

Board *from A1*

students and a local small business owner. My education and past experience are administrative, but my passion is in education. Formerly a SLSD Educational Assistant, I was recently resigned to focus on my business and family during the pandemic. I'm very fortunate to have worked with some of SLSD's amazing teachers, support staff and students in the past five years.

As a first-time school board member, if elected, I will encourage transparency and honest discussions between the district and the community. Education is at a pivotal point and I would be honored by the opportunity to represent our community as part of the school board as we move forward from this pandemic into the future of education.

Sherry Duerst-Higgins (incumbent)

I was born in Eugene and grew up in the rural farming community of Lorane, 12 miles west of Cottage Grove. I graduated from Crow High School with a class of 23. I have lived in Cottage Grove for over 40 years, raising my family, working and enjoying our community. I have three children, all graduating from CGHS, and seven

grandchildren, two who graduated from CGHS, two who are attending South Lane, two who attend school in Eugene, and one sweet 3-year-old.

I serve on the South Lane School Board because I believe our children are our future. I got involved in school activities when my children were in school; becoming involved in parent club, booster club, wrestling club, the South Lane budget committee and then elected to the school board. I have been active in the state advocating for students statewide, for stable funding for our schools. After years of insufficient funding for our schools and students we must do better. We need better funding to lift the quality of education in Oregon; to make it the top priority.

As a member of the South Lane Board, I will continue to fight for our kids.

Candidates for Board Position 5

Colleen Valley (incumbent; appointed December 2020 to fill the Position 5 vacancy for the remainder of the term-June 2021)

I was born in St. Louis, Mo., and moved to Cottage Grove with my husband and two children in 2009. I joined the board from South Lane Mental Health, began

volunteering with the Parent Club at Harrison Elementary. I also started coaching soccer with SVA and joined their board soon after. I am currently part of the Lincoln Middle School Parent Club and was appointed to the South Lane School District board in December of 2020.

Erik Benson

I am originally from California and graduated from Sheldon High School in Eugene. My wife and I have lived in Cottage Grove for 22 years and I have two sons who are Cottage Grove HS graduates, 2012 and 2014. I have served for 32 years in the Army Reserve and will retire this fall as a Colonel.

We own an insurance agency in Cottage Grove and reside on a rural property where we raise nursery stock.

Questions and Answers

1. *As a board member, what would your priorities be and what impact would you hope to make during your term?*

Taylor Wilhour:

Kids are always our top priority as a board and a district. Right now, that means getting them back into school as soon as we are able to safely do so and adding

supports like after-school programs, tutoring and summer school to make up for the ground we have lost to the pandemic. The passage of the Student Success Act (SSA) provided much-needed funding aimed at the expansion of Career and Technical Education programs and increasing equity in our schools. I'm eager to get back to that work.

On a personal note, I look forward to helping in the classroom again and hopefully tutoring as well.

Pam Duffy:

My priorities are to assist in the following: 1) to increase math and reading proficiency ratings and graduation rates; 2) provide more Career and Technical Education programs to students; 3) increase parent participation in the board meetings; and 4) make parents aware of programs, such as Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Critical Race Theory, that are likely coming down the pike. Some of this may not sound pleasant to people, but it is reality.

My hope is that in effecting these priorities, South Lane students will have a better path for the future and that parents have a far better picture of what is transpiring

in the district.

Melanie Stuhlmiller:

As a first-time school board member, I aim to learn, actively listen, ask questions and encourage community discussion. I hope that, if elected, community members feel welcomed and united with SLSD during my term and thereafter.

Sherry Duerst-Higgins:

The pandemic caused exceptionally high levels of stress for our students and staff. As they return to the classroom, we need to support their emotional and mental health, in addition to their academic pursuits, with staff and students feeling safe and supported in their school environment. This is essential for student success.

To create more opportunities for all our students to

have a quality education and to provide equal education for all our students, we need adequate and stable funding for our schools. We need the district to stay on solid financial footing in order to create opportunity for strong student success and equitable outcomes for all our students.

If elected, I will strive to give all our children the resources and support they need to have the best quality education available, to listen to the needs of our students and to set policies that will enable the district to move forward with the equitable and quality education our kids deserve.

I will also encourage more engagement and involvement from parents in the development of our education to our students.

See Q&A 7A

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CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE TREE LIMB PICK-UP

MAY 3, 2021 & MAY 17, 2021

The City of Cottage Grove Public Works Department will be conducting the annual Tree Limb Pick-Up the weeks of May 3, 2021 and May 17, 2021. **Property owners will be responsible for removing any branches or limbs placed in the street after May 21, 2021.**

All limbs must be put out **BEFORE** May 3, 2021 for the first pick-up and **BEFORE** May 17, 2021 for the second pick-up.

Residents can **NOT** place branches in the street where curbside parking does not exist or in bike lanes.

This is strictly a tree limb pick up, nothing other than loose tree limbs or branches will be picked up.

If you have questions regarding the Tree Limb Pick-Up Program, please call the Public Works Department, at (541) 767-4100 or see our Limb Pick-Up Brochure, located at City Hall, at 400 East Main Street, or on our website, at <https://www.cottagegrove.org/publicworks/page/tree-branch-pickup-program-0> for additional information.

CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE

