

Press Clippings for 12/20/2022

– Daily Herald –

Which school boards have competition in the spring elections and why

Dec. 19, 2022

By Alicia Fabbre

Curriculum, taxes, library books and even student groups are among the issues driving school board races across the suburbs.

Monday was the last day for candidates to file petitions to get their names on the April 4 ballot. While some districts saw just enough people running for open spots on their boards of education, others saw crowded fields of candidates running for a handful of seats.

Here is a look at some contested school board races across the suburbs:

Cook County

In Northwest Suburban High School District 214, longtime board members Bill Dussling and Alva Kreutzer are seeking reelection. They are joined by River Trails Elementary District 26 board member Frank Fiarito to make up the Friends of District 214 slate of candidates.

Elizabeth Bauer, a frequent critic and regular attendee of school board meetings, is also seeking one of the three open spots on the board. Misa Edwardsen, a parent who also has raised concerns at board meetings, also filed.

In Barrington Community Unit School District 220, eight candidates have filed for three seats, including incumbents Angela Wilcox, Barry Altshuler and Leah Collister-Lazzari. They are joined by challengers Nelda Munoz, Leonard Munson, Katey Baldassano, Matt Sheriff and Diana L. Clopton.

One of the issues this year was whether to remove the book "Gender Queer: A Memoir" by Maia Kobabe from the library at Barrington High School. Altshuler and Collister-Lazzari voted with the majority of the board to retain the book, while Munoz spoke out against the book's inclusion.

A crowded field of 13 candidates emerged for four available seats on the Palatine-Schaumburg High School District 211 school board.

Incumbents Peter R. Dombrowski, Steven Rosenblum, Kimberly Cavill and Mark J. Cramer filed for reelection. Joining them on the ballot will be Jennifer Wesche, Aiden Branss, Michelle Barron, Susan L. Saam, Meenal Dewan, Barbara A. Velez, Joan Sherrill, Angela Geitner and Jane Russell.

Recent debates in District 211 have centered on the educational impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the district's opting into the state's controversial sex education curriculum, and an Illinois attorney general investigation of disparities in the treatment of minority students by police.

DuPage County

In Warrenville Unit District 200, the field for three available 4-year seats on the school board features just two incumbents. Sitting board members Dave Long and Julie Kulovits officially launched their campaigns last week, as did four challengers: Amanda "Amy" Erkenwick, Spencer Garrett, Erik Hjerpe and David Sohmer. Anjali Bharadwa Monday also filed nominating petitions for one of the 4-year seats on the board.

Two candidates -- former Wheaton City Councilman John Rutledge and Kimberly Hobbs -- are vying for the single 2-year seat on the board.

The 20-school district serves about 11,550 students from Wheaton, Warrenville and portions of Carol Stream, Winfield and West Chicago.

Elsewhere, four candidates filed to fill three open seats in Naperville Unit District 203. Incumbents Joe Kozminski and Kristine Gericke, the board's vice president, are seeking a second and third term, respectively. Barbara Higgs, Gilbert Wagner, Ronald Amato and Melissa Kelley Black are also on the ballot.

Kane County

In **Elgin Area Unit District 46**, incumbent **board members Susan Kerr and Kate Thommes** are seeking reelection, while Chanda Schwartz, a co-chair of the **Unite U-46** committee, is seeking election to the board, as are Maureen Morris, Samreen Kahn and Heather LH Manzella.

The **Unite U-46** committee spent the past year studying the district's building needs. This month it recommended that the board seek voter approval to issue bonds totaling \$179 million, which the district would put toward a building program that's expected to cost between \$310 million and \$380 million and that would include rebuilding five elementary schools.

Elsewhere, in St. Charles Community Unit School District 303, eight candidates are running for three 4-year-terms and three candidates are seeking one 2-year term. Incumbents Becky McCabe and Joseph "Joe" Patrick Lackner are seeking reelection to a 4-year term. Delores J. Van Hiel, Matthew Kuschert, Lauren Duddles, Elias Palacios, Barbara Diepenbrock and Alexandra Teipel also are seeking election to one of the 4-year terms. Thomas Lentz, Mike Backer and Richard Rivard are vying for the one 2-year term that is available.

In Geneva Community Unit School District 304, incumbents Robert Larry Cabeen, Paul Radlinski and Molly Ansari are among the six candidates vying for three 4-year terms. Brent Nakayama, Brittney Quinn Sopcak and Andrea Heeg also are running for 4-year terms. Incumbent Stephanie Bellino and Willard C. Hooks, Jr. are running for two 2-year spots on the board.

In Batavia Community Unit School District 101, Cathy Dremel is the only incumbent in a field of seven candidates for three 4-year terms. Raquel Gonzalez-Thomas, Danielle Sligar, Jeffery

Robert Arulandu, Jeffrey Ekstrom, Kris Rayman and Gabrielle Fender also are seeking one of the open spots.

Lake County

The field is crowded in Antioch Elementary District 34 with 13 candidates running for six available seats. Tamar Lasko, Kelly Beall, Pam Adams, Kristen Fielder, Kevin Fielder and Joshua Cornwell are seeking to fill three 2-year terms.

Incumbents Lori Linck, Mary Beth Hulting, Tiffany Cappel and Paul Green are vying for one of the three 4-year terms on the board. They are joined by Sonia Williams, Christopher Hartman and Scott Schaffer.

Over the past two years, some issues such as masking, diversity, equity and books have led to turmoil in the district and contentious school board meetings. The polarized climate in May led to the surprise resignation of Superintendent Brad Hubbard with a year left on his contract.

In Antioch Community High School District 117, eight filed to run for three available 4-year seats. Incumbents Ellen Ipsen and Sandy Jacobs are running for reelection. Mechelle Casey, Linda Carroll, Julianne Hettich, Phillip Delany, Sue Dickson and Rebecca Galvez also are running.

McHenry County

In Algonquin-based Community Unit District 300, eight candidates filed for four 4-year terms.

Nancy Zettler is seeking her second term, and Stephen Fiorentino is seeking his fourth term on the board.

Like other suburban school districts, District 300 has had its share of criticism regarding masking mandates, curriculum, taxes and other issues. Most recently, an LGBTQIA+ student group came under scrutiny by some parents.

Parent Randi Gauthier, who is a member of a recently formed LGBTQIA+ parent advisory council, said she is seeking a spot on the board to further equity and inclusivity measures.

In a social media post, candidate Kristina Konstanty said she opposes tax increases and supports parental rights and involvement.

Olutola "Tola" Makinde, Laurie Parman, Robert Reining and Connie Cain also are vying for one of the 4-year terms on the District 300 board.

In Huntley Community School District 158, eight candidates filed for three open seats on the board. Jonathan Dailey, who was appointed to the board last month, joins incumbents Melissa Maiorino and William Geheren in seeking election to the board. Katherine Policheri, Stephen Buchs, Laura Murray, Andrew Bittman and Gina Galligar also are vying for one of the open seats.

- Daily Herald staff writers Katlyn Smith, Eric Peterson, Mick Zawislak, Kevin Schmit, Christopher Placek and Steve Zalusky contributed to this report.

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Boys basketball: Top 20

Boys basketball

Team

Comment

1. Benet (10-0) Redwings heading to Arizona for 4-game trip
2. Rolling Meadows (10-1) Will be tested at York's Jack Tosh

3. Stevenson (8-1) Starts play Friday at Hinsdale Central
4. WW South (8-1) Rallied from 9 down at half vs. Wheaton N.
5. Downers North (9-1) Beat rival DGS by 32 for 9th straight win
6. Barrington (8-0) Favorite at Jacobs' Hinkle Classic
7. Libertyville (8-3) 3-0 start in NSC play
8. Palatine (8-2) Holds Conant to 16 points
9. Glenbard West (5-2) Hilltoppers in 13-day stretch w/out a game
10. Hinsdale Central (8-3) Upset by **Bartlett**
11. Lake Park (8-2) Tied for DuKane lead
12. Neuqua Valley (9-2) Seven straight victories
13. Naperville North (6-5) Williams 18 points in 30-point win over NC
4. Huntley (9-2) Ball movement humming for FVC leaders
15. Fremd (6-4) Solid wins over Hoffman Estates, Warren
16. Crystal Lake South (9-2) Only 2 players score in loss to Huntley
17. Prospect (5-5) 4-game streak includes win over Palatine
18. Waubonsie Valley (7-4) Part of deep, talented field at York
19. **Bartlett** (9-2) Down 14, came back to beat Hinsdale C.

20. Burlington Central (7-2) No. 1 seed at Plano

Others to watch: Metea Valley 5-4, Hersey 8-5, Marmion 7-3, West Aurora 8-3, Geneva 7-3,
Conant 6-3, Warren 6-4, Kaneland 10-1, Hoffman Estates 6-4, Grayslake Central 8-1