

2019 Preliminary Election Guide

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City Council candidates appear in ballot order.

School Committee candidates incumbent alphabetical order & then nonincumbant alphabetical order.

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Preliminary Sept. 24 | General Election Nov. 5

City Council



Vesna Nuon
Highlands

INCUMBENT



Jeff Thomas
South Lowell



Corey Belanger
Belvidere

PREVIOUS CITY COUNCILOR



Alexandra Amparo – Del Villar
South Lowell

What of the two new systems for our local elections do you support most?

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3)
Because it ensures every neighborhood gets represented. It is also easier and less expensive to campaign in a district rather than citywide, making it possible for people who might not otherwise run or are new to the city to bring their ideas to the people.

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3)
I believe the neighborhoods need their own independent voice. I believe they will strive and have there issues taken care of promptly. As a district representative I will be able to achieve these goal for my district and the constituents of the district as well as helping out the at large councilors.

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3)
While I do have concerns with increasing the number of Councilors to 11 that could negatively affect decision making and stalling progress it seems to be the best option to achieve diversity. I do believe that candidates should reside in district they run. Either way I will support the voters.

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) Being that the demand for change was requested I believe that this option will expand for more opportunities for individuals to run for city council.

When opinions are divided on a tough issue, what will you use to make your decision?

I will reach out to all parts of the community and listen to diverse voices. I'll also use my experience and Lowell's history in making decisions.

I will use the voice of my constituents, as well as my beliefs on the issue whether good or bad to make a positive decision on the issues in front of me.

I learned a valuable lesson from the election two years ago. The issue as to where to build a new high school divided the city. I was the first to propose a ballot referendum and was not well received at the time. It ended up on the ballot anyway. Next time I will insist on letting the voters decide.

I will focus on community and lean on the majority input.

Education, harm reduction, and treatment are three parts of a strategy to reduce opioid addiction. How would you prioritize these elements in a strategic response in the city?

All three of these strategies go together. We need a collective effort that incorporates treatment, housing, and employment while starting education at an early age. We still need to work to break the stigma of addiction.

Education will be a top priority because the children are the future of this city. The kids will need an environment to grow the learning abilities of their young minds to next level. Opioids is also a mental health issue that I plan on dealing with because a person's mental health should be key.

I was integral in implementing opiod education in the Lowell public schools that is in place to this day. I worked hard to increase outreach and services to children that are exposed to substance abuse at home. Education is vital to stopping the cycle of addiction but much more needs to be done!!

My strategy to reduce the opioid crisis would start with adding one on one physical outreach and risk reduction are far as the education is concerned to prevent individuals from even needing treatment . And if treatment is needed implementing more facilities with longer term care is a demand .

What are your plans to clean up Lowell public spaces, and make them more accessible for use?

I believe in supporting community groups such as Lowell Canal Cleaners & Coalition for a Better Acre that organize groups to clean-up our public areas. I will work to ensure Lowell's Department of Public Works coordinates & cooperates with these organizations and make their clean-ups more effective.

Parks and open green space is also needed for the future of our development. With all the development that is happening I plan on making sure they provide space and keep our parks safe from any development.

I will propose corporate sponsors for parks and open spaces to increase funds for maintenance and lighting upgrades to make more accessible to all. I will promote frequent special events for families to enjoy and to attract tourism to our city. It is important we increase youth sports and activities

First identify if funds are available and ensure that they are allocated to that concern/ projects.

What new ideas do you have to make (or keep) housing affordable in Lowell for both renters and homeowners?

I submitted a motion for Lowell to benefit from the Community Preservation Act. If we become a CPA community we will have additional resources for the construction & preservation of affordable housing.

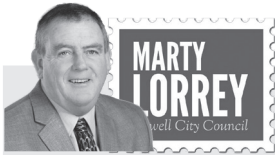
I am a homeowner and know the value of rents. Most renters are people who can not afford to buy and I want to make home buying easier for the lower income people because they are the backbone of this city and we need to keep them here.

We need to be more active in pursuing federal funds to subsidize the cost of housing by working with developers to pursue grants. The more new tax growth by developing the Hamilton Canal Innovation district will offer relief to the homeowners. It is important to partner with UML for job creation.

Revisit the current plan in place with Umass Lowell and the city of Lowell that have negatively impacted home owners real estate property taxes and that have driven up rental market values.

...but what's their favorite Lowell pizza?

lowellvotes.org/2019guides



Marty Lorrey
Belvidere

PREVIOUS CITY COUNCILOR

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3)
I believe there is a consensus across the city to elect neighborhood representation.

I always have made difficult decisions based on the facts on the issue.

Due to the current situation in our society I don't believe the you can prioritize one strategic response over the other. I believe you need to target the treatment to the individual. Education for those presently not using drugs, and a combination of harm reduction and treatment for current users.

To maintain public spaces you need to plan, prioritize and invest to maintain the spaces. I also believe you need to encourage public use with programs and activities to make the spaces viable and safe. We also need to reexamine and diversify the use of our public spaces to attract more people.

A partnership with organizations such as the Merrimack Valley Housing Partnership to utilize properties that the city acquires through tax liens. I believe in the past these properties have been sold through auction. I would consider a plan to make these available to qualified home buyers.



John Drinkwater
Belvidere

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) The "8-3" system will lead to a more diverse city government with more Lowell residents seeing themselves represented. It will also create more geographic equity through neighborhood representation, lower the financial barrier to run, and allow residents to get to know their Councilors better.

I will always listen to and learn from what constituents are thinking, on both sides of an issue. Often though, there will be good faith arguments on either side, and I will always do what I believe is right for the city based on data, analysis, and my own values - not what is politically expedient.

Each of these strategies is critical for addressing the opioid crisis and I would add aftercare, such as counseling, to this list as well. While we must provide every possible support for those committed to treatment and a life of sobriety, harm reduction medications and programs will save lives.

I believe that for a public space to be accessible, it must have the look and feel of a place where people are encouraged to come and spend time: seating, plants, signage, art, and easy pedestrian access. As a dense city, these spaces may be small (ie "parklets"), but contribute to quality of life.

Right now, housing units are not keeping up with job and population growth, driving up cost. We must encourage housing growth, with an emphasis on multi-family. Additionally, as developers seek to build new housing in Lowell, I plan to advocate strongly for the inclusion of affordable units.



Ty Chum
Highlands

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3)
More ideas equal more possibility and quicker result.

My Community Organizer skill and My Business Management mindset.

I believe in prevention tools. My first go to would be utilizing the school education system to educate our community on ways to prevent opioid and other dangerous addiction.

I would start by bringing the right people (those who have a passion to help other). Assessing the want and needs of every community. It's about assessing, planning (brainstorming), and implementing (actions).

Building a better relationship and communication with affordable housing agency, renters, and homeowners. I feel once we start talking the same language, know what we want and needs, plus the challenge, only will then we can start planning new ideas.



Dave Ouellette
The Acre

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3)
I like the idea of district representation and also adding 2 new councilors making it 11. I don't like ranked choice voting because every vote should be counted.

The will of the people, the budget, and common sense.

Education get the word out about addiction try to educate so people understand the causes and the problems of addiction. Harm Reduction to help the person with an addiction understand what's going on, how do we manage their addiction find the underlying reason till they are ready to accept treatment.

I have been doing that for over 10 years. The renovation of the North Common Amphitheater, the Basketball Court, the Handball Court, Levasseur Park, Decatur Way Machares Corner, Poet Pedestals

Adding more housing by starting a program that will make it possible for developers to transform unused 2nd and 3rd floor units downtown into apartments



Dave Conway
Belvidere

INCUMBENT

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3)
A fair system for the city.

I consult with individuals and seek their opinions, then I make my decision.

I would bring the appropriate partnerships together so we can maximize our resources.

Reach out to our neighborhood groups and get their input. Also, reach out to our delegation for additional monies. And explore grants that would target this issue.

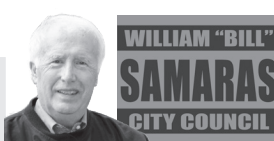
Affordable housing is an issue not only with Lowell but also with the state. We need to bring the different levels of government to the table to create a plan that will help solve this very real problem.

City Council

Continued



Juan Castañeda
The Acre



Bill Samaras
Belvidere



Rita Mercier
Belvidere



Sokhary Chau
Highlands

INCUMBENT

INCUMBENT

What of the two new systems for our local elections do you support most?

Option 2B - Mixed District and At Large (8/3) I think this system makes the voting process more fair for new candidates to get elected.

Declined to answer.

Other answers via email listed below.

At this point, I feel it is very important that we have the input from the citizens of Lowell as to which system they would prefer.

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) I believe this option is more representative of the community as a whole and a fairer more easier way for voters to understand while giving everyone a fair chance to be involved.

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) I am in favor of the 8-3 option as it is easier to understand for most residents and provides the most equitable and best representation for the neighborhoods.

When opinions are divided on a tough issue, what will you use to make your decision?

The best interest of the people.

The council is asked to serve as the voice of the people, but we also are asked to use our best judgment. I try to get as much factual input and the best possible information from all perspectives I can to make a well-informed decision and the best decision for the community as a whole.

When this or anything goes to the voters, I firmly believe that despite my opinion.....The majority rules and the people have spoken.

Consensus may not be possible but transparency and thoroughness for getting clear facts will be my basis for decision making. In addition, it is important that a Councilor reach out to non-traditional residents and businesses to collect alternative viewpoints and the actions that are needed.

Education, harm reduction, and treatment are three parts of a strategy to reduce opioid addiction. How would you prioritize these elements in a strategic response in the city?

We need to educate the community on the dangers of substance abuse with proper resources to assist them.

Truthfully, we need an approach that is all of the above, but as a former educator, I believe in the power of a well-designed and effective education program to give children and adults the ability to make well-informed decisions.

Education in the lower grades should be mandated. It is a little too late in High School. We much teach children when they are young of the dangers of opioids. We need people in the school system who have been in a drug situation and have come full cycle on staying clean. We need treatment beds.

People who are addicted are in need of medical care. Many times, in addition, they need mental health services. I am in favor of coordinating the emergency services, hospitals, community health center, mental health counselors, and other non-routine "caregivers".

What are your plans to clean up Lowell public spaces, and make them more accessible for use?

I want to provide more resources for the community with additional funding.

One thing I learned from the high school, getting our students and our community as a whole involved in the cleanup of public spaces helps give them a sense of ownership and pride. Our parks belong to all of us and we should all take pride in them.

No one will use these spaces if they are full of needles. We hired a person to do that. I will bring light to this issue to make Lowell cleaner.

Our public spaces are not only littered with trash but also syringes and human waste. This is dangerous as a safety and public health issue. I am in favor of more public drinking fountains, bathroom facilities and vigilance by city personnel to keep it managed.

What new ideas do you have to make (or keep) housing affordable in Lowell for both renters and homeowners?

We want to provide more subsidized programs.

We have to expand opportunities for first-time homebuyers at the same time, working with the state on tax credits and other financing to encourage private developers to include more affordable units in mixed-income housing settings.

It is not everyone who could afford the prices of rents today. It is possible to support developers whose goal is to build low income housing for those in need.

Gentrification is always a problem in Gateway Cities. As a city improves its facilities and schools, it becomes attractive to those who make investments and build high end housing. We can never forget that we need to keep housing affordable for residents who make public employee level salaries.

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Karen CIRILLO
Lowell City Council

Karen Cirillo

Centralville

INCUMBENT

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) The 8/3 option gives the City 2 add'l Councilors giving their time, effort, & ideas for improving Lowell. Constituents will have a Councilor representing them, ensuring their voices & needs have a focused representation. 3 at-large Councilors allows for focus on the needs of the City as a whole.

I listen to the constituents & attend neighborhood meetings because I believe the people are the heart of Lowell & their voices matter. I keep up with social media to gauge public sentiment. After careful consideration of all constituent input, I then make my decision.

The Lowell Opioid Task Force has been doing wonderful work and I feel they have their priorities in place to help Lowell succeed in fighting this epidemic. I am very impressed with their work, support their plan, and all their efforts in this endeavor.

I am always looking for ways to keep Lowell clean & more accessible. My motion for dog parks can revitalize underutilized space. I volunteer with the Lowell Canalwater Cleaners because I believe in their mission. Kayaking in the canals is another way to use one of Lowell's most valued treasures.

I support Lowell's Sustainable Lowell 2025 Plan to invest in building & maintaining plenty of affordable housing for rent or purchase, & providing equal access to fair housing. We need a holistic approach that includes working with our community partners & seeking aid from the State.



HARRY KORTIKERE
Lowell City Council

Harry Kortikere

Belvidere

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) I have chosen the hybrid option marginally over the at large RCV option. Both these options have drawbacks. With the hybrid option there is risk of incumbents not being challenged. Also how will the majority minority districts be carved out? At large RCV is a complex system & needs voter education!

I will abide by the decision of the voters on this issue. That is the democratic process. So whichever option ends up having a majority in the November election will be the option I will vote for if elected to the City Council.

We need more funding to fight opioid addiction. Create an effective partnership between first responders, hospitals, addiction treatment centers and social workers for a seamless management & treatment of addiction. Physicians & Pharma Industry must be held responsible for any over-prescribing!

I support Community Preservation Act which would bring in funds for maintenance & clean up of public spaces, parks, monuments etc. Volunteer clean up days organized by neighborhood associations have helped clean parks and should continue. I also support funding non profits like Clean River project.

Modify zoning to allow more apartments to be built, modify building codes to allow rehab of older buildings, create affordable housing loan fund to support affordable housing projects, implement rent control measures.



John Leahy
LOWELL CITY COUNCIL

John Leahy

Belvidere

INCUMBENT

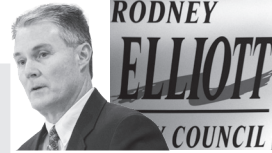
Option 3 - Citywide Ranked Choice Voting I think it may be the fairest way to represent the city as a whole.

I like to listen to both sides and then trust my instincts. I always try to be fair across the board.

I think that education of young adults is always the key to success. In Lowell we and the task force are doing an outstanding job on combating this crisis.

I continually work with the parks department and the managers office to make sure we are doing what we can. Its always a work in progress.

I think that well paying jobs are the way to go. If we continually work to keep people employed, with good paying jobs the rest takes care of itself.



RODNEY ELLIOTT
LOWELL CITY COUNCIL

Rodney Elliott

Pawtucketville

INCUMBENT

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) I have advocated for a mixed system of district and at large representatives from the onset. All neighborhoods in the City deserve to be represented.

I would rely on the experience I have been fortunate enough to have gained in the course of my service on the City Council. I will listen to my constituents, do extensive research, and make a decision based on facts and information.

Education on this issue has to start at a young age. I feel the most impactful learning tool is to hear from people in your age group that have personal experience with this epidemic. Treatment is critical. The state and federal government must dedicate additional resources to the fight.

Certainly people need to be responsible for their actions. As someone who has sat on the Disability Commission I understand the challenges we face. We need to ensure that each time we replace a sidewalk or develop a public space we make it accessible to all.

Lowell is more affordable than any of the surrounding communities. Keeping taxes as low as possible makes the dream of owning your own home feasible. I would advocate to keep taxes down.



ELECT Marty Hogan
LOWELL CITY COUNCIL

Marty Hogan

Centralville

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) I am proponent of Option 2b, a hybrid of both district and at-large members, representation that fosters a greater openness and ability for the council to address the issues of the city, both specific and general. The ranked choice voting option does not achieve this and only adds complexity.

Opinions are often divided in the simplest of scenarios, my experience has taught me that I need to consult with those in the know. I will make use of every opportunity to acquire a greater sense of the issue, and I promise that I will always make the best decision for you, the people of Lowell.

We must continue programs such as Team COOP (Community Opioid Out-reach). We must be new and innovative to treat the afflicted. We must make every effort to have drug and addiction education in our schools. Most importantly, we must support our police in the duty of removing these poison suppliers.

I would work to assure that the funds and resources needed for our DPW and Parks departments are continued and expanded as needed. As a city, we must make it a priority to see that a quality level of maintenance is afforded to all of our city public spaces.

I believe what we need in Lowell is several levels of affordable housing, spread throughout Lowell making sure that we continue to build on the positive increase of property value without impeding on Lowell residents, pricing them out of our city.

City Council Continued



Jose "Willie" Negron
Highlands



Daniel Rourke
Pawtucketville

PREVIOUS CITY COUNCILOR

What of the two new systems for our local elections do you support most?

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) I chose this option 8-3 for the purpose of answering one for this survey it is not my first choice. I feel is not the best option for under represented groups and is more expensive to the city.

Option 2B - Mixed District & At Large (8/3) The mixed district/hybrid is the most fair way of giving every neighborhood fair representation.

When opinions are divided on a tough issue, what will you use to make your decision?

My decisions will always be based on what is best for the city and the residents. Sometime one needs to compromise to come to a solution. I will try to find common ground and come to a consensus with my colleague to a final conclusion.

Careful review of all the information presented along with public input to make the best decision possible not just for one group of people within the city, but for the city as a whole.

How would you prioritize education, harm reduction, and treatment in a strategic response to reduce opioid addiction?

The pharmaceutical companies that created the problems shall be held responsible for what is taking place in this country. I will seek all possible means through our state reps, senators and congress people to bring more money in for education and treatment at a local level.

I would prioritize education and treatment. The local government needs to continue to be a partner with community agencies to provide education & assistance. Treatment protocols, long-term in/out patient programming as well support systems are proven methods to help with the battle of addiction.

What are your plans to clean up Lowell public spaces, and make them more accessible for use?

Its all about allocating money and control unnecessary spending within city government. Recently I read on the paper that some city employees were making twice their salaries in overtime. This is an example of investigating were money is being misused and allocated to be use in public space.

Providing additional resources to the Department of Public Works through such things as grant opportunities to provide for rehab and maintenance. Work with community partners and neighbors to create coalitions for up keep and programming.

What new ideas do you have to make (or keep) housing affordable in Lowell for both renters and homeowners?

Rehabilitate multiunit building in the city and create apartments units to be sold to new owners. Find ways to create funding for one and two family owner occupied programs so the new homeowners have an extra income by renting one of the apartments.

I commit to continuing to work with our Fed & state partners, local banks, community partners & non profits to develop new funding pools or incentives for things such as green living affordable housing developments & explore a lease-to-purchase program.

School Committee



Andy Descoteaux
Belvidere

INCUMBENT

What's the number one issue that made you want to run for School Committee?

After being a teacher and working with kids for nearly 40 years, I figured the School Committee made sense for me, so that I could continue to work for the kids.

How can we balance main maintenance and infrastructure while overseeing and funding the new High School construction?

This will NOT be easy and will require a significant amount of coordination on the part of the Construction Company and the City Public Works Department. It is my understanding that our Operating Project Manager (OPM) has had a great deal of success with minimizing negative impacts on everyone.

Has enough changed since the 1980s lawsuit decision ordered Lowell to bus students to reconsider neighborhood schools? Could we ensure that neighborhood schools are integrated and receive equal funding and resources?

John Descoteaux has done a remarkable job at figuring out how to accomplish this. In order to achieve the neighborhood schools, we would need to acquire more middle school classroom space. Not easy but we're working on it.

What would you do to improve parent services and increase parent engagement in schools, especially among parents who do not speak English?

We have several systems set in place currently. We strongly encourage our parents to avail themselves of these services either through the individual schools or the Family Resource Center.

What systems would you support, or create, to ensure that diversity is represented in all levels of the public school system, not just through teachers?

I firmly believe that we are making strides with our new Superintendent and that people of all walks of life will be pleased with the choices and people he is hiring for key positions that Dr. Boyd has and will continue to make.

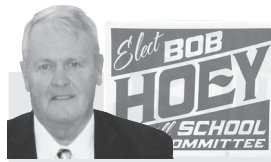
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Jackie Doherty
Highlands

INCUMBENT

In the beginning it was to fight for more funds, but through the years my focus expanded to make sure parents have a seat at the table, and to hold leadership accountable to do what's best for kids.



Bob Hoey
South Lowell

INCUMBENT

Special education.



Dominik Lay
Highlands

INCUMBENT

I would like to help making Lowell Public Schools (LPS) a good and safe learning environment for all families and students. Students getting the best education that they can get. Families feeling good about having their children going to LPS. Teachers and staffs get adequate supports & materials.



Connie Martin
Belvidere

INCUMBENT

Recognizing that an innovative and high quality public school system is the key to ensuring the economic and social success of our entire community.



Gerry Nutter
Centralville

INCUMBENT

Financial stability for the district

By hiring two new facility managers, we have taken steps to ensure the schools hold up their end re maintenance, including better communication and a stronger partnership with the city. The new high school construction also demands improved communication and collaboration from both sides.

It's the first time in Lowell's History to have a female city manager and she already created a plan to address maintenance and infrastructure. At this time we all have to circle the wagons and throw all our support behind her plan.

There's never enough money for the City. City has already secured funding for HS construction with MSBA and a 30-year bond. Current City Manager cares about Schools and I am confident that funding for maintenance of all schools will be available from the City's budget and it will be spent effectively.

The way to guard against our buildings falling deeper into disrepair is for both the City and the School District to conduct a thorough audit of the current state of our buildings and make a genuine commitment to invest the necessary resources to ensure building safety and efficiency.

A 8%-10% tax increase rolled out over a 3-5 year period will fund the HS project The Cities Capital Plan should include funding for roofs-boilers- windows with MSBA funding paying 80% and the yearly city budget should include money for standard maintenance

We should have as many children as possible attending neighborhood schools while still maintaining diversity. In addition to making sure our schools are integrated, we must do a better job of distributing funds equitably based on the needs of the student population at each school.

I believe enough has changed to reconsider neighborhood schools. But to do it right we need to build a large middle school in the Centerville section of Lowell.

When Lowell bused students in '80's it has a priceless positive effect. It gives students, families, staff, teachers, to share some of the resources, knowledge and friendship across the neighborhoods. Neighborhood schools cannot ensure integration or equal funding. Knowledge & friendship diminished.

I believe that the district must conduct a thoughtful analysis of student data to determine if we can maintain our diversity priorities if we make the move back to neighborhood schools. Maintaining a desegregated district has to remain our top priority.

Space limitations won't allow us to go back to neighborhood schools but we can change assignments to get students closer to home and neighborhoods have evolved to allow us to do that and stay in compliance. The new Administration is committed to fund schools equally and distribute resources fairly

Parent engagement improves when it is valued from the top down. Parents need to feel welcomed and empowered. I expect the Supt to model that value, track it, and hold his team accountable. More bilingual staff and translation services will help give access to those who do not speak English.

The parent information center has improved greatly in the past two years under the leadership of Miss Duda. With more resources I believe Miss Duda's ideas would increase parent engagement. Also more block party ideas like volunteers to give Salsa and Merengue lessons.

I have been working with Superintendent to increase parents participation by providing correct information and making parents feel that they belong. Superintendent is working on getting proper translation as well as parent liaisons who are bilingual. Adult Ed has important role to educate parents.

As a committee, we need to build programs, events and communication platforms that facilitate better connections with our families, especially those who face language challenges. We also need to support school level activities because our school staff are the most trusted by our families.

This School Committee has hired an equity and outreach officer to increase parental participation including extending hours at the Parent Information Center to give parents more opportunities to use it and hired more bilingual parent liaisons.

Recently, we hired some highly qualified, diverse school leaders and I support continuing that effort. I have also supported developing our own talent pipeline by providing educational paths for current employees, such as paras, and encouraging LHS graduates and locals to consider a career with LPS.

When we hire custodians, kitchen help, paraprofessionals, and many more positions. We need to make sure we hired people from Lowell. That would represent or student body.

Very hard to achieve! And may sounds a bit overwhelming to some. Ideally, to have diversity that reflects population in all levels I support a system that favors having percentage of qualified staffs that reflects percentage of the City's population.

The new Chief Equity Officer position has invested high level expertise towards our diversity efforts. We have already seen several positions filled by highly qualified professionals from diverse backgrounds. We need to pay attention to every level of hiring so our staffing reflects our community.

For the first time in my lifetime we see diversity in the Central Office and with the Equity and Outreach Officer and the hiring of new principals and the Special Ed leader I believe the Supt is committed to extending diversity. The School Committee needs to support this.

School Committee

Continued

Lowell Votes partners are...



Sherri O'Connor Barboza
Highlands



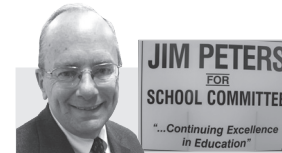
Hilary Clark
Downtown



Mike Dillon, Jr.
Highlands



Ben Opara
Pawtucketville



Jim Peters
Highlands

Special Education, Mental Health.

The financial crisis and inability of the current committee to work cooperatively with the superintendent and city council is what drove me. We need accountability, collaboration and relationship building which are skills I can offer this city.

I have seen an increasing number of families choose to relocate in search of a better public school system. I believe in the LPS and I believe that I can help this district overcome the challenges in front of it through hard work.

Equity, Justice, Integrity and Inclusion.

Treatment of the past Superintendent

Checks and Balances, Safety for our children will always be the priority while ensuring our students are learning in an environment that nurtures and fosters the growth needed while in High School. There should be enough funding to maintain and ensure the renovations. Failing not an option!

It is important to come up with a plan to address deferred maintenance at schools around the city and ensure we are applying for the maximum amount of MSBA funding available every year. Strong controls must be in place to ensure the high school project stays on time and on or under budget.

We are in a maintenance emergency with our city buildings. We need to come together as a community and provide support for our city workers. I am working on creating a Maintenance Relief Initiative in order to help catch up on outstanding work orders. We CAN fix our buildings!

Establishment of sound fiscal oversight mechanisms by the School Committee. Members of the School Committee, should constructively engage individual council members to ensure net school spending is met every year. Things needing maintenance, should be quickly identified and promptly addressed.

Maintenance is at the behest of the City Council. Making sure that the average maintenance man is on top of his game is the best way to balance maintenance. When my father took over, he discovered sleeping cots built into a wall hidden in the closet. They were gone that morning.

We are not in a position to consider neighborhood schools. Funding is not evenly distributed, we are not completely integrated now, how could we even begin to do that by neighborhoods. We need to have all our children on even playing fields and we are not close.

Every student in Lowell deserves the best possible education regardless of what school they attend. Therefore, we must focus on improving the quality of our under-performing schools before we consider a change like this. We must also improve communication with families about their choices.

I do believe we can change our school districts and maintain equal opportunity throughout the city. A three district system could save the city hundreds of thousands in busing costs, still provide multiple options to all, and help strengthen pride in our neighborhoods.

Things have changed, for the good. While I recognize the validity of the concerns of parents regarding busing, I worry, however, that the positive gains may be fragile. Some neighborhoods have unique issues that may need to be addressed before reverting to neighborhood schools.

Not unless we move 27,000 Asian Americans around the city.

Building communication at the beginning of school is important. We need to have multi-cultural staff and teachers to understand the culture of the families being served and what communication works best. This, also, is when we can take full advantage of technology; such as apps and social media.

We should share best practices from schools and teachers who are currently doing this well and look to replicate these practices throughout the district. In addition, we should have cultural competency training for all school staff and parent liaisons at each school.

Creating more districts and sending kids to school closer to home would have an immediate impact on parent engagement. Parents will have much easier access to the school and would be more likely to engage with the community around them.

School Site Councils is a state mandate. We MUST establish one in each school. We must build from ground up.

I would hire teachers who are fluent in multiple languages.

Definitely, support staff and teachers are very important. Beyond that, communication that goes beyond the flyers and robo-phone calls. Families culturally need to be understood and fear and miscommunication needs to be rectified by culturally sensitive personnel.

Creating mentoring and pathway programs similar to the one that began this past year for paraprofessionals will increase diversity at all levels of the public school system and provide advancement opportunities for interested staff.

I will strongly support equity in all of our schools to provide equal educational opportunities for every child. I also think an emphasis on peer to peer teaching in the classroom can inspire our students to pursue a career in education.

We must mandate the continuous existence and funding for the office of Equity and Diversity.

I would support hiring people of diversity in administrative positions.