

SFCC Board Candidates Forum
Tuesday, January 27, 2015
5:30 to 7:00 pm
Board Meeting Room
Santa Fe Community College
6401 Richards Avenue

SFPS Board Candidates Forum
Wednesday, January 28, 2015
6:00 to 8:00 pm
Board Meeting Room
SFPS Educational Services Center
610 Alta Vista Street

SFPS/SFCC BOARD ELECTIONS

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO VOTE IN THIS ELECTION?

All residents of Santa Fe County are eligible to vote in the SFCC Election. Voters will select three people to serve 6-year terms on the SFCC Governing Board. All residents of Santa Fe County are also eligible to vote in the SFPS Mill Levy Election, but only residents of SFPS Districts 71-1, 71-2 and 71-4 will elect representatives to serve 4-year terms on the SFPS Board of Education. You can find your precinct and Local School District numbers on your voter registration card- or on the Secretary of State's website: <https://voterview.state.nm.us>.

WHERE AND WHEN CAN YOU VOTE?

Early Voting: Early and absentee-in-person voting for all precincts is available Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, until 5:00 pm on Friday, January 30, 2015 at the following polling places:

- Office of the Santa Fe County Clerk, 102 Grant Avenue
- Santa Fe Community College, 6401 Richards Avenue, Room 209
- SFPS Educational Services Center, Room A, 610 Alta Vista Street

Absentee Voting: Absentee ballots can be requested from the County Clerk until 5:00 pm on Friday, January 30, 2015. Completed absentee ballots must be received by the County Clerk's Office by 7:00 pm on Election Day.

Election Day, Tuesday, February 3, 2015: On Election Day, voters must vote at their precinct's polling place. Polls are open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. A list of polling places by precinct is available on the League's website: www.lwvsfc.org.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF SANTA FE COUNTY

The League of Women Voters is a nonprofit organization that provides information about political issues and candidates for public office in order to promote greater citizen participation in government. Because the League is nonpartisan, we do not support or oppose any candidate or political party. We compile and distribute unbiased, factual information for citizens to use when preparing to vote.

The candidate information in this Voters' Guide was obtained by means of a questionnaire sent to all the candidates. Because of space restrictions, all candidates were limited to a specific number of words per response. The League does not edit for meaning, grammar, punctuation or spelling; we print the candidates' responses as they were submitted. The candidates are listed in ballot order.

Marcy Litzenberg, Voter Services Chair

SFPS SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES ANSWER THE LEAGUE'S QUESTIONS

What education and/or experience would you bring to the Board of Education of the Santa Fe Public Schools?

I currently serve on the BOE nearing the end of my first four year term and have become extremely knowledgeable about our budget, funding, facilities master plan, legislative challenges, GO bond issues, as well as the dominate issues and challenges facing our teachers and SFPS as a whole. I have developed great working relationships with SFPS staff and the parents and teachers of those schools I represent. My son is currently a freshman at SFHS.

I have a Bachelor's Degree in Special/Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in Public Administration. I understand teaching and management. As a retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, I have invaluable budget/contracting experience. I taught 3rd-5th grades for this District and previously was a special education teacher at the middle/high school levels. Since 2007 I have been on the Citizens' Review Committee, so I understand how capital funding works. Since 2001 I've volunteered/tutored throughout the District.

I have a B.A. in English Literature from Williams College and Masters in International Business from Thunderbird School of Global Management. The majority of my professional career has been in the public sector in the field of economic development, where I have developed the policy making, management, planning, budgeting, marketing and lobbying skills requisite to successfully serve on the BOE. I have a fifth grade daughter and first grade son at Eldorado Community School

I have an AA in Early-Childhood Education, a BA in Public Administration and a JD from Seattle University School of Law. During the last 8 years I've worked for the state managing multiple boards/commissions and I'm currently appointed as the State Records Administrator by the Commission of Public Records. I've also been a school board member for four years, served as Secretary, Vice-President, President and currently serve as Vice-President for the NM School Board Association.

What is your vision for the Santa Fe Public Schools over the next four years?

Let's keep moving forward. We must; build on the tremendous successes over the last two plus years since hiring Dr. Boyd and his Cabinet; continue supporting parents as their child's most important educators; develop a district APP so we're better at communicating with parents, teachers, students, and community stakeholders; grow our student population by continuing to offer schools of choice; continue our responsible stewardship of GO bond funds; curtail standardized testing.

Making a safe learning environment and using your tax dollars wisely are priorities. I will be guided by my philosophy "If it's not good enough for my kids, it's not good enough for yours!" Working to ensure our graduation/proficiency rates match is essential so graduates do not spend time in post-secondary remediation courses. I will continue to provide every student with the necessary resources to learn and be successful while respecting/supporting our outstanding professionals.

To work with parents, students, teachers, the Administration and community to customize curricula to maximize the potential of each student, diversify project based learning and vocational programs, increase student and parent volunteerism, maintain art, music and P.E. as part of the core curriculum and increase resources for support services. Continued emphasis on reducing dropout rates and increasing graduation rates is crucial to maximizing the number of our students who are workforce or college ready.

My vision for the next four years is to continue to close the achievement gap and ensure that district resources are distributed equitably. This means that our students and schools with the most need are receiving the resources they need to be successful. I will continue to advocate for expanding early learning and k-3+ programs. I will also continue to support expanding choices for our secondary students to improve our high-school graduation rates.

What part, if any, should student test scores play in evaluating teacher performance?

No more than 25%! We are, however, often constrained by PED and the legislature. Risk factors such as ELLs and "free and reduced lunch" must be taken into consideration. Testing is not the problem; students have been tested since the beginning of time. Our big challenge is the corporate standardized tests which are unfairly used to make high stakes decisions regarding our teachers. Measures related to teacher observation continue to be the best tools.

Although teachers do not fear being professionally evaluated, they desire a system that can be clearly understood and is fair and equitable. The state mandates test scores be used. Until we can obtain a fair, equitable teacher evaluation system it is imperative that the District does not use this data for employment decisions or release it to the public. It should be part of the employee's personnel file and protected as such.

A small part. There are so many other factors that determine the success of our teachers and students, that it is unfair to place emphasis on a single standardized mechanism to determine compensation. We need to work with the Public Education Department and the legislature on developing a funding mechanism for teachers which takes into account the variety of socioeconomic and language barriers that affect their students' educational attainment and performance.

Student test scores are intended to be used for evaluating student learning so teachers can focus on areas needing improvement. There are many things that impact student test scores. National experts who favor using student test scores only suggest using 25% - 35%. I support giving teachers the resources to teach ALL students and using best practices to reach that goal rather than a standard determined by the NM PED or legislators.

How would you propose to allocate the district's tax revenues from bond issues and mill levies?

Most of this is guided by statute. What's difficult here is making the critical decisions in prioritizing which projects go from ideation to completion. It's imperative that our programmatic needs and goals as they relate to our strategic plan guide the decision making process. We are so very fortunate in Santa Fe to have the bonding capacity we do and the continued support of the community for having superior facilities and acquiring 21st century technology.

With over 7 years of volunteer experience on the Citizens' Review Committee I will use your tax dollars to ensure bond money first addresses safety/security/ADA issues and focuses on continually maintaining the facilities we already own. Then spending can proceed on new facilities/programs. I will seek your vote before raising taxes and respect your decisions. I will use mill levies to improve our technological/maintenance infrastructures and provide a 21st century education for all students.

Allocations should be to infrastructure, technology upgrades and programs on a prioritized basis in line with the Board of Education's strategic plan. Safety of our public school facilities is crucial. There should also be an emphasis on continuous upgrades of facilities to meet green building standards district wide. By lowering energy costs, additional resources would become available to allocate to teacher salaries and support services.

Like all other districts in the state, we have more building needs than funding. I support continuing to dedicate building funds to the schools with the most health and safety needs. Outside of health and safety, I believe these funds should be used to support the programs at our secondary schools. While Capital High School is getting some needed health and safety repairs, there are programmatic needs that must be addressed with building improvements.

2015 MILL LEVY QUESTION

"Shall the Santa Fe Public School District continue to impose a property tax of \$1.50 for residential property and \$1.50 for non-residential property per each \$1,000.00 of net taxable value of property allocated to the Santa Fe Public School District for the property tax years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 for the purpose of (1) erecting, remodeling, making additions to, providing equipment for or furnishing public school buildings; (2) payments made pursuant to a financing agreement for the leasing of a building or other real property with an option to purchase for a price that is reduced according to payments made; (3) purchasing or improving public school grounds; (4) administering the projects

undertaken pursuant to sections 1 and 3 above, including expenditures for facility maintenance software, project management software, project oversight and district personnel specifically related to administration of projects funded by the Public School Buildings Act provided that expenditures pursuant to this section shall not exceed five percent of the total project cost?"

All voters registered in Santa Fe County are eligible to vote "yes" or "no" on this question. For detailed information about the 2013 GO Bond, visit the SFPS website: www.sfps.info.

ADDITIONAL QUESTION: SFPS candidates are now required to disclose information about their campaign contributions and expenses. Do you intend to comply with that request?

All four SFPS candidates answered yes. Their information will be posted on the League's website: www.lwvsfc.org.

SFCC GOVERNING BOARD CANDIDATES ANSWER THE LEAGUE'S QUESTIONS

Why do you want to serve on the SFCC Board and what are your qualifications?

SFCC is at a crucial point in its growth and development. After 31 years in our Santa Fe community, SFCC has grown into a vital and integral component of the Santa Fe fabric. Students of all ages have more options and opportunities than ever before. We have had a difficult 18 months, but have emerged with new energy, direction and accountability. I want to continue to be part of the re-energized SFCC.

I believe SFCC is an important institution of higher learning for New Mexicans. SFCC has helped thousands of New Mexicans achieve their educational and career goals. I want to serve on the Board in order to help further SFCC's mission in serving the community, and to ensure it meets the demands of an ever-changing educational climate. While working in Senator Bingaman's office, I worked with SFCC to meet the financial needs of the college.

Education: Stanford University, MSCE; Georgia Tech, BCE. Public Service: 2-term Santa Fe County Commissioner, student mentor, youth soccer coach, decorated Veteran. I have completed credit and non-credit courses at SFCC, and view it as a critical gateway for our community members to access education to advance their careers. SFCC serves a vital role for needed workforce training and enhancing lifelong learning. I would like to apply my community and engineering experience toward achieving these goals.

I have been a student, staff member and an instructor at the Community College. SFCC is a rare and extraordinary institution serving our community. I am passionate about strengthening this community treasure. I have been very engaged at SFCC serving on key committees and governance groups. I understand many of the challenges facing the college and broad community networks to enlist the support of both on and off campus stakeholders.

Many SFCC students are also parents and/or working at full-time jobs. Given that, what strategies would you propose to increase graduation rates?

Over the last three years, SFCC has implemented a number of strategies to help students succeed and graduate. Record numbers of students have graduated. Many students with a job, family and needs for child care have difficulty balancing these with school. Wrap around social services need to be developed to assist with these non-academic issues. More collaboration with community health and social service programs could provide further support for students.

Understanding that SFCC serves a diverse student body, we must work to ensure that opportunities are made available for all of our students - no matter their situation. To that end, I will work through our SFCC Foundation to expand scholarship opportunities; I will endeavor to enhance work-study programs; and will work to promote our Kid's Campus, which allows students with children to attend class while their child is cared for.

President Grissom has related to me that *Math Skills and Life Gets in the Way* are the two primary obstacles to graduation. On average, SFCC students take 4-5 years to complete a 2-year Associate Degree. The Board needs to examine the effectiveness of current retention programs, increase the flexibility of course scheduling, including evening, weekend and online courses, and pair SFCC graduates with students in a mentoring environment to help them successfully navigate their education.

For many of our students success and graduation are not synonymous. We serve a broad and diverse population with differing needs and experiences at SFCC. Evening, weekend and online classes create more opportunity for non-traditional students. Shorter, more condensed classes are often easier for busy students. Coordinating break schedules with the public schools would really help parents out. Proactive advising can help with academic planning to find the most effective academic and career pathways.

SFCC has had a rough financial year. How would you bring it back to financial strength?

Current funding from the state will not increase due to declining state revenues and property tax revenue will remain flat. New funds necessary to expand or create programs must come from outside sources. We must look to collaborations with local businesses to co-create programs to address key employer shortage areas. We must expand our federal grants. Foundations and private donors are a source of potential funds. Within the college, we must look for entrepreneurial opportunities.

As a SFCC Board Member, I will ensure that we spend responsibly, and execute the Financial Stability plan with fidelity. We will remain committed to providing cost-effective, high-quality instruction, while monitoring our expenses.

The Board must increase its financial oversight and financial transparency, including publishing its annual budget. The administration needs to: (1) aggressively engage students to take advantage of the college's new state-of-the-art technology and health sciences facilities, (2) build partnerships with local businesses to design relevant academic coursework, (3) build cash reserves and focus on cash balances, (4) strengthen legislative lobbying and marketing, (5) maximize the support role of SFCC Foundation, and (6) encourage employee input.

The issues SFCC is dealing with today are from overspending due to misunderstanding of the college's finances. Some administrative services of the college have expanded. We need to see if all of that growth was affordable, effective and fits priorities. Better financial oversight by the board starts with better data and incorporating more perspectives to get a more accurate indication of what is going on. Utilization of on campus expertise is can improve project management.

What new programs should SFCC develop to prepare our students for the jobs of today and the future?

SFCC can continue to work to expand its nursing program. Northern NM College recently relinquished it radiology technician program which provides us the opportunity to open training at SFCC. A potential new type of dental provider called a dental therapist may hold promise for the future. Our trades and sustainable technology programs are constantly looking for new areas of cutting edge technology to expand. A comprehensive automotive mechanic program is lacking in Northern New Mexico.

As SFCC is tasked with preparing our students to participate in New Mexico's job force, we must be mindful of emerging job opportunities, such as in technology, healthcare, clean energy, and film. As a member of the Board, I will encourage our administration to design curriculum, and partner with community stakeholders to build the necessary skills, and expose our students to these emerging markets so that they may enter these job markets.

There is a workforce need for more STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and Healthcare Science courses. These areas will continue to grow in New Mexico and SFCC should examine how its offerings match the needs of local businesses in these areas so graduates can remain in-state. Another challenge will be to fully utilize the new Higher Education Center and make it self-sustaining to provide students with a seamless and economical pathway for advanced learning.

SFCC has done a good job of staying on the cutting edge with program offerings because it has done a good job of engaging with the whole community in planning program development. Developing "soft skills" to make our students workplace ready is as important as the courses SFCC offers in many regards. Reliability, problem solving, group collaboration and effective communication are the core skills to make SFCC graduates adaptable for a rapidly changing workplace.

ADDITIONAL QUESTION: The League is asking candidates to voluntarily disclose information about their campaign contributions and expenses. Do you intend to comply with that request?

All four SFCC candidates answered yes. Their information will be posted on the League's website: www.lwvsfc.org

SPONSORS: The 2015 SFPS/SFCC Election Voters' Guide was produced and distributed by the Santa Fe New Mexican, in partnership with the League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County. Tax-deductible donations to the League's Education Fund are gratefully accepted to support voter services projects such as Voters' Guides, candidate forums, and voter registration efforts. If you would like to contribute to the League to support voter services, please make your check payable to the LWVSFC Education Fund.

QUESTIONS? NEED MORE INFO? Visit the website of the Santa Fe County Clerk: www.santafecountynm.gov/clerk for election information and a detailed list of polling places by precinct, or call the County Clerk's office at 505-986-6280.

League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County
1472 St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505
505-982-9766 • www.lwvsfc.org

JOIN THE LEAGUE

Annual Membership:
\$54 per individual, \$80 per Household, \$30 per student

- I/we want to join the League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County
- I/we want to contribute to the LWVSFC Education Fund (No membership necessary.)

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