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**AUHSD board candidates**

... continued from Page A2

**Derksen:** Given the state of school funding in California, challenges always face our public schools. Staying focused on fiscal responsibility and stability continue to be key. Funding of the district's pension liabilities requires continued monitoring. Since one of the board members not continuing brought financial experience to the table, I'm hoping my financial experience can fill that gap. Although our district is a destination for teachers and staff, the potential teacher shortage forces us to find smart ways to recruit and retain qualified teachers and staff.

**Severson:** Student wellness is a big concern of mine. As a parent of three children currently in the district and as an Emergency Medicine Physician, I have many insights into how we can help our students successfully navigate the high school years. We need strong working partnerships between students, parents, educators and community organizations for solutions and to help ensure meaningful change.

**Hockett:** There are many, but I will focus on the very significant

teacher shortage, which has already reached crisis proportion in many California school districts. Presently, AUHSD has been only slightly impacted because our highly motivated students, along with extremely supportive parents and community, have made our district highly desirable to teach in. As our many veteran teachers retire, coupled with the high cost of living in the Bay Area, we will have to grapple with that shortage. We need to actively recruit teachers, strive to keep salaries and benefits among the best, and maintain good conditions for teaching.

**LW: What is your opinion about school start times and schedules?**

**Kendzierski:** The research on school start times is clear and we need to accommodate it. Block scheduling has been a step in the right direction, including a later start time on a majority of school days, longer periods to provide time for in-class collaboration and work on projects, and wider spacing of classes through the week that can mean homework for fewer classes on any given night. There is still more to be done and it's im-

portant to work with our partner districts, families and communities in this ongoing process.

**Derksen:** I believe the current school board did due diligence getting input from all stakeholders and made a decision they believe is in the best interest of our students. Since its implementation starts next school year, I would be honored to be part of the process to implement and monitor the progress.

**Severson:** I want to help further any efforts between students, parents and staff that will contribute to student success and wellness. I think this conversation (start times and schedules) is ongoing and productive so far.

**Hockett:** I believe an 8:30 starting time is desirable and would probably be healthier for our students. Presently we start school at 8:35 three days a week, and at 8 a.m. two days a week. To start the other two days later might result in some stakeholder opposition due to the possible negative impact of pushing back the end of the school day by some 30 minutes those two days. But I believe we should have that discussion.



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