board.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: A firm future for our students and district.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: I base what i do with integrity, morals, values, honesty

Robert J. Thivierge

Experience & Qualifications:

I have been a member of the Schuylerville Central School Board since 2013, where I have held the positions of Legislative Liaison 2013-2014, and Vice President from 2016-2018. The monthly meetings are a priority on my calendar and I look forward to each meeting.

As a board member, I've also had the privilege to be present at two New York State School Boards Association Conventions. At these conventions, I've acted as a delegate for the district and have attended various seminars to further my knowledge about current issues facing education and school districts.

Community Involvement:

I've resided in the Schuylerville School District my entire life and am fortunate to be a graduate of this district. I have two children that have also graduated front his district and currently have a son that is a member of the junior class. With that being stated, my involvement within my community has been life long. As a parent, I've assisted with many fundraisers and events for OSAA when my children were younger and members of this organization. As my children entered elementary school, my involvement meant chaperoning field trips and attending school events. As my children entered high school, my involvement expanded to not only attending various school events, but also assisting at the concessions and on the athletic fields as needed. I've also assisted the youth athletic organizations by volunteering my equipment and time to line the fields for football and lacrosse.

My mission in life has always been to assist others where and when I can. If someone asks for my help, I try to be there for them.

Education:

1986 SCS Graduate and CCAF (Community College of the Air Force)

E-mail: Thivierger@yahoo.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: Although I've always been a resident of Schuylerville, I am also a veteran of the United States Air Force. I retired after 28 years of service and had the privilege of traveling around the world as a flight chief and aircraft mechanic. I spent years managing personnel and aircraft in both Antarctica and Greenland. Traveling to these desolate and unpredictable locations sometimes meant making difficult decisions to keep personnel safe, but also maintaining a schedule to complete a given mission. Throughout my years in the Air Force, communication was also extremely important in order to network and connect with people on a personal or professional level. My skills with decision making, being able to listen to others, communicating my own thoughts and ideas, and being able to make informed decisions based on the situation and details provided have already proven to be beneficial as a board member. If re-elected, I'm sure this skill set will continue to be an asset for me.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: The purpose of the Board of Education is to set policy and programming that provides educational and extra curricular opportunities for our students. This can only be achieved through open and productive dialogue between the community and the Board of Education. Decision making should be tailored to the safety, needs, interests, and enrichment for our students and their learning environments. Programming opportunities should also reflect the current educational standards and guidelines. This can only be achieved through open channels of communication by all.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: The continued safety of our students is first and foremost on my agenda if re-elected and promoting a safe educational environment for all. The district also needs to continue to practice fiscal responsibility to protect the tax payers of our district. Yet, still provide enriching, educational opportunities for our students. The roll out of technology has been ongoing during my first term, and I'd like to see its continued growth within our educational programming. The demands for skill sets revolving around technology continue to evolve and grow and our students need to be knowledgeable in this area.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: I've truly enjoyed my first term as a Schuylerville Board Member. I've learned a great deal about the daily operations of our district and am proud of the educational opportunities and programming offered to our students. I feel our extracurricular clubs and activities provide opportunities for all students to become involved. I continue to be

amazed by the talent and accomplishments of our students, faculty, and staff and am proud to be a community member and parent in such a fine school district. Thank you in advance for your support, as I hope to continue to serve my community.

Shenendehowa Central Schools

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 3):

Ram Lalukota (declared write-in candidate)

Experience & Qualifications:

As a father of two children attending public school since kindergarten, I was involved in school programs for few years. Volunteered in classroom and campus. I am a resident of SHEN School District since 2005. My Both Kids are in Shenendehowa school system and now in Middle school. I am a successful businessman, running an IT company for over 10 years and started Restaurant in 2016. I have a professional background in NY State working as IT Consultant for around 17 years. If elected I would bring diversity to the board as well as my wealth of experience in information technology and private business, my creativity, collaborative spirit and passion, and a commitment to education that will enable me to be an effective school board member.

Community Involvement:

I have a proven history of leadership. I was elected President of the Tri-City India Association, a leading Indian community organization, for the past two years and have also served on our Temple Board. In those leadership roles I have worked with state and local elected officials to help the community as well as with the YMCA and Red Cross on community services.

Education:

Bachelor of Engineering

E-mail: rmlalukota@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: As an immigrant, US Citizen and my two children born here in US, I will bring diversity to School Board. My wealth of knowledge and expertise in Technology &

Business will bring additional resources to our School Board. I will use my experience to use build a better relationship with other board members and parents to build a better future for our school.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: This is great question. We should have an ongoing open forum for our voters to voice their opinion and school safety concerns where together with the support of our voters, school board can make necessary initiatives to review and improve our school safety and classroom environment.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: First, let me thank all our previous school board members for their leadership and expertise, which made our school system running well. In addition to supporting our current School Board District's long term initiatives, let us work together to give more training opportunities for our Teachers and staff to work in an environment technologically advanced to create a better experience to benefit student education. I strongly feel that Full Day Kindergarten and honors program are very important. These are my priorities, I would like to evaluate and plan for our School District.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: Your effort is greatly appreciated. I am sure that our voters will get more of their questions answered with this Forum, where all voters can decide who is the best choice for their school board. I am Contesting as Write in Candidate, Please Vote on May 15th.

Robert Pressly

Experience & Qualifications:

6 prior years Board of Education, 1 year as Board President, 2 years as Vice-President

Community Involvement:

Active Member - Shenendehowa United Methodist Church; Assistant Scout Master - Troop 45 ;

Education:

Masters in Public Administration - University of Oklahoma; Bachelor of Science, Systems Engineering - US Naval Academ

E-mail: bpressly@nycap.rr.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: I intend to continue providing a balanced perspective from years spent with both public and private sector management. In board conversations, I make an attempt to provide comments that are strategic and visionary in nature

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: These are critical factors to ensure our decisions remain supported by our community. Over the last year, we have held dedicated forums on Mental Health and School Safety that allowed us to review critical topics with our community

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: In addition to supporting our District's long term initiatives to evaluate enhanced scheduling, and Full Day Kindergarten, I believe we also need to evaluate how our accelerated/honors/enrichment programs are benefiting student education, and ensure we provide better feedback to our key district initiatives

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: Thank you for allowing me to participate in this survey. Please Vote on May 15th so we can continue the fine work of the last 6 years

Christina Rajotte

Experience & Qualifications:

As a current BOE member, I would like to continue to offer my experience and passion to advocate for our students, teachers/staff, families and our extended Shenendehowa community. I have the experience serving in this capacity and have built a trusting rapport and positive relationship with our teachers, staff, administrators, and our community in this role; most evident this past year with the contested land sale during which I stood firm in my position of preserving a quality of life and ensuring safety for our children and community. I may come across having a more “quiet or even-keeled demeanor”, but I have a strong voice and honest approach; I have high expectations for accountability, transparency, and fiscal responsibility, and bring to the table twenty-eight years of non-profit and management experience -- including a mission-driven philosophy and passion, and success in working with diverse groups. I also have thirteen years of experience as an active district/community volunteer and an experienced leader through PTA advocating for our children, teachers and education.

Community Involvement:

Current Shenendehowa BOE Member (2015-2018)

Current Member of Shenendehowa’s Mental Health Committee, and other District Committees

Past President for Shenendehowa Council PTA

Past PTA Co-President for Arongen Elementary

Served on NYS PTA Northeastern Region Board

Eucharist Minister and former faith formation volunteer at St. Edward’s Church

Education:

BA Communications (Cum Laude), St. John Fisher College Rochester, NY 1986-1990

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Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: Public education continues to respond to the challenges and pressure placed upon our schools by political agendas, regulatory and budgetary constraints, and major societal issues (i.e. school and community violence, mental health, homelessness). I feel it is imperative to be an active member of our BOE to be part of the solution in ensuring we continue to position Shenendehowa to competently address these issues in a manner that best fits our district's needs and goals---partnering with our teachers, staff and administrators to meet the unique needs of all our students, and connecting with our families and the community at large to provide dialogue, resources and supports to do so. I currently serve on the leadership team of a human services agency that provides services and opportunities to youth, adults and families who are impacted by mental health issues, alcohol and drug addictions, domestic violence, food-insecurity, and homelessness - issues that do not discriminate and affect students and families in our own "backyard". In addition, I have first-hand experience in working with children with special needs through a former career path and as a mother. I feel the combination of my experience and knowledge is an asset to our BOE as we address the complex needs of our students and district.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: Collaboration among students/families, teachers, staff, administration and board of education is essential to embracing the best practices and philosophy promoted by Shenendehowa. Furthermore, connecting with our community to foster a partnership offering open dialogue, feedback and resources is vital to helping our district carry out our student-centered goals and mission.

Transparency and communication are key to strengthening and deepening this partnership, and to increasing investment in the success of our district while building on our collective strength to support rigorous academic standards, advance professional development, and drive school and instructional improvement -- with student engagement, achievement and well-being at the core.

As a large district, it is a challenge to balance the diverse perspectives, needs and desires of all our "stakeholders". But at the end of the day, it's imperative they feel they can instill their trust in our BOE and Administration to give careful consideration to input, provide an honest approach, and make objective, sound decisions with the best interest of our students in mind--improving outcomes for our students and enhancing the efforts of our teachers and staff, while being fiscally responsible with our community's investment.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: The objectives I would like our district to accomplish during my term, with support from fellow BOE members and collaboration with our key education partners, include: Addressing Our Students' Complex Needs: As a large district, effectively balancing the unique needs of all our students - from academic and social to emotional and physical, while providing our teachers and staff with the right tools, resources, and training--is a lofty mission. Needs of our students (and of all youth across our nation) seem to be increasingly complex. We see much higher expectations and demands on our youth due to changes in family dynamics, technology and access to a competitive global world, and an unsettling political environment. As a result, our youth are growing up in a time where they may be impacted by large-scale societal issues much sooner than our generation experienced (i.e. families struggling to meet basic needs--food-insecurity or stable housing; opioid and heroin epidemics; school and community violence; mental health issues, etc.). When our students are faced with such real-life stresses (and sometimes crisis), it becomes difficult for our children to focus on school/academics. It becomes equally stressful and frustrating for our teachers and staff who have a passion for teaching, but their jobs require them to be social workers, dealing with issues beyond their experience and expertise. I have no doubt that our teachers and staff are committed to our students' achievement and overall well-being, but how do they provide an engaging learning environment, while addressing and balancing the complex needs of all students? There is not a single solution to address this question, but a collaborative effort is essential. Shen has made strides in addressing our students' unique needs by investing in mental health services and other supports (special education, ENL), but we need to continue looking at and implementing sustainable initiatives that fill the gaps and address new identified needs -- for both our students and our teachers/staff--specifically related to mental health and overall well-being, including safety.

Ensuring Our Students in the "Middle" Are Not Forgotten: In my opinion, Shen provides strong programs and supports to our students with special needs or at-risk, and extensive programs and opportunities for our accelerated/advanced students. There seems to be less focus on opportunities for our average or typical students. We need to look beyond the status quo and identify other opportunities or programs that may interest our middle (but awesome) students, and look at how we promote some of the extra-curricular activities, which are "perceived" to be for the top performing or "wicked smart" students; many of our middle students are bright kids but may be intimidated or lack the self-confidence to participate, sometimes due to perceptions; how do we encourage them and engage them in existing opportunities and what other sustainable programs can we offer to these students and what supports can we provide teachers to help accomplish this objective?

Continued Commitment to Better Communications Across District & Community: This past year, the board committed to piloting public forums on topics that were pertinent to our district and community. The purpose of the forums was to provide an opportunity

and venue for open dialogue and to increase awareness or to better inform the community of how the district is addressing topics, and where programmatic/resource gaps and misconceptions may exist based upon input/feedback gathered at the forums. We had two productive forums and look forward to others in the future, as well as establishing a protocol for follow-up to these forums and how we mine the collected feedback for information that should be considered in policy decisions and potential program/service changes or implementation.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: Mother of 3 sons: 11th and 12th graders at Shen High School and college sophomore (Shen Class of '16)

I believe a good school district is an asset to a community in attracting potential employers and potential residents. It is essential for our school district to have the support of our community, and, in turn, our community has the right to expect our school board and administration to continue to be accountable and fiscally responsible with the investment made by our residents.

I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve on Shenendehowa's Board of Education. I encourage all district residents to get out on Tues., May 15th, 7:00 AM-9:00 PM at the Gowana Middle School to vote for our school budget, bus proposition, and board of education seats.

Kerensa Rybak (declared write-in candidate)

Experience & Qualifications:

I have worked for five years as PTA president, 14 years in the district as a volunteer and parent, and run for school board twice. I still volunteer once a week in the classroom and chair various committees. I have five children, four of whom are in the three different levels of education in the Shen district.

Community Involvement:

I served on the board for Nick's Fight to be Healed foundation, worked on a panel for NYSUT to discuss state testing and spoke at a press conference addressing high stakes testing in our schools. I offer my photography skills for various charities within the district and volunteer at the schools in different capacities.

Education:

Averill Park high school and Arizona State University (no degree)

E-mail: kerensa32@gmail.com

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: Because of my volunteer work and how closely I have worked with staff and faculty in several of the schools, I believe I have more knowledge about the current school climate and its needs.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: I believe that transparency and openness is of utmost importance. Our community only works if it works together.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: I would like to address safety in our schools, broaden our outreach for children in the district who are either financially, emotionally or physically disadvantaged. I would also like to continue to educate myself on budgetary needs and the role of high stakes testing on our students.

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: This will be my third time running for school board. I am dedicated to being an advocate for our children.

Julia Tristan (declared write-in candidate)

Experience & Qualifications:

Parent of two Shen students (10th and 5th grade) B.S. in Physics M.B.A. in Accounting 20 years experience as a Semiconductor Engineer My children have attended large schools, small schools and international schools. I have an appreciation for the challenges that are presented to our students being part of a large district. I have an appreciation of the challenges and needs of our international population having lived in Singapore for 2 years.

Community Involvement:

- Member of Southern Saratoga YMCA Advisory Council currently serving as Secretary and Chair Aquatics Committee, previous served as Chair of the Program and Togetherhood Committees. - Skano Elementary CapCom School Banking Chair - 2nd Lt in the Civil Air Patrol serving as Drug Demand Reduction Officer and Character Development Officer - Coach/ Mentor of all girl CyberPatriot Team (national competition that focuses on cyber security) - Girl Scout Leader - Boy Scout Leader and Merit Badge Councilor

Education:

B.S in Physics; M.B.A. in Accounting

E-mail:

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: As a physicist and accountant I have a logical approach to problem solving and am very data driven. I make decisions solely based on data, emotion has no place when it comes to making decisions that determine the education of our children. I look at a problem from all sides and when I don't have the right information to make a decision I hunt out that information. My family moved her to Clifton Park 8 years ago and we choose Clifton Park and Shenendehowa based on a regression analysis I did on state and local data of all the School Districts in this region. This is the attention and rigor that I will bring to the decision making process when serving on the Board of Education.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: Decision making is not a one way street. Every-bodies input is vital to getting all the data needed to make the best decision. Any decision that I vote on I will gladly defend the reason I cast my vote in the way that I did.

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: I plan to work closely with the community to involve them more in the education opportunities that are presented to our children. Our educational system needs to be as fluid and evolving as the world outside of our district. Our children need to be prepared for what awaits them after they leave Shen and one way to do this is to bring our community into the school,

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: I am a Write-In Candidate of the Shenendehowa Board of Education so my name will not be pre-printed on the ballot. When you go to vote for the Shen Budget and Board and Education I ask that you Write my name JULIA TRISTAN on the write in line for the Board of Education candidates.

South Glens Falls Central School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 2):

John B. Farrell

Experience & Qualifications:

Served the past 6 years as a School Board Member.

Community Involvement:

Years of community service on Moreau Rec Commission. Served for years on the South Glens Falls Girls Softball Board last position as President of the Board

Education:

Masters of Science in Education

E-mail:

Q: *A good board is made up of interested citizens bringing diverse qualities they apply to decision making. What special expertise, knowledge or interest would you bring to the Board of Education?*

A: I have made it my goal to become and remain educated on the issues around all things school board related. I have been a strong advocate for our communities needs when speaking with State representatives. I believe I have worked well with my colleagues at balancing educational and fiscal needs of our district.

Q: *How do you see the role of dialogue, inclusiveness and openness in the process of Board of Education decision-making?*

A: I believe it is the only way to come to the right decision for our district

Q: *What do you want to achieve during your term if elected?*

A: I want to see the fruition of our Capital project and know I have left our schools better than when I arrived

Q: *Additional comments or information?*

A: I am pleased and honored to be able to serve our community for another three years

Kevin Ostrander

Candidate profile not available.

Stillwater Central School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 3):

Tim Hems

Candidate profile not available.

Jon Mueller

Candidate profile not available.

Waterford-Halfmoon Union Free School District

[Website](#)

Candidates (Vote for 2):

Carolyn Bell

Candidate profile not available.

Jack Catanzarita

Candidate profile not available.

Maria Ricci

Candidate profile not available.