

**VOTER GUIDE –BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTION
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE
CITY OF PONTIAC**

**Tuesday, May 6, 2008
POLLS ARE OPEN 7:00 A.M. – 8:00 P.M.**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OAKLAND AREA

Website: www.lwvoa.org **E-mail:** contact@lwvoa.org **Phone:** 248-548-1097

Go to www.LWVOA.org and Click on Candidate Forums for 4/24 forum information.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan national organization whose purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party. Candidate responses are included as submitted and have not been edited except in cases where the replies have exceeded the stated word limitations. **Spelling and Grammar were not corrected.** The inclusion of candidates' statements and opinions is solely in the interest of public service and in no way is to be construed as an endorsement by the League of Women Voters which takes no responsibility for any views or facts stated by the candidates.

THERE ARE NO PROPOSALS ON THE BALLOT.

School District Board Member - 3 Candidates on the Ballot + 1 Write-In for 1 Seat

CANDIDATES for SCHOOL BOARD ONE 4-year term <i>Vote for no more than ONE</i>	Question 1 (200 Words or less): Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for School Board and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position that you are running for.	Question 2 (200 Words or less): What are the top three (3) Priority Issues facing your school district and what actions would you take to address them if elected to the school board?
KAREN CAIN 172 Green Street Pontiac, MI 48341	DID NOT RESPOND IN TIME FOR INCLUSION	

PONTIAC School District (cont'd)

<p>CANDIDATES for SCHOOL BOARD</p> <p>ONE 4-year term <i>Vote for no more than ONE</i></p>	<p>Question 1 (200 Words or less): Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for School Board and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position that you are running for.</p>	<p>Question 2 (200 Words or less): What are the top three (3) Priority Issues facing your school district and what actions would you take to address them if elected to the school board?</p>
<p>TONI ESTRADA 2419 Richwood Road Auburn Hills, MI 48326</p>	<p>Born in Pontiac; raised in Pontiac and Waterford; presently residing in Auburn Hills for the past eight years.</p> <p>Married to Rudy; I have one son, one step-son and two step-daughters.</p> <p>I am prematurely retired from the automotive industry due to a disability.</p> <p>Education: Board Certified Cosmetologist; Certificate of Achievement in Toolmaking; Apprentice Completion Certificate; Bona fide Journeyman Toolmaker; Bona fide Journeyman Metal Model Maker/Inspector; Certificates in Unigraphics - CAD; BS in Business Leadership, minors in Computer Science and Manufacturing Engineering; MBA in International Business.</p> <p>Why I'm running for the Pontiac School Board: Our Schools will soon be undergoing a major restructuring that I would like to be a part of. I feel that with my background, experience and education, I have much to offer our failing and declining school system.</p> <p>Every student in our school district has the right to a superior education that thoroughly prepares them for college and/or entering the workforce.</p> <p>Our school board, administration and citizens are all responsible for making this a reality. Because of existing issues, the whole school system needs to be overhauled to achieve our goals. With the right technology and a motivational curriculum, our students will look forward to attending school.</p>	<p>Financial Operations: Implement electronic system for tracking all departments and operating costs that are not currently in place. This system would also track gang activity, and constituent complaints and requests.</p> <p>Consolidate schools, and close schools not needed. Inventory closed schools/buildings, excess equipment and liquidate.</p> <p>Negotiate contracts at lower costs without automatic renewals for all facilities and contract services. Hold all contractors accountable and/or failure to meet contract requirements.</p> <p>Curriculum: Expand technology programs to include mini-classes of software programs that are used in technology-based careers.</p> <p>Broaden curriculum to educate students about current in-demand careers, types of degrees/certifications, apprenticeships and entry-level jobs.</p> <p>Teach students the basics of using checking and savings accounts, budgeting, prioritizing, credit scores, credit cards, buying a house, etc.</p> <p>School Leadership: Schools to work as a team, communicate and be consistent. Utilize state, federal, and all other resources for restructuring and reorganizing school buildings.</p> <p>Create a hotline for reporting fraud, unethical behavior, waste and abuse.</p> <p>Determine the number of staff needed; clarify job positions, descriptions, salaries, and benefits. Hire new employees based upon qualifications.</p> <p>Appoint a school counselor to every student with whom they can consult regarding personal, home, family issues, social and health services and academic performance.</p>

PONTIAC School District (cont'd)

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<p>BENJAMIN L SHATTUCK SR 617 Markle Street Pontiac, MI 48340</p>	<p>I am a lifelong resident of Pontiac and attended the Pontiac School District. I have been married for fifteen years and have three children who currently attend school in the District. Community service has always been important to me. I served in the U.S. Army and have volunteered as a PTA president in the District for two years. In addition, I was a member of the District's Dress Code and Attendance Policy Committee and currently serve on the Parent Advisory Committee, representing the interests of all of the District's special education students. I am running for the School Board because the District needs positive change. I am committed to ensuring that ALL of the District's students have the opportunity to succeed and that the interests of all students and parents are represented on the Board.</p>	<p>(1) Fiscal Responsibility: As a School Board member, I will scrutinize the budget and closely monitor contracts to make sure that we are using every dollar effectively. We must stop sweetheart deals and root out conflicts of interest and unethical dealings. In addition, I will push to implement the recommendations of the Chartwell Report as soon as possible.</p> <p>(2) Safety: We need to take strong measures to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff. I support increasing the number of security personnel in our middle and high schools and implementing a zero-tolerance policy toward any violence or threats of violence in our buildings.</p> <p>(3) Strong Academics: By being more fiscally responsible, we can put more money into classroom instruction. We need to expand educational offerings and focus on enhancing academic quality.</p>

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<p>DONALD WATKINS <i>(write-in candidate)</i> 1526 Stirling Lakes Drive Pontiac, MI 48340</p>	<p>Bio: Student achievement! I am a <u>write-in</u> candidate for the Pontiac School Board for the sole purpose to enhance student achievement in the Pontiac School District.</p> <p>I am a teacher and an educator, I teach 150 students a day. I have been an educator for the past 17 years. As a certified teacher, substitute teacher, and college instructor, I have taught every level from kindergarten-college senior. I have also been an after-school and Saturday tutor, mentor, sports coach, and a coach for the Michigan League of Academic Games.</p> <p>Nearly every successful school district in Oakland County has a teacher or former teacher on its school board. The Pontiac School District does not. Only a teacher has first hand experience with <u>all</u> of the following: lesson planning, curriculum instruction development and implementation, classroom management, educational facility operation, technology instruction, teachers union membership, professional development, teacher-student-parent-administrator relationships, test and career preparation, mentoring, nurturing, and surrogate parenting.</p> <p>Education: Pontiac Central High School (Class of 1985) B.S. History, Tuskegee University M.A. Education, Oakland University Indiana University School of Law</p> <p>Teacher, Detroit Public Schools: 1999-present Teacher, Pontiac Public Schools: 1996-99 Associate Instructor, Indiana University: 1992-96 Undergraduate Advisor, Indiana University: 1991-92</p>	<p>Declining Enrollment: Without question, the number one issue facing the Pontiac School District is its declining student enrollment. It is destroying the vitality of the District. The District is losing hundreds of students a year, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding. These students are being lost primarily to Pontiac's 5 charter schools.</p> <p>I respect parents' right to choose a school for their child. However, as a product of the Pontiac School District, I am strongly convinced that when you compare the Pontiac School District against the 5 charter schools, you will find that the Pontiac School District has the superior teachers, administrators, facilities, services, and resources. Many of the very successful students in charter schools had their educational foundation instilled in the Pontiac School District. To regain the trust and confidence of those who have left the District, we must improve and market our product and services, and convince parents to reinvest in the Pontiac School District.</p> <p>We will bring these students and parents back to the Pontiac School District by demonstrating that the District can more than match the options that the charter schools provide: such as a safer school environment, content-based curriculum, and innovative learning techniques.</p> <p>(...)</p>