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Lafayette School District Governing Board Candidates

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Teresa Gerringer



David Gerson



Art Kapoor



Berch Parker



Saveth Soun

The Lafayette School Board will have three seats available in the November general election. Five Lafayette residents - two incumbents and three challengers - would like your vote. Here they are, in alphabetical order.

Teresa Gerringer (Incumbent)

Teresa Gerringer has served on the Lafayette School District Governing Board since 2000. She is a Strategic Services Manager for a Bay Area consulting firm.

Question: Why did you decide to run again?

Answer: I truly believe in the importance of the work the School Board does and I continue to enjoy serving the students of Lafayette. Given the unprecedented fiscal challenges California districts are facing, I feel it is important to have a Board and governance team made up of experienced individuals who know the inner workings of both the instructional and the business side of schools. Our district has continued to provide an exceptional education program given the unstable resources provided by the State. We'll have to stay vigilant over the next four years to ensure that we have the resources we need to maintain the quality of our instructional program - we'll have to use those resources in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

Question: Why should people vote for you?

Answer: I was very involved in the development of our current Strategic Plan and would continue to help move the district forward. I actually really like doing this job - I like the people, the work and the challenge. I have also been heavily involved in developing the Partners in Education (the collaborative effort between LASF, parents' organizations and the District). I have an extensive business background and I realize that ensuring the fiscal stability of the District for future generations will be the primary work of the next Board. The challenges facing our District requires a Board that have knowledge of the complex school finance system. We'll need to work collaboratively to find solutions and make hard decisions while keeping students at the core of our work.

David Gerson

A retired tax attorney, David Gerson currently serves as President of the Board of Directors for Shelter, Inc. of Contra Costa County. Gerson recently served two years as Treasurer of the Springhill Elementary Parent Faculty Club.

Question: Why did you decide to run for the School Board?

Answer: One of the reasons I retired was to get more involved in my community. I increased my involvement with Shelter, Inc. as well as volunteering at Springhill Elementary in a number of roles, including serving as treasurer of the Parent Faculty Club. As the treasurer I learned about school financing and was instrumental in fashioning a campaign to increase parent giving at Springhill Elementary. It was successful. I also found myself wanting to know more about school financing in California, so I attended several meetings focused on the background that has led to California schools being under-financed. Given that I like a challenge, I thought getting involved by running for the School Board was the right thing to do.

Question: Why should people vote for you?

Answer: I am a problem solver. Our schools are facing financial shortfalls that threaten the quality of our public schools. Everyone in Lafayette has a stake in the success of our schools and I hope to bring the community together to address the District's financial challenges. I also want to make sure that children have an opportunity to learn using tools that motivate them. Different kids are captured by different approaches and I want to make sure that our teachers have state of the art tools to motivate each and every child. As a problem solver, I look forward to finding practical and creative solutions to the District's challenges.

Art Kapoor (Incumbent)

Art Kapoor has served on the Lafayette School District Governing Board since 2008. He has an engineering background and currently works as a property manager for large buildings.

Question: Why did you decide to run?

Answer: My interest in running for the school board was initially sparked when I served on the District Strategic Planning Committee in 2005. I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience on the Governing Board. It has been a

fascinating, challenging experience and I enjoy working with my fellow board members. They are great to work with and we are able to "agree to disagree" when we need to. I really enjoy the students - they are wonderful. I love going to the classes to see the kids and teachers in action. In spite of all the fiscal challenges districts are facing, we're still moving forward due to effective strategies like "teach the teacher." We are fortunate to have very good, strong teachers in our district and I want to continue to support our community.

Question: Why should people vote for you?

Answer: My engineering and finance background offers me a unique combined perspective. I'm really good with understanding physical structures as well as the many maintenance and building challenges our district has. As a property manager of large buildings, I'm able to understand everything from roofing materials to the many costs associated with operating a large facility. The District is one of the largest landowners in Lafayette. I also bring lots of experience working on parcel taxes and bond measures. I was very involved with organizing the last K-8 parcel tax committee and was the Chairman for Measure B so I'm experienced working with both K-8 and 9-12.

Berch Parker

Berch Parker works as the Lafayette Police Department's Youth Diversion Officer. He is a former high school teacher and past owner of a computer education business.

Question: Why did you decide to run for the School Board?

Answer: As a Burton Valley parent, I want to make sure that the excellent job our Governing Board has done continues and I want to give back to this great District and community by volunteering. I am already an involved part of this community - I've coached LMYA sports and am currently a Youth Diversion Officer for the Lafayette Police Department. I believe we need to find solutions for the many challenges our students face.

Question: Why should people vote for you?

Answer: My experience as the owner of a computer education company will allow me a lot of insight to the business and budget side of the District and I'm very comfortable making tough decisions. Further, my work with at-risk juveniles is unique. I assist the District when they have legal issues with a student; I respond to the school site and often find the issues arise out of problems at home. I believe we need to support our parents and our students. I'm already very familiar with the District and the Governing Board and understand the need for consensus on the Board. The Board needs to work together to make decisions and I'm able to work collaboratively. I don't believe anyone with an individual agenda would be successful on the Board.

Saveth Soun

Saveth Soun is a middle school teacher on special assignment in the West Contra Costa Unified School District. She is also the lead English Language Development trainer.

Question: Why did you decide to run for the School Board?

Answer: My two sons are entering Acalanes and I also have family here so I've always been fond of participating and volunteering in the community. I've volunteered for the Art & Wine Festival and the Lafayette Reservoir Run and I always like impacting my immediate community. I believe in equity in the classroom, in every district. Every student should have a chance for an equitable outcome. Differentiation (in the classroom) is needed so no child gets left behind. We need to leverage our community resources - from LASF to the Chamber of Commerce. I would be adding diversity and bringing an educator's perspective to the Board.

Question: Why should people vote for you?

Answer: I've taught public middle school for 10 years and am also working in the curriculum office as a Teacher on Special Assignment doing curriculum mapping, benchmarking and assessments. I have served on the School Site Council and Instructional Leadership Team and, in 2004, I became the lead trainer for the English Language Development program. California just adopted the "Common Core Standards" two weeks ago (California is the 33rd state to adopt these national standards) and I have the expertise in terms of curriculum mapping that the District will need since it will have to ultimately comply.

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