

"Chess club in each school, bringing music back in ... It would build a community of parents that want to bring their kids to school every day."

Hartfield and the Redmond School Board also created an equity task force for the district in September, intended to address inequities in local schools, combat explicit and implicit racism nd diversify the district's workforce The task force has done well getting set up this year, Hartfield said, but shed push them to set concrete goals if reelected. "That way it's not a task force in idea, it's a task force that's actually moving forward to doing something that would be measurable to all students," she said. One of the equity task force's members, Stephanie Hunter, is Hartfield's lone challenger. Hunter is a behavioral specialist at the Opportunity Foundation of Central Oregon, a Redmond nonprofit that supports people with disabilities. She is the mother of a senior at Redmond Proficiency Academy charter school and a foster son who is in a post-graduate high school program for students with developmental disabilities. Many of Hunter's top concerns have to do with helping schools and students recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Those include making sure attendance bounces back next year after a sudden drop, improving school air-filtration systems to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and investing in



Hartfield

students' mental health. "Our kids have been through trauma," said Hunter, 46. "We need to

Salinas

Summers Visinoni

ter assist students who went through tough times like she did. "I was an underprivileged child

Michael Summers, owner of Bendbased Summers Flooring and Design, said if elected, he hopes to heal the divide between school staff and some local families. The tension between the two groups got heated after COVID-19 mandates from Oregon Department of Education required students to learn online, he said.

Teachers and administrators just

Summers didn't know enough about the guns-in-schools bill to have a strong opinion on it, he said.

If elected to the school board Rachel Visinoni - an office assistant and mother of a kindergartener at Tom McCall Elementary — said shed push for more opportunities for open dialogue between parents and the district.

We need to find that sense of com

ioritize individual attention, espe cially for kids who have not done well."

Teachers' mental health is also something Hunter worries about. If elected, she'd push for providing counseling for teachers, donating spa gift cards and enforcing a more reasonable work-life balance.

"I think it should be normalized that teachers don't work evenings and weekends," Hunter said.

One of Hunter's strengths is her drive to connect with Redmond community members and bring their ideas to the table, she said.

"I have been a bridge builder for 20 years," she said. "I will go anywhere, and I will talk to anyone."

Position 2

As a teenager in Redmond, Michelle Salinas had to temporarily drop out of school to take care of her younger sisters after her parents abandoned them.

Salinas eventually re-enrolled at Redmond High School, earned her diploma and now serves as the assistant branch manager at Bank of America in Redmond. She wants to be on the school board so local schools can betwho had to struggle for everything," said Salinas, 40. "I want more representation of those underprivileged children."

Salinas has two children at Hugh Hartman Elementary School. She was also the co-chair and manager for the political action committee that helped pass the Redmond school bond last November.

Some of Salinas' biggest concerns are keeping students safely in schools in-person, addressing post-COVID-19 learning loss and supporting the equity task force.

A state Legislature-approved bill, awaiting Gov. Kate Brown's signature, would allow school districts to vote on whether or not to continue to allow permitted, concealed firearms on school property. Redmond School District currently does not have a policy addressing visitors carrying weapons in schools, but staff and students are banned from doing so.

Salinas said she was unsure how she felt about banning visitors from bringing concealed guns to schools.

"As someone who comes from a family who owns guns, I don't want to see our rights being taken away," she

got beat up last year," Summers, 39, said. "I felt like I can come in and help."

Summers has three daughters in Redmond schools — two in middle school at Redmond Proficiency Academy and one at Hugh Hartman Elementary.

One thing Summers wishes Redmond schools did better is keeping parents informed. For example, even though he was happy to hear of Mosaic Medical hosting vaccine clinics inside schools, he thinks parents weren't given enough information about them.

"I feel like if parents can trust the board to keep them in the loop — especially on health-related things that would ease so much tension," he said.

The board should also be more clear to parents about the goals of the equity task force, Summers said. At the moment, some conservative families in Redmond are anxious about it, and they may want more involvement, he said.

"If they feel their input is taken into account, and they have a choice, then

munity again, and a sense of compromise between the parent's voices and

the school board," said Visinoni, 44. Like Hartfield, Visinoni wants more extracurricular activities for elementary students. She also wants to host teacher-parent sessions, which could ease tensions between the groups, she said.

"If we need to do something like an open forum, where parents can ask teachers anything they need to, I think that would be incredibly beneficial," Visinoni said.

If the Redmond School Board must make a decision on visitors bringing guns into schools, Visinoni would advocate for banning firearms on school property.

"I am 100% pro-Second Amendment, always have been, but I cannot think of any reason why a parent would need to bring a concealed weapon to a basketball game or par-ent-teacher conference," she said. "Keep them in the car."

Lacey Butts, whose name will appear on the ballot, is no longer running for office.

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Police

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The proposed communications specialist would engage in "telling our story," and not act as a traditional public information officer responsible for relaying official information as a uniformed representative of the department.

"We need to constantly engage and communicate with our community, and I'm looking to do that on a regular, ongoing basis," Krantz said.

City Manager Eric King re-cently revised earlier dire budget projections for 2021-2023, with revenue now expected to hit pre-pandemic levels or higher.

Krantz called the requests

"right-sizing" and said the department could still use more people.

In 2020, there were 51,320 calls for service to Bend Police Department.

The majority of calls to police do not result in an arrest, and a long-running program in Redmond and Bend sends professional "community service officers" to many nonemergency calls, like parking complaints or nuisance animals.

Though Redmond is currently proposing adding two community service officers to its budget, there are plans in Bend to add to the nine such positions on staff. Krantz said he'd like to one day.

"Working with the available

budget, it's just not one of the positions we'll be able to add," ĥe said.

On the county side, Sheriff Shane Nelson is asking the Deschutes County Commission for funding for five additional sworn deputies.

An ongoing study by Portland State University has found that Bend has fewer sworn police officers than other cities its size.

From 2010 to 2019, Bend had an average of 1.1 officers per 1,000 residents, while similarly sized U.S. cities had an average of 1.6 officers per 1,000 residents.

The study also accounts for Bend's low crime rate by comparing the city to others with lower crime rates, but

still found that Bend is sig-nificantly "under-policed," according to PSU criminologist Kris Henning, who conducted the study alongside graduate student Holly Schorr.

From 2010 to 2019, Bend Police increased its ranks of sworn officers from 88 to 101, a rise of 14.8%. In that time, Bend's population increased 26.4%, from 79,556 to 100,588.

According to Henning, all Oregon cities followed this trend, decreasing statewide from 1.5 officers per 1,000 residents in 2010, to 1.3 officers per 1,000 residents in 2019.

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U.S. restores trans health protections

Associated Press

The federal government will protect gay and transgender people against sex discrimination in health care, the Biden administration declared Monday, reversing a Trump-era policy that narrowed rights at the intersection of changing social mores and sensitive medical decisions.

It marked the latest step by President Joe Biden to advance the rights of gay and transgender people across society, from military service, to housing, to employment opportunities.

The policy announcement by the Department of Health and Human Services

affirms that federal laws forbidding sex discrimination in health care also protect gay and transgender people. The Trump administration had defined "sex" to mean gender assigned at birth, thereby excluding transgender people from the law's umbrella of protection.

Both opponents and supporters of Biden's action said it's likely to lead to litigation.

The American Medical Association said in a statement that the Biden administration "did the right thing" by ending "a dismal chapter which a federal agency sought to remove civil rights protections."