

2021 General Election Guide

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Phone: 978-452-7532 ext. 808
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www.lowellvotes.org

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If you notice any errors in this guide, please contact us immediately and we will issue a correction over our website.

Candidates appear are listed alphabetically in their races (District, then At-Large) unless otherwise specified.

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The candidate questions in this guide are generated through a community input survey to identify issues that residents care most about. Watch for the survey when it comes out each cycle on social media, through community organizations or in your neighborhood and submit your questions! You may also contact the candidates directly to ask where they stand on issues you care about!

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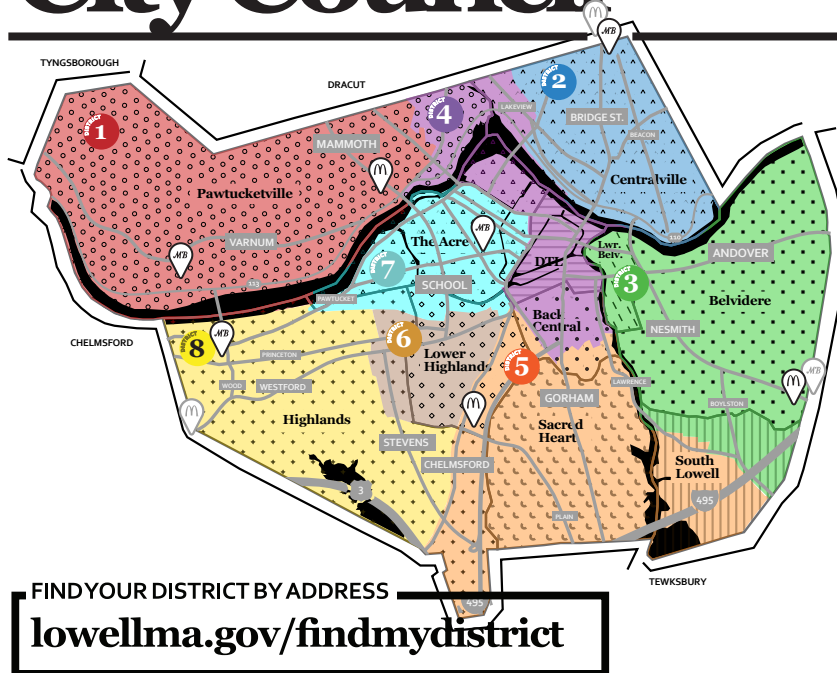
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Defining the Districts

City Council

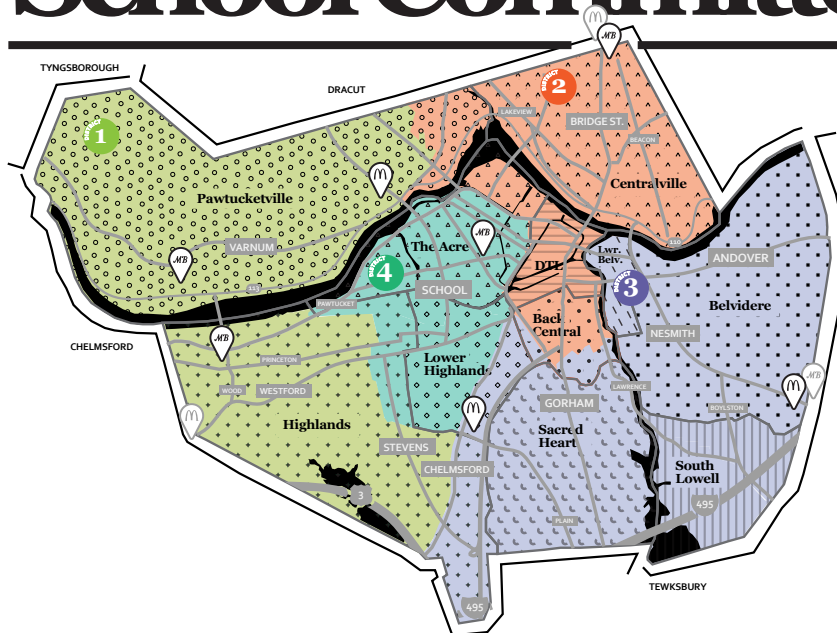


The new district map establishes eight, approximately equal districts, two of which are "majority minority," where Asian-American residents and Hispanic/Latino residents together comprise a majority of the citizen voting age population.

While they hew closely to neighborhood lines, some districts span neighborhoods or split off small portions in order to ensure equal representation based in census data.



School Committee



The new district map establishes four, approximately equal School Committee districts. One of these is "majority minority," where Asian-American residents and Hispanic/Latino residents together comprise a majority of the citizen voting age population.

While they hew closely to neighborhood lines, some districts span neighborhoods or split off small portions in order to ensure equal representation based in census data.



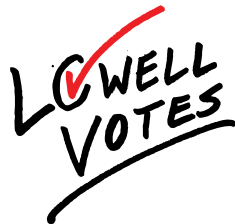
City Council Survey Answers

22 candidates.

8 districts.

3 at-large.

8 incumbents.



City Council

DISTRICT 1

POLLING LOCATIONS
 • Pawtucketville Memorial School
 • McAvinue School
 Call 978-674-4046 to confirm
SCHOOL CMTE DIST: 1

DISTRICT 2

POLLING LOCATION
 Robinson School
SCHOOL CMTE DIST: 2



RODNEY ELLIOTT
Pawtucketville

INCUMBENT



Daniel Rourke
Pawtucketville

INCUMBENT



Robert J. Gignac
Centralville



COREY ROBINSON
Centralville

Where can voters find you on the web?

Twitter: Rodney_Elliott1
 Facebook: rodneylelliottforcitycouncil
 Instagram: N/A
 Website: rodneylelliott.com

Twitter: N/A
 Facebook: N/A
 Instagram: N/A
 Website: No Website

Twitter: gignacforlowell
 Facebook: GignacforlowellCville
 Instagram: N/A
 Website: gignacforlowell.com

Twitter: coreyforcentralville
 Facebook: coreyforcentralville
 Instagram: coreyforlowell
 Website: coreyforlowell.com

What should voters know about your story?

I am one of five children with four sisters, two daughters, and three granddaughters. My goal is always to strive to be a person others can count on. I am always willing to work hard and lend a hand. My philosophy as an elected official is the same.

I am fortunate enough to live, work and raise a family in Lowell. I get to serve my community as a Probation Officer at the Lowell Judicial Center, as a City Councilor, and as a youth sports coach to so many of our children.

Born and raised in Lowell, I've spent more than 20 years as a resident of Centralville. My wife and I are proud to raise our young family here. I bring expertise in government finance, a lifetime of helping others through public service, volunteering and community involvement.

I've been a Lowellian all my life. More importantly, I know what it's like to leave school and then return. I got my first neighborhood services job at 14, and I served as a City employee for 15 years. I'm running because I know that together we can raise the bar - for Centralville and for Lowell.

What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?

One of the biggest issues facing District 1 are illegal housing units (stealth dorms). With the growth of the University, we have seen illegal conversion of housing. I DO NOT support a sweeping change in the single-family zoning ordinance. This should be done via the special permit process.

Pawtucketville is a neighborhood where many residents have chosen to live and raise their families. Keeping the district safe, clean and accessible to the multiple public spaces is paramount. My twenty years in public safety of serving the community has helped make Lowell a great place to live.

Public safety, absentee landlords, access to high quality education, clean streets and parks are all issues within our district. I will ensure our neighbors have a voice at the table and that resources are provided to ensure city services are meeting the needs of the residents.

Basic services like waste removal, street sweeping, and snow removal aren't equitable in all neighborhoods. If we can't make sure that residents trust the City for basics like these, how can they trust us on larger issues? City Council has to listen and act on feedback from every corner of the city.

What disparities were more apparent to you during the pandemic and how do you plan to address them, especially using the federal Covid-19 relief American Rescue Plan Act funding?

The American Rescue Plan Act will provide a one-time infusion of resources into our community. As someone who has dedicated their career to budgeting and fiscal management, I understand the need to be judicious in our application of these funds over a multi-year period.

Education. Those that were in most need of being in school and learning have suffered the most. As a Council, we must continue to make our school buildings prepared for a safe and on-time opening by using whatever funds are available.

Disparities in our minority and low income communities were most apparent during the pandemic. Access to high quality healthcare, education, public services is essential at all times, for all residents. We need to invest in outreach strategies to educate/inform our minority and low income residents.

Everyone deserves stable housing and nutritious food. Child care and school issues are important on their own, and they affect work for so many households. We must also work towards improving infrastructure such as internet access to all and keep it affordable for ALL residents.

How could we attract businesses to fill empty storefronts?

The City is working on a three-phase plan called the Rapid Recovery Plan to assist companies affected by Covid-19 that lays out steps for the downtown to attract new businesses and improve conditions in the area.

Keeping our city safe, clean, and welcoming to all are the best ways to attract businesses to Lowell. As a municipality that is very dependent on a commercial base, Lowell needs to promote the positives of running a business in the city, as well as working on issues that make it difficult to succeed.

We need to ensure our city services are fully meeting the needs of the residents and business owners. Investors are attracted to vibrant, clean, well maintained and lively communities that take pride in its community. Accountability and proactive planning and delivery of services is essential.

Our city's downtown has been our business hub. We as a community need to listen to, embrace, and support our businesses. Our local government needs focused policy, ordinances, and enforcement to ensure our business districts thrive citywide.

How can Lowell build more affordable housing for everyone, including people who are currently homeless?

I have supported a multitude of affordable housing projects during my tenure on the City Council. Lowell has added housing units in many of our vacant mill buildings by working with Mass Development to provide tax credits for affordable housing and we should continue on that path.

One aspect of housing I do support is In-Law apartments. This allows for our seniors, young adults, and those suffering from disabilities to maintain their privacy but still be close to family. Homelessness causes need to be addressed first and foremost as many have underlying factors.

Lowell is full of underutilized and vacant buildings/homes across that city. Although we do not have many vacant parcels for new construction, we have many underutilized and vacant sites to develop into affordable and homeless housing. Hundreds of millions of dollars are available for this purpose.

Lowellians should be able to find housing they can afford in Lowell. Right now, there are multiple funding sources at hand to invest in emergency housing for those who are currently homeless and develop reasonably priced homes for families. We also should look at incentives to stabilize rents.

City Council

DISTRICT
3

POLLING LOCATION

Reilly School

SCHOOL CMTE DIST: 3

DISTRICT
4

POLLING LOCATIONS

• Lowell High School
• Rogers School
Call 978-674-4046 to confirm

SCHOOL CMTE DIST: 2



John Leahy
Belvidere

INCUMBENT



Bill Samaras
Belvidere

INCUMBENT



Wayne Jenness
Downtown



Ryan Rourke
Downtown

Where can voters find you on the web?

Twitter: @Jleahy62John
Facebook: LeahyforLowell
Instagram: N/A
No Website

Twitter: N/A
Facebook: samarasforlowell
Instagram: N/A
Samarasforlowell.com

Twitter: District4Lowell
Facebook: District4Lowell
Instagram: District4Lowell
District4Lowell.com

Twitter: Ryan_Rourke2021
Facebook: ryanrourke2021
Instagram: ryanrourke2021
ryanrourke2021.com

What should voters know about your story?

As mayor this term it was an honor and a privilege. I thought that I worked extremely hard to be fair and listen to all concerns that were presented to me. I enjoyed working with local businesses and trying to improve our schools through the pandemic. COVID was very difficult but we worked well.

I am a lifelong resident of Lowell who had the privilege of serving as both the headmaster of Lowell High School from 1991-2010 and as the Mayor from 2018-2020. Under my leadership, LHS was recognized as one of the top urban high schools in the U.S. and as mayor, I helped lead the effort for a new LHS.

I first moved to Lowell in 2005, and have lived downtown since the end of 2009. I met my wife at a Spinners game and we got married at the Whistler house. I love living in Lowell and I enjoy working hard to make it a better place for all. This is my first time running for office.

My career has taught me hard work, growth and improving the bottom line. My 25 years of community involvement as a youth sports and non-profit president, and Board of Parks member has taught me accountability, collaboration, and efficiency. My favorite "job" is Dad. That has taught me patience.

What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?

Quality of life issues effect us all, no matter where you live. The sidewalks, traffic, safety, and schools. I will continue to fight hard to make sure that people are satisfied in their neighborhoods.

Traffic is a major issue. Speeding on Andover St--Clark Rd, Douglas Rd, and Wentworth Ave being used as cut-throughs. We have to insist that our rules of the road are respected and enforced and I have filed many motions on this. As a neighborhood this is everyone's issue and we must come together.

An issue I've heard about from many voters is the upkeep of city streets: Trash piled up near barrels, decay of concrete (garages, sidewalks, bridges) and lighting. Trash can be solved by providing more resources to DPW. Lights, replace with LED fixtures where possible. Concrete needs more analysis.

The Homeless population is the biggest issue for most of District 4. More collaboration between the LPD, DPW, homelessness coordinator, mental health facilities (state and local) as well as private business owners is needed. Improving the lives of the homeless will have a positive economic impact.

What disparities were more apparent to you during the pandemic and how do you plan to address them, especially using the federal Covid-19 relief American Rescue Plan Act funding?

I feel like our partnership with the local nonprofits was an asset for the City. We listened and worked hard to focus on a lot of disparities and we will continue to do so.

Virtually every aspect of society was impacted by the pandemic and in all cases it was disproportionately difficult on low income and second language learners. We must invest time, money, and most of all, effort, in making everyone aware of their rights and resources that are available to them.

Access to health & child care, as well as the ability to work from home or have paid leave are disparities across the racial and socio-economic spectra. ARP funds should be used to bolster our public health infrastructure and engage with the community to determine how to close other gaps with ARP.

Many jobs could be done with minimal disruption. That can't be said of everyone. From my perspective the economic disparity was very apparent and magnified for those that had children in public school. I want ARPA funds to be invested in physical infrastructure first such as high speed broadband.

How could we attract businesses to fill empty storefronts?

We need to come up with a long term plan. We have a lot of new and bright people over in Planning and Development. I'm looking forward to working with them on this.

The world has changed but there is money right now available from federal sources to reach out in a nontraditional fashion to the community in support of entrepreneurs and small businesses. We must invest in our own community, especially our minority communities, to meet the needs of today.

We should work to make sure that our commercial areas within the city are safe, clean, accessible, well maintained, well-lit and welcoming. Working with property owners / managers to understand their challenges in leasing their space should continue to be a priority of the economic development team.

Collaboration of Public/Private partnerships need to ensure the city is clean, safe, and inviting. Filling the second/third floors will also increase the economic base to generate customers for those filled storefronts. Downtown is key, but focus must include "mini-downtowns" in our neighborhoods.

How can Lowell build more affordable housing for everyone, including people who are currently homeless?

We need to partner with the state and private leaders to find solutions that will work for us now and in the future. We need to take care of one another.

Lowell should work with our nonprofit, public, and private partners to create more affordable housing by investing and expanding our existing inventory to redesign the living spaces to meet the needs of the residents and improve their quality of life.

This is not just a Lowell problem, we need to work with our partners at the State & Federal levels to help across the region. The answer to our housing shortage is not either / or, but "Yes, and?" Focusing on building affordable or market rate housing alone will not solve the shortage.

I think the city can collaborate with local builders on the right mix of market rate and affordable housing. The City also needs to lean on absentee landlords. A project such as Acre Crossing is a model example. I feel homelessness is also a mental health issue, and more space/services are needed.

City Council

DISTRICT 5

POLLING LOCATION
Butler School
SCHOOL CMTE DIST: **3**



Kim Scott
South Lowell



Tooch Van
South Lowell

DISTRICT 6

POLLING LOCATION
Morey School
SCHOOL CMTE DIST: **4**



Sokhary Chau
Highlands



Justin Ford
Highlands

INCUMBENT

Where can voters find you on the web?

N/A
 Kim Scott for Lowell
 KimScottforLowell
KimScottforLowell.com

N/A
 Tooch-for-City-Council-District-5-South-Lowell
 votefortooch
votetooch.com

N/A
 sokharychau
 N/A
 No Website

N/A
 Justin-Ford-for-Lowell-City-Council-District-6
 Justinford4lowellcitycouncil
justinford.nationbuilder.com

What should voters know about your story?

I served two terms on the Lowell School Committee and my knowledge of municipal budgets and finance background will help me efficiently allocate tax dollars. I will continue to advocate for Lowell residents. I made motions that brought science fairs and free lunch to all Lowell students.

My unique story: both challenges and triumphs: I moved to Lowell from Cambodia in 1996 and owned a home for 12 in South Lowell. Khmer Rouge soldiers killed all my family members. But I always have a burning desire to run for public office and to give back to the community.

I am an immigrant Cambodian American running for re-election in District 6. I am passionate to represent a minority-majority district and bring our residents voices forward. Lowell is where my wife and I choose to live and raise our family. It's a great City!

I am a proud veteran, a Lowell native who grew up as a multi-racial citizen. I've endured struggles that make me who I am today from being homeless as a child, to having an opportunity going to college and join the Army as a paralegal. Throughout my life I have learned the true meaning of community.

What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?

The pandemic is the largest issue. We need people back to work, children back to school, and economic development to have the funds to address the quality-of-life issues. (cut-through traffic, streets, litter, etc.)

South Lowell has been neglected for several decades. I will connect SL to City Hall, with the voice of inclusion and diversity; together we can provide a quality of life to all. Potholes, sidewalks need to be fixed, trash needed to be picked up and cleaned up. Local businesses need to be supported

Shooting into residential buildings. I have sponsored and secured City Council support and testified at the State House to increase penalties to the shooters. People should be able to be safe from gunfire in their own homes.

Affordable housing and renting. To build affordable housing Lowell needs to work with nonprofits, contractors with local realtors and federal housing authority, to build sustainable housing and robust transition programs.

What disparities were more apparent to you during the pandemic and how do you plan to address them, especially using the federal Covid-19 relief American Rescue Plan Act funding?

Parents became remote educators overnight and they had to balance this with work demands. This disproportionately affected women. ARPA funds could focus on childcare programs, and vocational programs to help get them back to the workforce.

I focus on outreach and engagement activities to reach all communities in Lowell in order to get them vaccinated. COVID-19 vaccine equitable to all must be honored and treasured.

The most vulnerable among us were negatively effected during the pandemic. Challenges in the areas of food, housing, and mental health should be priorities of future income to the City.

Healthcare access for older populations. With the pandemic it made it a lot harder for residents to get timely appointments. We should have mobile checkups to help serve the elder and physically and mentally impaired.

How could we attract businesses to fill empty storefronts?

Encourage the development of upper floors downtown, support small business incubators including MBE and WBE, address the homeless not having a place to go during the day and their lack of access to services.

Grants opportunities. Easy to access to applications. Multiple languages access.

Partnerships with the landlords, incoming new businesses, and listening to the needs of small businesses are needed to address the unique needs of the downtown.

We give grants and tax breaks to business startups. Because sometimes small businesses need a little help to get off the ground.

How can Lowell build more affordable housing for everyone, including people who are currently homeless?

Support zoning changes for additional housing in the suburbs, housing walkable to public transportation, converting city/state property to affordable housing, and coordinating who is providing outreach to the homeless.

I will work with DPD and non-profit organizations such as CTI, to build more affordable houses as well as to find permanent and stable housing for Lowell's homeless population.

Lowell needs more housing at every level, but particularly for low and middle income residents. Partnering with agencies and nonprofits is important to reach our goal. Homelessness is a major issue and should remain a top Council priority.

To build affordable housing Lowell needs to work with nonprofits, contractors with local realtors and the federal housing authority, to build sustainable housing and robust transition programs. We need to take a broad approach to ending homelessness and looking at what causes homelessness.

City Council

DISTRICT
7

POLLING LOCATION

Senior Center

SCHOOL CMTE DIST: 4



Dave Ouellette
The Acre



Paul Ratha Yem
The Acre

DISTRICT
8

POLLING LOCATIONS

- Daley School
- Charter School
- Call 978-674-4046 to confirm

SCHOOL CMTE DIST: 1



Ty Chum
Highlands



Erik Gitschier
Highlands

Where can voters find you on the web?

N/A
 daveforyoulowell
 N/A
 daveforyou.com

PaulRatha
 PaulRathaYemforCityCouncil
 PaulRYem
 PaulRathaYem.com

N/A
 chumforlowell
 N/A
 chumforlowell.com

N/A
 Erik-Gitschier-for-City-Council-District-8
 N/A
 No Website

What should voters know about your story?

I have been bringing change to the ACRE for many years. Started the ACRE neighborhood group ACTION in response to many shootings and high crime rate in 2009 at the request of Chief of Police Lavalle. I was on the board of Directors of the CBA for 9 years last 2 as the board President.

I came to America at the end of Vietnam war, lived with American family in California, came to Boston to work with Cambodian refugees, Worked with Mass Executive Office of Public Safety & Attorney General's Office in Boston, worked for Lowell bank, became CALL Exec Dir, developed 60 Middlesex St.

Ty was born in a refugee camp. With the grace of the universe he ended up in Lowell MA at the age of 5. Three decades passed, with many "helping hands" he gained many experiences and skills. Now he's on a mission to help and give back.

Lifelong resident of District 8 with 32 plus years of municipal experience in budgeting, operations, and management. Education: Washington School Daley Junior High School GreaterLowellTechnicalHigh-School University of Massachusetts Lowell, B.S., Civil/Environmental Engineering

What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?

More safe decent housing and more store fronts for the neighborhood to work at. I have been working on solutions for many years through my ACTION meetings. We are now working with 6 developers bringing 290 new units and new storefronts-they were all at my last ACTION neighborhood group meeting.

My district 7 has been neglect for many years from lack of representation at the City Hall. Dirty streets, potholes, lack of lights and trees and biggest issues of all are parking taken over by UMass Lowell students. I want UMass students to park in the UMass empty parking lots as part of their tuition.

The biggest issue at the moment is Steven street road construction. I believe with better communication there's lesser frustration and confusion. Few examples: Start/Completion date and time, costs, daily to weekly updates.

City services are the biggest issue in our district from yard waste, construction project management, homeless, crosswalk and street marking, to taxes, residents are concerned with the management of services. Having 32 years of municipal experience, we can make a difference in all of these areas.

What disparities were more apparent to you during the pandemic and how do you plan to address them, especially using the federal Covid-19 relief American Rescue Plan Act funding?

The biggest problem was at the beginning the state forcing people to travel many miles to receive the vaccine instead of bringing the vaccine to the people, in their cities, their neighborhoods. Lowell has responded extremely well once we were able to receive the vaccine in adequate supply.

Economic recovery is 1 of my 3 priorities by working with the City, State and Fed to secure grants, loans, to keep small businesses in our City growing and open. I was able to secure PPP & small loan from SBA for my business and can help other small businesses to do the same.

Effective communication(news and updates) from city hall to different communities, businesses (profit & nonprofit), and neighborhoods. Refine "City of Lowell" app for smartphone.

In my opinion health care was the most apparent. Lower income families don't have the disposable income or health care offerings. We can use the COVID-19 relief funding to open up offerings and offset costs along with delivering information that will result in better health care for all.

How could we attract businesses to fill empty storefronts?

I am working with the developers on the Acre upper Merrimack St corridor to actually add more store fronts in the Acre. Our Acre business have been very successful we have many 50 year businesses. Almost all new businesses have been successful in our awesome Acre Neighborhood

I am proud to say that I brought Tasty Dumplings to the City at 351 Market St, Gormley's breakfast at 343 Market St working with the City and building owners. I am a small business owner owning my real estate office at 463 Merrimack St.

Help support small business with technical and financial service and lease negotiations to help small businesses succeed and thrive.

Support businesses creative and attractive business plan. One example is allowing temporary pop-up uses.

Start a campaign like we have in the past promoting Lowell. Clean up our main roads leading into the city by painting crosswalks, cleaning sidewalks, replacing old signage that is faded, sending street sweepers out on the main roads more frequently, offer incentive loans.

How can Lowell build more affordable housing for everyone, including people who are currently homeless?

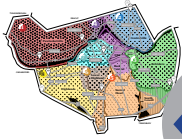
I was Lowell's senior code enforcement officer for many years ensuring safe decent housing. I have been working with many interested developers over the last 2 years bringing about 290 new units to the upper Merrimack St corridor. The units will be affordable workforce housing.

I developed 60 Middlesex St into 24 affordable units w/ 5 commercial spaces on ground level. Work with the City, Developers & landlords to encourage them to allocate a % of their units for affordable units and in return they receive tax credits, grants to subsidize those units.

Collaborating and utilizing Lowell City Hall Homeless Commission and different nonprofit organizations(LHA,CTI, CBA, and other great organizations).

We would have to continue to look at our zoning requirements and look at making sensible adjustments that have input from neighborhoods. Provide more protection for the property owners, so the risk of renting to low income families is not a negative in the owner's eyes and can be a positive.

City Council - At-Large



Deb Belanger
Pawtucketville



John Drinkwater
Belvidere



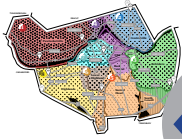
Robert Hoey
South Lowell



Rita Mercier
Belvidere

		INCUMBENT		INCUMBENT
Where can voters find you on the web?	<p> N/A debbelangerforlowell DebLovesLowell debbelangerforlowell.com </p>	<p> jm_drinkwater John Drinkwater - Lowell City Councilor jm_drinkwater drinkwaterforlowell.com </p>	<p> N/A N/A N/A No Website </p>	<p> N/A Rita-M-Mercier N/A No Website </p>
What should voters know about your story?	<p>Married 31 years, 1 son, 4 granddaughters. Born & raised in Lowell. Built career in Marketing at Wang Labs & ED of Greater Merrimack Valley CVB. Proven success in driving revenue to City utilizing Tourism, Arts and Culture. Established Leader, Consensus builder & Advocate for the City & Residents.</p>	<p>That I'm a proud "Blowellian." Though we didn't grow up here, my wife and I chose to live and raise our kids in Lowell because we truly love the city. Its diversity, history and culture make it easy to develop a sense of civic pride, and I am committed to making it better for future generations.</p>	<p>I've been blessed with five grandchildren and I'm on a mission to make sure the City of Lowell is the safest and cleanest City in the Area.</p>	<p>Voters should know that I truly enjoy helping people. I am loyal, truthful, and I love to serve or I wouldn't have been a councilor for 26 years. When a resident has a problem I try very hard to correct the wrong and make it right. I treat every resident the same way I would like my mother to be treated.</p>
What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?	<p>Downtown Lowell Neighborhood is the epicenter but First Class Education = First Class City.</p>	<p>Housing, because it ties into so many other critical issues. Potential employers want quality, affordable housing for their employees; residents face skyrocketing costs; and barriers to homeownership prevent many families from building wealth. The City Council must take on zoning for more housing.</p>	<p>Alcohol - drug addictions-homelessness. Obviously the only way to resolve these issues is to replace the leadership and the current City Council. They are stuck on economic development....</p>	<p>Drug addiction coupled with mental illness. What we need is a huge building such as a segregated housing complex, where people can look after them, make sure they are taking their medication. A place that once a person got detoxified they are monitored to see if they are staying on top of their plan.</p>
What disparities were more apparent to you during the pandemic and how do you plan to address them, especially using the federal Covid-19 relief American Rescue Plan Act funding?	<p>There were many disparities: access to healthcare, disbursement of vaccines, unemployment issues, limited \$\$ of PPEs. As a single mom, affordable childcare was critical to me 40 years ago and is still an issue in the fight against poverty. Prioritize funding to address all the needs.</p>	<p>Economic and racial inequalities are directly related to access to healthcare, individual health outcomes, and overall public health. During the pandemic we brought healthcare directly to people through enhanced outreach and mobile clinics. These are things that should stay well beyond the pandemic.</p>	<p>Mental health is a good place to start. We need to put some of this money into social emotional learning in our schools and Mental Health on the streets and in the Bushes.</p>	<p>It was frightening to see how many people lost their job during the pandemic. Businesses lost income with people remaining in their homes, so in an effort to correct this loss we could replace lost public sector revenue to strengthen support for vital public services that would help to retain jobs.</p>
How could we attract businesses to fill empty storefronts?	<p>Create Curb Appeal for all neighborhoods; flowers, cleaning, trash receptacles; flags. Hold Landlords accountable. Downtown summit 2x's a year to measure success. Find the next generation of entrepreneurs. Follow the Jackson Street Model of Jam Plan. Be Proactive vs Reactive. What is our vision?</p>	<p>By finding ways to bring more people and foot traffic Downtown, and to our business districts throughout the city. This means more residents through additional housing (especially Downtown), and more visitors through marketing, special events, public art, and a better pedestrian experience.</p>	<p>Law and order is the main ingredient. Along with school improvements.</p>	<p>We could help to deliver assistance to workers and families, support small businesses with loans, grants, and in-kind assistance.</p>
How can Lowell build more affordable housing for everyone, including people who are currently homeless?	<p>We need to continue doing our job on affordable housing like we did @Rivers Edge but towns need to step up. The City of Lowell needs to invest more \$\$ in homeownership opportunities. Advocate for more State aid & CDBG \$\$ Home ownership = generational wealth; Home ownership = stable neighborhoods.</p>	<p>By making sensible changes to our zoning code to allow more, and more types, of housing to be built. For those who are unhoused or housing insecure, "single room occupancy" housing or in-law apartments can provide affordable rental options. We must also push developers to include affordable units.</p>	<p>Many people are not paying rent right now. How long do we think Landlords will sit around waiting for their money. Places like CBA is one non profit organization that accomplished a lot on affordable housing. We should find ways to support CBA.</p>	<p>We certainly know that homelessness is a public health crisis, more than ever before. We have the working poor whose pay cannot meet the high cost of housing. And, the reality is that open space is not readily available. I honestly don't know that I have the answer but we need to come up with a plan.</p>

City Council



Vesna Nuon
Highlands

INCUMBENT



Bobby Tugbiyele
Downtown

Where can voters find you on the web?

N/A
 vesnaforlowell
 N/A
vesnaforlowell.com

BobbyforLowell
 BobbyforLowell
 BobbyforLowell
BobbyforLowell.com

What should voters know about your story?

My family came to the US as refugees from Cambodia. Grateful for the aid from Catholic Charities, helping others became part of my DNA and I've worked in public safety for 31 years. I have served on the Lowell City Council for the past two terms and always focus on keeping people working together.

I have been proud to call Lowell home for half of my life where I met my wife, Aleksandra, & purchased our 1st home together. We both graduated from UMass Lowell and we are raising our young sons, Samuel and Ellis, as well. I also founded and run a recruiting firm in Lowell, The Leap Network, LLC.

What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?

We need to tackle homelessness. We need more and better jobs, affordable housing, and more resources for those with mental health problems. We need to seek state and federal grants, make good use of the American Rescue Act funds, and partner with our local non-profits to get this done.

The issues that we're facing this year are centered around representation, the health & wellness of the City and also having the right City Council team in place to be proactive & innovative in solving problems of today & tomorrow. With the right team, we can face any problem.

What disparities were more apparent to you during the pandemic and how do you plan to address them, especially using the federal Covid-19 relief American Rescue Plan Act funding?

The pandemic hit the less fortunate the hardest. Many residents who worked multiple jobs lost one or more of those jobs and the essential extra income that came with them. Low-income families whose children had to begin online schooling did not have tablets or access to wi-fi service.

The pandemic has affected all of us, particularly among low-income, elderly and BIPOC communities, as well as small businesses. We must listen to & understand these communities better. Through ARPA, we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to bridge real gaps & strengthen Lowell. Let's Be Bold!

How could we attract businesses to fill empty storefronts?

I support the Manager's efforts with Small Business Emergency Relief Grant, which has given funding to 46 local businesses. I asked DPD to look for grants to incentivize building owners to renovate upper floors for residential or office space. This will increase foot traffic and help businesses.

Increase grants, incentives, & subsidies for local entrepreneurs to occupy vacant storefronts. Hire an economic dev. biz specialist to strengthen engagement, collaboration, & retention of existing downtown & neighborhood businesses. Strengthen partnerships with local business accelerator programs.

How can Lowell build more affordable housing for everyone, including people who are currently homeless?

We have \$2.6M to support affordable housing, historic resources, and open space through CPA. I proposed that we participate in the fund—it was put on the 2019 ballot and won nearly 60% of the vote. We need better paying jobs, and more mental health assistance as it is a major cause of homelessness.

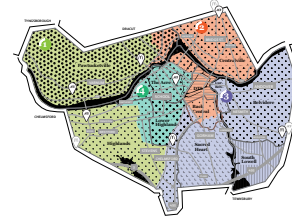
At the intersection of health, wellness, & prosperity is housing. The homeless need homes! Lowell must increase and, when appropriate, redevelop available housing stock. We need aggressive funding and less restrictions for down-payment & closing cost programs. We need more mixed-income housing.

Odds & Ends

Where do I vote in person?

You vote for these candidates on the same ballot as your district candidate during the general election. Choose your top three!

What are the School Committee At-Large Districts?

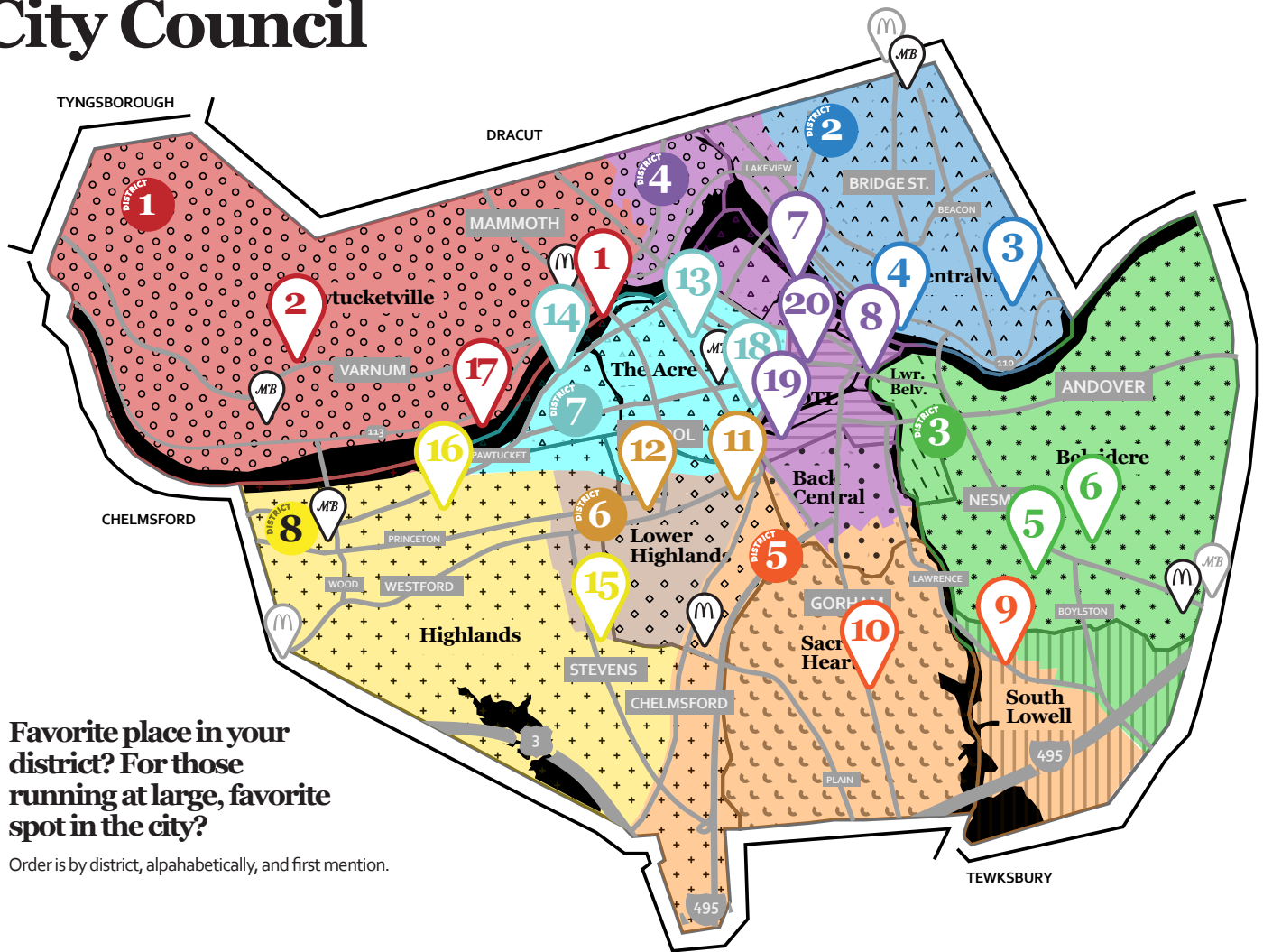


Each School Committee District is made up of two City Council districts.

...but what is their favorite band!?

































Keep reading!

City Council



Favorite place in your district? For those running at large, favorite spot in the city?













































Order is by district, alphabetically, and first mention.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1   Pawtucket Falls | 9   Concord River Greenway | 17   Heritage State Park Riverwalk |
| 2   Spartan's Pizzeria | 10   Spaghettille Bridge District | 18   Senior Center |
| 3   Christian Hill Reservoir | 11   Armory Park | 19   Downtown |
| 4   Centralville River Walk | 12   Phnom Penh Restaurant | 20   Merrimack St. |
| 5   Shedd Park | 13   Welcome Rainbow w/ the ACTION stage | |
| 6  38  Store 38 | 14   Sheehy Park | |
| 7   Canal & River Walkways | 15   Callery Park | |
| 8   Kerouac Park | 16   Hadley Park | |

City Council

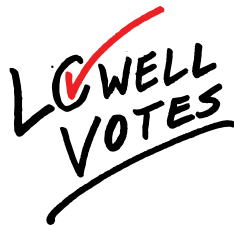
Who's your favorite band or musician?

Candidates appear district & alphabetical order. Names are listed twice in some cases for legibility reasons.














<div>  Elliott <div>  <p>Prince</p> <p>"Maybe the most underrated musical artist of our time."</p> </div> </div>	<div>  Rourke <div>  <p>Kygo</p> </div> </div>	<div>  Gignac <div>  </div> </div>	<div>  Robinson <div>  </div> </div>
<div>  Leahy <div>  <p>"Too many to choose from, but it is summertime..."</p> </div> </div>	<div>  Samaras <div>  </div> </div>	<div>  Jenness <div>  </div> </div>	<div>  Rourke <div>  <p>"Has been my go-to since High School. They have stood the test of time and put on an amazing live show."</p> </div> </div>
<div>  Scott <div>  </div> </div>	<div>  Van <div>  </div> </div>	<div>  Chau <div>  <p>"I love the fact that my eldest son and I both enjoy his music."</p> </div> </div>	<div>  Ford <div>  </div> </div>
<div>  Oullette <div>  <p>Aerosmith</p> </div> </div>	<div>  Yem <div>  </div> </div>	<div>  Chum <div>  <p>"...also known as the Bangtan Boys."</p> </div> </div>	<div>  Gitschier <div>  </div> </div>
<div>  Belanger <div>  <p>Lady Gaga</p> </div> </div>	<div>  Drinkwater <div>  <p>"My all-time favorite concert experience was watching them from the field at LeLacheur Park in 2009."</p> </div> </div>	<div>  Hoey <div>  </div> </div>	<div>  Mercier <div>  <p>"Every song was great."</p> </div> </div>
<div>  Nuon <div>  </div> </div>	<div>  Tugbiyele <div>  </div> </div>		

School Committee Survey Answers

















4 districts.
2 at-large
12 candidates.
6 incumbents.



School Committee

DISTRICT 1		DISTRICT 2	
 Ben Opara Pawtucketville	 Stacey Thompson Pawtucketville	 Hilary Clark Downtown INCUMBENT	 Eileen DelRossi Centralville
Where can voters find you on the web?	 N/A  benoparaforlowell  N/A No Website	 N/A  clarkforprogress  clarkforprogress clarkforprogress.com	 N/A  StudentFocusedVoice  N/A studentfocusedvoice.com
What should voters know about your story?	I am a 31-year resident of Lowell, 27 of which have been in Pawtucketville with my wife, Valerie and three adult children who are all products of Lowell Public Schools. I moved to Lowell from Nigeria for graduate school at UMass, Lowell. I am an entrepreneur who owns Duziem Labs in the Highlands.	Education is something I believe in because of its power to not just inform but to open doors. As a teacher of 11 years (8 in Lowell), I was fortunate to empower, advocate for and educate students that felt forgotten. My history of fighting for equity and amplifying voices is documented. I care.	I am a parent of a middle schooler. I believe focusing on communication, collaboration, diversity, equity and inclusion will continue to raise LPS towards excellence.
What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?	Though I am still listening to residents, busing, maintenance and food seem to come up often. These are new and district-specific issues which, because of the new districting, present a fresh set of challenges. In the backdrop of what will be best for our city, I am still thinking them through.	As many districts will say, District 1 has strong schools. There are still general needs for updates, upkeep and varied levels of maintenance. The lack of cultural diversity/equity in educators is the most noticeable of the district's issues.	Many of the Renaissance schools are in district 2. We need to continue to prioritize providing these schools with what they need to help their students learn and thrive, which will elevate the schools out of this status.
What plans do you have to increase funding to the schools? How would you use those new funds?	I will seek ways to increase grant applications targeting specific projects. e.g. online learning, early childhood education and gifted programs. I will encourage more individual schools to get involved with expanding such projects. Because of Lowell demography, proactively seek out Title 1 funds.	Whether it be applicable grants or private industry, solidifying its sustainability is paramount. In using the funds, I would consult with the experts: teachers, paras, parents and students. Of some areas I would address: special ed, the arts, staffing for paras, social workers and equity.	We must continue to advocate for appropriate levels of state funding. We should also hold the city accountable for properly planning & funding continuous & required improvement of our school buildings. Funds should go to schools for SSC's to decide use based on their specific goals and needs.
What is your plan to better involve both staff and public school families in decision making?	Establishment of School Site Councils in every building is a state mandate. I will encourage the central office to make sure this is implemented. When I headed the Citywide Parent Council, I observed that we were not compliant. This is an excellent way of providing voice to staff and families.	I'd create a working group pilot: inclusive of curriculum designers, and Lowell experts in the classroom, in the social work space, including also both parents and students. This working group would look not only at curriculum content, but the styles of presenting the materials as one example.	We must continue to encourage staff and families to get involved in SSC's. These meetings should be accessible and there should be ways to gather input from those that are unable to attend. Also sharing best practices between schools related to family engagement.
Is our curriculum across the grades and school evidence based, and in what ways are community members and students involved in developing and improving curriculum?	There is a great deal of variance in the curriculum across our schools. I would encourage a serious exercise of alignment between the various schools. As a school committee member, I will encourage my colleagues to seek opportunities for the community and students to get involved in this exercise.	Though some is, curriculum is not all evidence based as that implies proven theory. It's also based on observations, historically accepted data, vantage points, etc. Typically, community and students are not involved in its development, often it's a mix of faculty, upper management, and consultants.	Our curriculum is evidence based and MA standards are some of the best in the country, however we as a community should be working together to incorporate culturally and linguistically sustaining practices into all classrooms.

School Committee

	DISTRICT 3		DISTRICT 4	
	 <p>Susie Chhoun South Lowell</p>	 <p>Andy Descoteaux Belvidere</p> <p>INCUMBENT</p>	 <p>Cheth Khim The Acre</p>	 <p>Dominik Lay Highlands</p> <p>INCUMBENT</p>
Where can voters find you on the web?	<p>  N/A  susieforlowellschools  susieforlowellschools susieforlowellschools.com </p>	<p>  N/A  avoiceforthekids  N/A No Website </p>	<p>  KhimCheth  N/A  ChethKhim No Website </p>	<p>  N/A  LayforSchoolCommittee  N/A No Website </p>
What should voters know about your story?	<p>Lowell has been my home since arriving in 1989 after my birth in a Cambodian/Thai refugee camp. My two daughters and I attended Lowell Public Schools. I would like to be the voice for our teachers, families, and most importantly, our children. I've been an educator in Lowell for over 20 years.</p>	<p>As a life-long educator, I feel that I bring a teacher's perspective to the School Committee. Considering the damage that has occurred to our students since the pandemic, I believe I have the background necessary to move our students closer to where they should be, had it not been for COVID.</p>	<p>I'm a software developer / crypto and stock market investor. I believe in passion and helping those in need.</p>	<p>I got elected the first time to School Committee in 2017. I had motions that were helpful to students. I would like to ask for your vote so that I could return to serve you. I am a person who believes that education is important for every students and family. It should be fair. No politics.</p>
What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?	<p>One of the biggest issues that I'd like to address for my district is increasing opportunities for parent involvement. We can remove barriers to engagement with families through translation services, providing childcare for meetings, and offering culturally diverse resources.</p>	<p>We need to keep a watchful eye on the Lowell High Project to make sure that we get what has been promised. Acquiring level performance at all of our schools is extremely important for our students and for our taxpayers, as well. Great school systems elevate the value of living in a city.</p>	<p>Helping those in need that lack financial stability.</p>	<p>I wish more parents put more effort in their child's education. I wish more parents speak to their child's counselor or teachers. Spend more time at after school activities or read before bed. Solution are making parents comfortable & have network for parents to share their successful stories.</p>
What plans do you have to increase funding to the schools? How would you use those new funds?	<p>Funds must be directed to programs that directly help our students and teachers in the classroom. The COVID pandemic has robbed our children of valuable learning time & we will need to invest in programs that help our students fill in gaps in their education and their social/emotional development.</p>	<p>We are obviously receiving a lot of funds to help mitigate the effects of COVID, but we have other needs in the district. I believe the city should make every effort to acquire the St. Louis School/Parish property. This would save the district over a million dollars every year.</p>	<p>Nonprofit organization focused on youth education.</p>	<p>Make LPS attractive to all students and parents. School funding is proportional to the amount of students attending Lowell Public Schools(LPS). When students go to a Charter School or a Technical School money follow those students. Make sure MA legislatures committed to Students Opportunity Act.</p>
What is your plan to better involve both staff and public school families in decision making?	<p>As a school committee member, I will advocate for working together as a community, providing more communication, cooperation and coordination between students, parents, teachers, & administrators ensuring Lowell families have ample opportunity to partner with schools for our children's future.</p>	<p>We have already established School Site Councils for this purpose. We (School Committee) will be monitoring them to find out exactly what our parents believe is a need in their schools.</p>	<p>A weekly meeting discussion on the pros and cons of the week and how to grow as a organization.</p>	<p>For parents to want to get involved, LPS as well as City, need to provide them with the up to date information the way they would understand. School Site Parent Councils is one place. Also sending information directly to parents including electronically about the importance of their participation.</p>
Is our curriculum across the grades and school evidence based, and in what ways are community members and students involved in developing and improving curriculum?	<p>Parents and students should be involved in helping to identify gaps in classroom resources, curriculum, and in suggesting culturally diverse options that will help supplement the curriculum and allow students to gain a multi-cultural perspective on a variety of topics.</p>	<p>For the most part, I believe it is already evidence based. The district is always evaluating the current curriculum, and decide whether or not the curriculum needs to be updated.</p>	<p>Pushing innovation on the youth and exposing them to new opportunities with science and technology activities.</p>	<p>Beside the core curriculum the community members and students should have a voice and suggestion to modify and to create a new topic of study that makes our community stronger and increase participation. If there are two sides of the history, then knowing both sides makes us all better educated.</p>

School Committee -At-Large



Mike Dillon, Jr.
Highlands

INCUMBENT



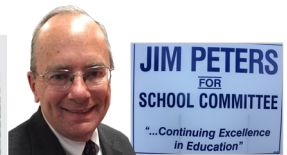
Jackie Doherty
The Acres

INCUMBENT



Connie Martin
Belvidere

INCUMBENT



Jim Peters
Highlands

Where can voters find you on the web?

MikeDillonJr2
 Mike Dillon Jr. for Lowell School Committee
 mikedillonjrforlsc
 No Website

N/A
 electjackiedoherty
 N/A
 No Website

N/A
 conniemartin.lowellschools
 N/A
 No Website

N/A
 N/A
 N/A
jimpetersblog.com

What should voters know about your story?

Wife Allison, 3 daughters, live in the Highlands, Lowell Firefighter, former teacher, small business owner

Five years before I ever ran for school committee, I was working to improve our schools and get school funding we need as an outspoken leader on the Citywide Parent Council. My commitment to excellent public schools and opportunities for each child to succeed drives every decision I make.

All of my professional non-profit experience, along with my service on the Lowell School Committee, have taught me the value of committed community involvement and each step along the way has made me more and more ambitious for what our school system can achieve.

Born in Iowa and bring those values to my adopted city of Lowell. Accountant for 7 years, saving Wang \$2 million. Taught for 20 years in Massachusetts and a principal for 3. Graduated UMass Lowell and studied computers at Fitchburg. Married to Vickie and have 4 children and four grandchildren.

What's the biggest issue in your district and how will you resolve it? For those running at-large, what's the biggest issue facing the city?

The biggest issue in the city right now is individual health. Our children need to be active, socialize, and learn how to take care of their bodies. The physical and mental well-being of every individual should be a focal point of our recovery efforts.

The biggest issue facing the schools right now is using the federal funds wisely to have the most positive impact on the most students--especially those with the highest needs. That means building staff capacity and having supports to offset the emotional toll and learning loss from the pandemic.

Our effective response to the challenges of the ongoing pandemic and its damaging impact on all of our students and their families. That includes safely opening our schools to in-person learning and supporting educational and mental health interventions for all of our students

The formation and construction of the High School. We can not afford slippage and mistakes in Construction. As for formation, we need to maintain the Latin Lyceum, while working to expand access to vocational education through cooperation with Great Lowell Technical High School.

What plans do you have to increase funding to the schools? How would you use those new funds?

There is opportunity for large savings on transportation. Our current district map and school assignment policy are inefficient. We could provide a much better product and meet ALL of our transportation needs in the district with a revamp of these policies.

I push for educational dollars by reaching out to legislative leaders at the state house and the city council, as well as joining with the Mass. Assoc. of School Committees. We must use and distribute the funds wisely and fairly to provide each child with the resources they need to learn.

We must spend the recent increase in federal funds on classroom based positions to ensure that our students, who have been so dramatically impacted by the pandemic's disruption of their education, can be given the appropriate teaching and tutor based interventions to make up critical ground.

Our funding is fixed by the General Court and the City. New funds should be given to those on our support staff. Next in order is books, as reading has to be desired by the School Committee. Then teacher's pay raises. Children at an early age have to be on schedule for reading every day.

What is your plan to better involve both staff and public school families in decision making?

I think talking to people and being present in the community is the best way to get input from families. It is difficult for many parents to stay connected and provide their own opinions. I would encourage people to reach out to me, or sign up to speak at a meeting. Your thoughts will be heard.

I support empowering school site councils with building-based budget decisions and I have repeatedly asked for training/access for these groups. Frontline staff and parents must be heard. We need better 2-way communication and a collaborative mindset where their input is valued and acted upon.

I have supported the school site budgeting process, however, I believe that this new effort still requires additional facilitation and training to ensure that parent, teacher and community voices are clearly and respectfully heard during the entire decision making process.

Studies show Parents are key to student success, so first we must involve parents in their children's education at home and in schools. Progress often comes from new ideas and public hearings are ways of gaining input from both staff and families. And parents must get close to Committee members.

Is our curriculum across the grades and school evidence based, and in what ways are community members and students involved in developing and improving curriculum?

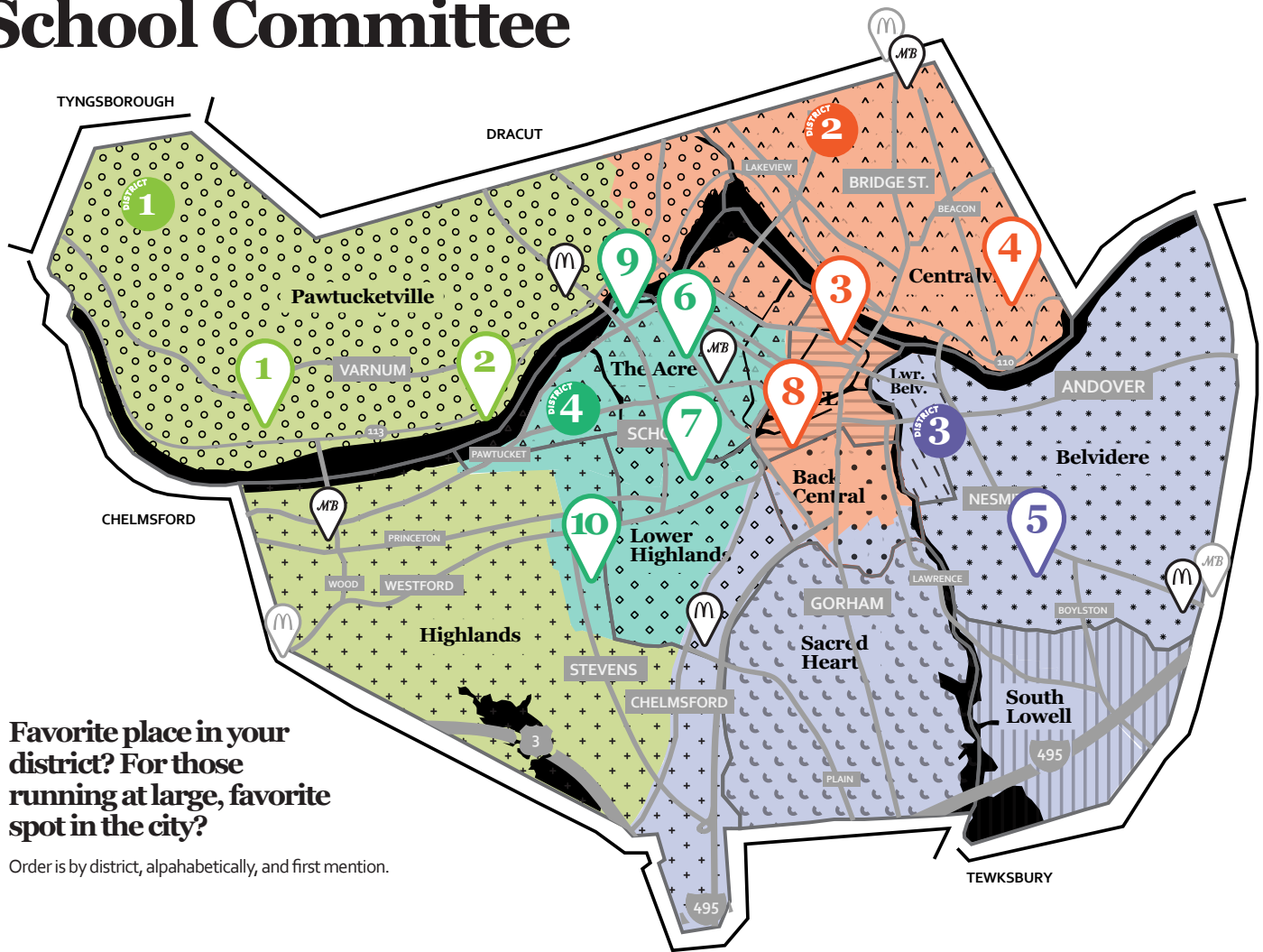
Providing an evidence based curriculum is important. We should be refining content often, while keeping in mind that the basics of reading, writing, and communication skills are what set our kids up for life.

Our curriculum is evidence based, but needs to be more inclusive not only in terms of community involvement but also in content and areas of study. I have asked for updates on curriculum, so we have those conversations publicly as a community.

The district uses a variety of curriculum systems and materials but they are all evidence based and they have been vetted by our Curriculum and Instruction office. Local curriculum mapping brings together teams of our district's teachers and content experts effectively implement in our district.

Yes, my experience is it is evidence based, as is the testing. Fads come and go, but we must always return to the basics. The Community, including students should openly discuss what is taught and issues brought to the School Committee. I am writing a book on the history the Lowell School System.

School Committee



Favorite place in your district? For those running at large, favorite spot in the city?

Order is by district, alphabetically, and first mention.

- 1**  **Market Basket (Boulevard)**
 Nothing is better than grocery-shopping at the new MB on The Blvd on Sunday mornings after church service with some pastries at check out.
- 2**  **The Boulevard**
 I love the water. There is a peace and a calming effect just looking out over the water. Walking down the path when the foliage is on the trees is also beautiful.
- 3**  **Boardinghouse Park**
- 4**  **Christian Hill Reservoir**
 There is something serene about the sunrise and sunsets there.
- 5**  **Shedd Park**
- 6**  **The Acre**

- 7**  **Clemente/Pailin Park**
 There are always many people there. There is playground for kids. Some play basketball and skateboard. Grownups playing volleyball and chess. Everyone is friendly. The City should to put a splash pad here.
- 8**  **Owl Diner**
 A storied Lowell institution!
- 9**  **Merrimack River**
- 10**  **My Front Porch**
 Here, I am available to talk to any resident or student about any issue.

School Committee

Who's your favorite band or musician?

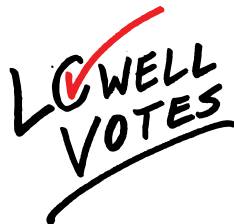
Candidates appear district & alphabetical order. Artist names are listed twice in some cases for legibility reasons.

District	Candidate	Favorite Band or Musician	Comments
District 1	Opara	BOSTON	
	Thompson	Earth, Wind, & Fire	
District 2	Clark	THE BEATLES	
	DelRossi	PINK	"She is passionate about the meaning of her music."
District 3	Chhoun	Sin Sisamouth "The 'Khmer Elvis Presley'."	
	Descoteaux	THE BEATLES "They were game-changers."	
District 4	Khim	Does not have a favorite band or musician. "I listen to pod casts."	
	Lay	Sin Sisamouth	
District 5	Dillon	Pink Floyd	
	Doherty	FLEETWOOD MAC	
	Martin	Ray Charles	
	Peters	BILLY JOEL	

Keep going for bonus questions
for both City Council & School
Committee races!

Web Bonus Questions

**3 more questions
answered by
34 candidates.**



City Council - Bonus Qs



Rodney Elliott
Pawtucketville



Daniel Rourke
Pawtucketville



Robert Gignac
Centralville



Corey Robinson
Centralville

What would you do to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lowell?

We have taken a major step by hiring a consultant that will provide a roadmap for the city to follow. The next step will be the hiring of a DEI Officer. That position has been funded in the City budget. The audit lays out (7) immediate recommendations to implement.

Lowell should continue the outreach of not just openings in boards, commissions or employment, but also community planning that reaches out to all that are underrepresented. Encourage more involvement, but also make sure that those who choose not to get involved are not neglected.

Listen to the various stakeholders across the community. Coming to the table with an open mind and ability and willingness to change past practices and fully engage in thoughtful, meaningful conversations to develop a strategy. This has to be built into our community and how we operate as a city.

We must look to hire based on qualifications rather than relationships, which includes reforming HR hiring processes and conducting outreach to qualified candidates in our community. We need to focus on available talent pipelines like the VOKE, UML, and MCC to develop required skill sets.

What would you do to make sure that parks/river walks/etc are taken care of so everyone can enjoy them? (Free of trash, needles, other pollution, etc)

I supported funding of a position to hire an employee to specifically pick up needles. That person has picked up nearly 35,000 needles. We all need to work together to keep our city clean. I have volunteered my time with the Lowell Litter Krewe in this worthwhile endeavor.

Lowell should continue the partnerships with both community based organizations as well as state agencies to make sure our public areas are taken care of. PARC and LAND grants made available are a great way to obtain, improve, and conserve our public spaces.

I would task the City to develop a regular maintenance and long term strategic greenspace plan to continuously invest in our parks and greenspaces. As a City Councilor, I would hold the administration and vendors accountable while advocating for resources to ensure service delivery.

The city must have routine, proactive maintenance plans for in-house and contracted services and accountability for service delivery. We also need to listen to our neighbors' requests on what they would like to see provided in our greenspace to increase usage amongst our residents.

How can the City Council work to make sure Lowell's schools better support the success of our diverse population of students, including those with IEP and 504 plans?

The Council has one member that sits on the School Committee. We need to ensure that whoever we vote on for Mayor is someone who understands these types of issues and will work to maximize the progress of our students. Each child deserves the best education possible.

The city and schools should work together to create more options for the students who are in need of both IEP and 504 plans. Better and more diverse options that best meet the accommodations of Lowell students increases their chance for success. This should be prioritized.

As a former school committee member, current school leader and parent, I know the success of our City relies on the quality of education provided by the public education. The CC should ensure resources to support our diverse population of students are allocated and that accountability occurs.

The School Committee takes leadership on curriculum and staffing issues. The City Council is responsible for our school buildings, which are four walls with our future inside. Every school needs to be safe, accessible, well maintained, and have inspiring learning spaces for ALL.



John Leahy
Belvidere



Bill Samaras
Belvidere



Wayne Jenness

Downtown



Ryan Rourke

Downtown

What would you do to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lowell?

We must all as a council and individuals to make change. We will have the first DEI director in the City shortly. I have tried to lead by example in the Mayor's office. We have given a lot of people the opportunity to intern over the past term.

If I've learned one thing from my career, it takes more than just talk. There is a saying, you have to "walk the talk" when it comes to efforts to be inclusionary. Over the years, we've had a lot of talk, but we need serious investment and commitment to ensure we make Lowell a city for all.

I am excited and hopeful as we move forward with hiring a Chief DEI officer for Lowell. Hiring the right person for this role is important to continue to drive this issue forward. The employee-driven DEI Leadership Council suggested by the audit is also something that should be done to help.

First, we need to follow through on the HR audit. We also need to focus more on empathy since my experience of this city will differ from yours. We need to truly see each other for who we are. We all look, speak, act, think, and feel differently. Our differences are what actually bind us together.

What would you do to make sure that parks/river walks/etc are taken care of so everyone can enjoy them? (Free of trash, needles, other pollution, etc)

This year along I have been very involved with the Lowell Litter Krew. They have cleaned up tons of trash throughout the City. I will continue to be apart of this effort and continue to stress that we must all continue to keep our City and neighborhoods clean.

We need better communication between the city and the various volunteer stakeholders in the community with an interest in our parks to make sure everyone is working together and that there is a clear line of responsibility and accountability.

Increase the amount of trash barrels in parks and other public areas, make sure they are emptied frequently, increase events and activities in the park to deter less desirable uses and make sure the parks department has adequate funding and staffing for upkeep of all parks.

As a Board of Parks member for nine years this has been important. Trash pickup coordination with Waste Management needs to improve/be replaced and ideas like "smart" garbage barrels will pay for themselves. I want to use our canals for recreation, not just tourism. South Common will be a focus too.

How can the City Council work to make sure Lowell's schools better support the success of our diverse population of students, including those with IEP and 504 plans?





We must work with and support the school committee members. They work tirelessly to improve our schools. We must all strive to do better every day. This is the message we need to exemplify.

We have to ensure that the school buildings are properly equipped with today's needed technology, the students are provided access to resources at home as well, and finally we have to make sure we have the staff in place with the proper skills and dedication to meet the multiplicity of needs.

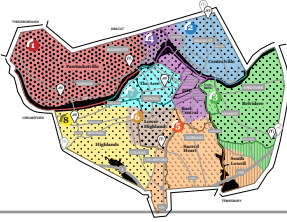
The council's role should be to make sure that the school dept. has all necessary resources in terms of staffing, equipment, space and expertise to make sure that all IEPs / 504s are able to be implemented, adhered to, and reviewed and updated to provide the most effective education for the child.

Communication with the school committee, parents and input from students is key. IEP/504 plans vary so allowing and hiring educators to play to their strengths is vital. My experience with my daughters' school is great and want to ensure it is citywide. I also want more languages taught in K-8.

City Council - Bonus Qs

	 <p>KIM SCOTT LOWELL CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5 NO TOGETHER FOR SOUTH LOWELL</p>	 <p>TOOCH VAN LOWELL CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5 Connecting South Lowell to City Hall</p>	 <p>SOKHARY CHAU CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6 Represent</p>	 <p>Justin Savouring Ford Lower Highlands - City Council Building a District That Reflects Our Values</p>
What would you do to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lowell?	Educate about the importance of a diverse workforce, listen, and address hiring policies happening in the city. The data on hiring does not lie.	Supported City Lowell HR audit's work-- making sure its implementation goes properly and well. Work and Support, DEI coalition, and its advocacies. Support the DEI officer within City's administration.	Fully Implement the recommendations of the 2021 diversity audit and work toward eliminating the nepotism that blocks fairness in recruiting and hiring.	I agree with some recommendations shared with City Council from CLA. A firm the City hired to look at these exact issues. One of the approaches was prioritize hiring a chief DEI officer who can build strategies, action, plan and metrics for improvements. Also update and utilize online hiring.
What would you do to make sure that parks/river walks/etc are taken care of so everyone can enjoy them? (Free of trash, needles, other pollution, etc)	We need to research whether adding several free bulky item pick-ups will help decrease illegal dumping, develop a community service coalition, expand school programs around littering, fund parks/code enforcement with adequate staff, and require vendors to live up to contracts.	Work with Lowell Little Krowe, Canal Clean-Up Committee, Vanna Howard's Office and others, to ensure the cleanup activities going on progressively	In April and May 2021, the City discharged over 100 million gallons of raw sewage into the Merrimack River due to heavy rains. Besides the fact, that Lowell drinks the water, we need to update our sewerage plant to protect our greatest asset - the Merrimack River - our history and our future!	Some solutions are easier than others but can still be accomplished. Let's start with more trash barrels available at parks and river walks and making sure they are emptied more often. Also hire more trash disposal workers.
How can the City Council work to make sure Lowell's schools better support the success of our diverse population of students, including those with IEP and 504 plans?	We need to fully fund our public schools. School staff know the services needed, and they need direct classroom support to provide them. I was an advocate for the Promise Act, NO on 2, and increased refugee funding.	Continue supporting City HR audit at Lowell Public School, to ensure the hiring practice at Lowell High School and LPS reflecting the diverse student populations	We need to make sure the School Administration and all our faculty reflect the cultural and ethnic make up of our City through better hiring and recruitment.	We need to hire more language interpreters for our growing diverse population of students but also hire diversity consultants to understand the cultural needs of the students. Also educating parents to look for signs of their child's unique learning needs.
	 <p>DAVE OUELLETTE Lowell City Council DISTRICT 7</p>	 <p>PAUL RATHA YEM LOWELL CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 7 THE ACRE www.PaulRathaYem.com</p>	 <p>TY CHUM LOWELL CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 8 www.ChumforLowell.com</p>	 <p>ERIK GITSCHIER LOWELL CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6</p>
What would you do to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lowell?	I have been working with bringing us together for many years on all the boards I have been on, my hiring history in the city, the designing of the WELCOME RAINBOW AMPHITHEATER on the North Common, working with the Roberto Clemente League and Jc basketball bringing many children together.	I want to create a task force on DEI that is chaired by the Mayor to listen to recommendations from all the major players and the residents to improve DEI. I was involved in similar task force to rid of gangs in our City in the early days.	Effective and simple, easy to understand communication (news & updates) from city hall to different communities, businesses (profit & nonprofit), and neighborhoods. Example: city budgets, growth charts, and future city plans	Set aside funding for a community outreach program. One that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion. Review the HR audit, hire someone in the HR office with a background in diversity, equity, and inclusion, and implement changes as recommended.
What would you do to make sure that parks/river walks/etc are taken care of so everyone can enjoy them? (Free of trash, needles, other pollution, etc)	I have worked on that for many years bringing major Change to the North Common with the Welcome Rainbow. Decatur WAY outside art and poetry walkway. I started the Lowell Needle program. Being proactive instead of reactive. Picking up needles in our neighborhoods.	Each district will have their own responsibilities to care for their parks and river. I know I will have a group of volunteers in District 7 as part of my Community Development plan to keep our district clean, beautiful, and safe.	Create and support more programs and events like the Syringe Collection program and Unwanted Medication and Sharps Disposal Day.	Hold contractors and employees accountable for the residents expectations. We pay good money in taxes and deserves services that represent our expectations. Make sure all contracts are followed and plans are in place that outline schedules for maintenance of these areas. We need to manage these areas.
How can the City Council work to make sure Lowell's schools better support the success of our diverse population of students, including those with IEP and 504 plans?	I think it would be great to have our students interact with our local businesses during school a work study program the interaction would be great for both. I did that when I was at Lowell High, during that time I worked at a restaurant, then a warehouse. giving me some idea what was possible.	As a City Councilor, I will work with the School committee to come up with a comprehensive plan to address children who qualified under IEP/504 receive specialized instruction and related services. Should Lowell send IEP/504 students to other cities who already have the program or develop our own?	Building and Sustaining relationships with students, parent and caregivers, and other supportive entity. Start with a honest conversation and Needs Assessment	The City Council's role is to fund the school department and elect a mayor to be their voice. Under the 1993 Ed reform act, the Superintendent of Schools and the Principals have the oversight of day to day operations of the schools. Funding would be based on recommendations from the Superintendent

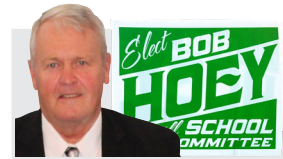
City Council - At-Large - Bonus Qs



Deb Belanger
Pawtucketville



John Drinkwater
Belvidere



Robert Hoey
South Lowell

What would you do to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lowell?

Lowell just completed an HR audit. Identify steps to implement, including the Hiring of DEI Director. Ensure Police, Fire, Teachers and City Boards reflect the population of our community. Continue with Outreach.

We must make it a stated priority that the city's workforce reflect the city's diversity. To do so, it must be the priority of every city department to implement HR practices that put DEI at the forefront. We should also require contractors on city construction projects to meet DEI hiring goals.

Hire more Lowell residents. Not just your family and friends.

What would you do to make sure that parks/river walks/etc are taken care of so everyone can enjoy them? (Free of trash, needles, other pollution, etc)

We need to have better coordination of efforts. The National Parks, State Aid, DPW Lowell Litter Krewe, Lowell Canalwater cleaners, Lowell Parks & Reservation Trust. We should also look at a local litter campaign and provide additional trash receptacles through the city.

We need to bring outsourced services back in-house and reallocate the funding toward hiring more city employees to make sure our parks and public spaces are clean. It is also important that the city operate in partnership with residents and non-profits who have successfully mobilized volunteers.

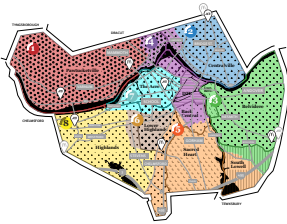
We need to patrol those areas it's not just homeless or drug addicts we have a bigger problem with contractors and do it yourselves. Lowell's a dumping ground. Again Law and order.

How can the City Council work to make sure Lowell's schools better support the success of our diverse population of students, including those with IEP and 504 plans?

The council needs to ensure that the Schools are fully funded. I'm an Advocate for chapter 70 funding. The teachers know how to provide services. We need to ensure that we provide direct support to the classrooms (for example, if a child needs extra reading help, we have the staff to so).

By fully funding our schools through the city budget and advocating for the full, on-schedule funding of the Student Opportunity Act, which corrects long standing funding inequities for special education students and English learners. No matter the budget challenges, we must fully fund our schools.

Even though we spend a lot already on Special Ed, it's still isn't enough. Smaller class sizes and more reading specialists are needed. We do bill Medicaid for speech pathologist-occupational therapist- and physical therapist and I believe that money is sent back to the city. Not the schools.



Rita Mercier
Belvidere



Vesna Nuon
Highlands



Bobby Tugbiyele
Downtown

What would you do to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in Lowell?

I feel, as a council, we have improved diversity. We voted, arranged and paid for a company to come in and survey city hall and the school department to find the answer to, if we met our goal of diversity. We have met it but we can always do better.

The first step in solving a problem is admitting that it exists. I asked the Manager to hire an auditor to look at our hiring practices in terms of DEI. The audit is complete, and we have work to do. We need a workforce that reflects our population.

I am a Human Resources/Recruitment professional w/ 15 years exp. I fiercely advocated for the recent City HR audit and the 2018 LPS HR Audit. The results of both reports provide areas of concern, alarm, & opportunity. I will be a leader who walks the walk on DEI. My experience supports this!

What would you do to make sure that parks/river walks/etc are taken care of so everyone can enjoy them? (Free of trash, needles, other pollution, etc)

If we solve homelessness & drug addiction then this question would take care of itself, less trash on the streets, less needles and a better Lowell

Trash barrels need to be placed throughout the city, and Department of Public Works needs to empty those barrels on a regular basis. I support the work DPW is doing with the Lowell Litter Krewe and hope that partnership continues and grows.

City govt provides core services to residents & when they are not provided, we must try to understand why & have conversations around responsibility & accountability. Residents deserve a clean, vibrant & safe city. Let's also motivate & incentivize residents to protect & enhance our green spaces.

How can the City Council work to make sure Lowell's schools better support the success of our diverse population of students, including those with IEP and 504 plans?

We, as a city, can work to make sure that school are in a better position to know the needs of the students and support the success of our diverse population by keeping in touch with what the classroom teacher feels is in the best interest of each student.

The school committee must work with the superintendent to ensure that every student has the best possible learning experience. Periodic evaluation and review is necessary to make this possible.

I applaud LPS for creating a Diverse Teacher Leader Fellows program. I applaud LPS for creating a bias reporting protocol & anti-racism training for admin & staff. We want to ensure services & funding is available for our most vulnerable to ensure they get the education they deserve.

School Committee Bonus Qs

School Committee Members by District				
<div> <div>  <p>Ben Opara Pawtucketville</p> </div> <div>  <p>Stacey Thompson Pawtucketville</p> </div> <div>  <p>Hilary Clark Downtown</p> </div> <div>  <p>Eileen DelRossi Centralville</p> </div> </div>				
<p>Are all of Lowell's schools on the same level? What would you do to bring them to the same level or maintain that equality?</p>	<p>Unfortunately, not all schools are at the same level. This is the results of many years of neglect and favoritism. My first push is to support the school in need with extra help to bring them at par. I would also encourage the administration to collaborate with UTL for teacher exchange programs.</p>	<p>There are noticeable differences in the schools. Level is hard to determine but it is clear some locations need more than others. We are not looking for carbon copy schools, we are, however, looking for each student in LPS to have an equitable overall experience; and to equip the teachers fully.</p>	<p>No, there are seven schools in our Renaissance network. We need to provide additional support and resources to these schools to raise them out of this status. All schools in LPS should be centers of excellence and we have work to do to get there.</p>	<p>No one school is on the same level because each student in our school is on different levels. These individualized student educational needs present varied challenges. Consistency of one curriculum that uses consistent material in grades k-12 would help maintain a stronger level of equality.</p>
<p>What will you do to improve the quality of the food served in our schools?</p>	<p>I will encourage a new bidding for food service contract. Engage older students, parents and community members in a special task force to develop new requirements for the bid specifications focusing on quality of food.</p>	<p>I'd propose a new program pairing history classes with food vendors. It would be called "It's Time to Eat". This program brings students on journeys throughout the world, paying particular homage to the different ethnicities of Lowell and their culinary traditions; tasty and educational.</p>	<p>We need to hold Aramark accountable to provide fresh, quality and local food (where possible). We should establish a nutrition committee that includes students, families and staff to provide regular input and suggestions and also to review and adjust food levels for improvement.</p>	<p>Review the current menu choices, think outside the box. Provide a diverse variety in what is offered within the nutritional guidelines. Add distribution kitchens for fresher food so not one major kitchen based LPS school is charged with provided, preparing, and delivering to satellite schools.</p>
<p>How can staff diversity in the Lowell Public Schools be improved?</p>	<p>To improve diversity, we must first change what has been done for years, favoritism and nepotism. I would advocate the use of hiring firms with a focus on hiring a diverse staff. The cost will be a meaningful investment in building and ensuring a more diverse administration and staff.</p>	<p>Diversity is a layered concept. Most people often gravitate towards race and culture in defining diversity. However, as we know, it is much more complex. We need to look at the current hiring matrix and areas where it can change, such as: outreach. We also need to circle back to the audit.</p>	<p>Continuing to improve hiring practices, supporting mentorship and diverse teacher leadership academy, and creating pathways for career growth and opportunities will continue to move us forward in this important initiative of having our staff reflect our students and community.</p>	<p>We have incredible staff diversity in LPS. Although, for staff diversity to be improved, overall respect must be shown for each diverse staff member and what they contribute. When staff do not feel valued or respected it takes so much away from the benefits a diverse staff has to offer.</p>
<div> <div>  <p>Susie Chhoun South Lowell</p> </div> <div>  <p>Andy Descoteaux Belvidere</p> </div> <div>  <p>Cheth Khim The Acre</p> </div> <div>  <p>Dominik Lay Highlands</p> </div> </div>				
<p>Are all of Lowell's schools on the same level? What would you do to bring them to the same level or maintain that equality?</p>	<p>All of Lowell's schools should be on the same level. We need to identify those schools that are lagging behind in resources and earmark them for additional assistance. We must ensure that all students have the same opportunities for increased exposure to the arts as well as sciences.</p>	<p>Our schools and their Principals are working very hard to try to bring them to the same level. By virtue of their neighborhoods, this can be a daunting task. Our Renaissance Schools have been given additional resources to help with this issue.</p>	<p>Making sure all the schools are up to date with technology devices and offer students laptops.</p>	<p>No, not all of schools on the same level. Staff, students, parents, and school campus & facilities are all important variables to that equality. I'd like to put efforts to help any of the four variables above. Every students deserves the highest quality of education to their ability.</p>
<p>What will you do to improve the quality of the food served in our schools?</p>	<p>As an educator, I've seen improvements in serving sizes at schools, however, I've also seen first hand the low quality of foods being served & we must have an open feedback loop to address these issues as they occur. We must also continue to be mindful of students with dietary issues and allergies.</p>	<p>This has been a recurring question every year. Our district has worked with Aramark to elevate the food category, which in theory, should provide our children with a better menu.</p>	<p>Nutrition facts on the food served and to offer healthier choices.</p>	<p>\$45M/yr. Student is the biggest customer, school cafeteria should listen to them. The same company have been providing food services for many years, have done excellent job with LPS to provide food during COVID. I don't have an intention to change but I'd like to see what other food vendors offer.</p>
<p>How can staff diversity in the Lowell Public Schools be improved?</p>	<p>We should review available studies, understand how to retain the diverse educators we have and how to attract new educators from diverse cultures. I will encourage a critical look at the "2+1" hiring practice that restricts a school's ability to recruit high quality educators outside of the district.</p>	<p>This can become a very difficult task to accomplish. The amount of students entering into education in the colleges across the United States is very low. This is for a number of reasons; lower salaries than say an engineer, lack of respect given to our educators.</p>	<p>Monitoring the diversity and maintaining a balance.</p>	<p>For many years we have been speaking about having staff that reflects our population. One solution I had that worked well was to offer Teacher Academy to Lowell residents who already have a Bachelor degree and help them get METEL. Educators are admirable Pro, & recruitment effort should start from LHS.</p>

School Committee -At-Large - Bonus Qs



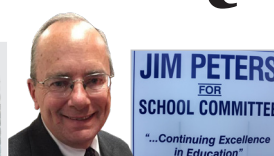
Mike Dillon, Jr.
Highlands



Jackie Doherty
The Acre



Connie Martin
Belvidere



Jim Peters
Highlands

Are all of Lowell's schools on the same level? What would you do to bring them to the same level or maintain that equality?

Our schools are always going through change and there are many factors that contribute to the overall environment in each building. Fair student funding and our renaissance schools program help the district manage underperforming schools and provide a quick and efficient turnaround.

Each school has different needs based on the strengths/challenges of its students and staff. Fair Student Funding provides resources based on student needs. Strong professional development for teachers and leaders, and behavior/emotional supports for student will help each school improve.

The impact of remote learning and general disruption of so many of our student support programs will make it impossible to make any kind of valid MCAS performance comparisons. However, I do believe that fairness and equity must be priorities in all our district wide decisions.

Schools, physically, are near the same level, but academically more needs to be done. Key is the Superintendent's selection of principals. Important is English instruction, so all students are on the same level. Also, paraprofessionals who represent the demographic of the students are needed.

What will you do to improve the quality of the food served in our schools?

We have made small improvements to the quality of our food in recent years, but more has to be done. It is important that we hold our food service providers accountable for the product they serve everyday and continually seek to our best options.

I have continually supported better quality food and have specifically asked for surveys to be done to determine what choices students prefer. Getting student preference and using good-quality ingredients with variety are key.

This past school year was particularly challenging with the need for pick up and go meals as opposed to our usual in-school meals program. During this last term the school committee voted to increase the per meal cost in an effort to improve the quality of food served in our schools.

The Superintendent has been eating in all the cafeterias and is aware of individual issues. Our next step is to rebid the food service contract and consider other responsible bidders.

How can staff diversity in the Lowell Public Schools be improved?

In an city like Lowell, I believe it is important to provide a fun and challenging atmosphere for every child. If our students develop pride in this city, and we educate them well, our own population will be more likely to want to return to teach here. We should be encouraging that pipeline.

Staff diversity has been improving. It starts with making the effort, which we have been doing. It also requires providing a welcoming and supportive environment for newcomers, another area that has seen renewed emphasis in recent years.

The administration has made a very conscious effort to broaden our recruitment and hiring strategies specifically to increase the number of teachers and administrators from diverse backgrounds. We have also put in place efforts to support our current cadre of paraprofessionals on the pathway to becoming on the pathway to becoming Massachusetts licensed teachers.

We need to expand the staff to provide the headspace to hire people of diversity. But, to provide input, we should provide scholarships to our college bound students in exchange for a promise to return to teach in Lowell Schools for four years.

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