

may 2025 lane county

election candidate guide

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4J school district board

The 4J School Board oversees the education of more than 16,000 students—our region’s future workforce. Board decisions shape student outcomes, school funding, and programs like career and technical education. The business community has a stake in strong public schools that attract families, support working parents, and prepare students with skills local employers need—making these races critical to Eugene’s talent pipeline, economic competitiveness, and long-term business growth.

4J school district board position 2

4J position 2

Ericka Thessen
Physical Therapist
PAC Filing YES



CANDIDATE
SCORE

9.5

Danny McDiarmid
Case Manager,
Oregon Dept. of Justice
PAC Filing NO



CANDIDATE
SCORE

5

Please provide a brief bio including your professional background, volunteerism and any affiliations with local businesses or organizations.

Ericka Thessen 9.5

I have been working as an acute care physical therapist since 1997, spending all but 3 of my career years working for PeaceHealth, 12 of those years at RiverBend Hospital. I am a single working mother of 3 amazing kids. I started volunteering in their classrooms in elementary school which led to me serving on the Site Councils of McCornack Elementary, Kennedy Middle and Churchill High Schools. I served on the Eugene School District 4J Budget Committee from 2021-2023. I was appointed to the Eugene School District 4J Board Position #2 in October 2023 and I am now running for my seat. In the past I have served on the Whole Earth Nature School Board for 2 yrs, Wiggly Tail Dog Rescue Board for 2 yrs. My kids and I have fostered over 80 dogs for 2 local dog rescues. I served on the Lane County Parks Funding Task Force in 2021. I was a volunteer for Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon Lane County Leadership and Advocacy Team for 6 years doing advocacy work at a State level for health care, education and child care. I served as board president for The 86 Hunger Foundation from 2022-2024. The 86 Hunger Foundation is a low to no barrier grassroots local not-for-profit that works to eradicate hunger and food waste in Eugene/Springfield. We were able to fundraise last year to buy a food truck and became the first plant based free food truck in Lane County, often partnering with local organizations like Community Supported Shelters to bring food to their clients.

Campaign Email: thessenfor4j@gmail.com
Campaign Website: www.thessenfor4j.com

Danny McDiarmid 5.0

I have over 19 years of experience in judicial legal processes, safety inspection, and case management, including my current role as a Child Support Case Manager with the Oregon Department of Justice. I hold a Master's in Legal Studies from Purdue University and a Bachelor's in Business Management from Kaplan University. My volunteer work includes serving on the Awbrey Park Elementary Site Council and Parent Teacher Organization, where I focus on event planning, logistics, and community engagement. I'm passionate about fostering inclusive environments, supporting equitable access to education, and building strong community Partnerships.

Campaign Email: danieljohnmcdiarmid@yahoo.com

4J position 2

**Please share with us your primary reason for running in this election.
Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the School Board?**

Ericka Thessen 9.5

I wanted to run for the school board to bring some sometimes underrepresented perspectives to the board. I am a single working parent who at times had to work second jobs to get by being the sole supporter of my children. I felt that was an important perspective to bring as many of our students and families also come from single working parent homes or families who are financially struggling or low income. My children are my greatest teachers and I learned much from their experiences accessing their education. I have a child with some significant health and mental health struggles that made being in school very difficult. I also have a child with developmental delay, autism and mutism and we had to really work to get her needs accommodated through 504 plans to help her be successful in the educational environment. So these lived experiences inspired me to serve on the school board to bring the perspectives of neurodiverse and disabled students and their families to be better represented in decisions made in our district.

Danny McDiarmid 5.0

My primary reason for running is to advocate for equitable educational opportunities for all students. I'm motivated by the need to strengthen community involvement and ensure student voices are heard in decision-making processes.

4J position 2

What are the top two issues facing the school district today and how would you address those as a Board member?

Ericka Thessen 9.5

I would say the top two issues are:

-Student achievement- namely 3rd grade literacy, 9th grade on track and graduation rates. Attendance also is heavily tied into these metrics as well.

-Staff retention, satisfaction, appreciation and recruitment- our district struggles to keep classified staff (EAs, bus drivers, food service, grounds keepers/ maintenance) and SPED (special education) staff across all employee groups.

As far as achievement, I believe focusing on early literacy supports and Title 1 services are important in elementary levels. We have early literacy grants from the state and are in the 2nd year of programs that focus on the science of reading. I would increase our 8th grade and 9th grade transition supports and teams to get students ready to make the transition to high school. As far as high school, we know the highest graduation rates are for students in one of our many CTE programs. As a board member, I feel we should grow our CTE programs- for example this year we started a new CTE program EmpowerED to help grow a new generation of teachers and education paraprofessionals. Also, there are concrete lessons that general education programs can gain from studying WHY students are more engaged in the CTE programs which lead to higher graduation rates (like project based learning, real life applications of subject courses).

As for staff retention, appreciation, satisfaction and recruitment, the board and district need to invest in programs we already have like the Grow Your Own Program and Teacher Mentor Programs. We also need to make sure that all employee groups and staff are included in decision making at district levels that affect their everyday job roles and duties. I would also like to see development of a more robust Employee Wellness program at the district and each building level to support staff to improve retention. Lastly, I would like to develop exit surveys and/or interviews for staff that leave the district so we can track trends and reasons why we are losing staff especially in SPED and classified groups.

Danny McDiarmid 5.0

The top issues are funding allocation and student mental health. I'd prioritize transparent budgeting to ensure resources directly benefit classrooms and support services while promoting mental health initiatives that provide accessible counseling and social-emotional learning.

4J position 2

As a board member, how would you approach the budget issues facing the district?

Ericka Thessen 9.5

Our district has had a relatively large budget reserve fund which buffered us from making tough budget decisions for a couple years. But with declining enrollment and declining funding (especially after COVID funds ended) we are now facing the need to cut \$17-20 million or more to have a balanced budget and financial stability for the immediate and medium range forecast. We cannot do all the things all the time. Making budget readjustments and cuts is difficult but necessary, especially because it is unclear about what changes will happen at a Federal level. We start budget committee meetings tomorrow 3/11/25 and will begin work on "right sizing" the district. The board and I want to limit cuts as much as possible from direct frontline education staff as possible. The board did choose to increase the district budget reserves from 5% to 8.5% a couple weeks ago FYI. At the end of the day, we need to have the budget locked in and focused on providing our students with an excellent top notch education while also being an amazing place where people want to work and grow their careers.

Danny McDiarmid 5.0

I'd adopt a collaborative approach, working closely with administrators, teachers, and families to ensure funds are directed toward programs and resources that have the greatest impact on student success.

4J position 2

What should we be doing as a district to prepare our students to be successful in the workforce after graduation?

Ericka Thessen 9.5

We see that the highest graduation rates in 4J are the students in CTE programs. We have many programs such as health careers, early childhood/childcare, K-12 education, architecture and construction, Rachel Carson/natural resources, forestry, IT/tech, digital media arts, journalism, business management, culinary arts, engineering and manufacturing. I have gone to many of these programs and talked to students. What I hear from students is that they are much more engaged in their education in these programs because of program based learning, collaborative problem solving and real life applications of their educational courses. We can grow and increase our CTE programs AND we can apply what works well in CTE to our general education programs. Also, 4J has increased using "real life" in course curriculum to help support students be more successful in real life and workforce through courses like financial algebra or teaching resume building in our language arts curriculum. 4J has also recently introduced extended day high school at schools like Churchill to help get students back on track, get some credit recovery and towards graduation on time so that they can get out into the workforce after graduation quicker.

Danny McDiarmid 5.0

We should expand vocational training, internships, and partnerships with local businesses to give students practical experience. Strengthening career counseling and emphasizing digital and financial literacy will better prepare students for a dynamic workforce.

What endorsements have you received for your campaign to date?

Ericka Thessen 9.5

Oregon Working Families Party, Democratic Party of Lane County, Eugene Education Association, Oregon School Employees Association Chapter 1, Oregon Education Association, Basic Rights Oregon PAC, Stonewall Caucus of Democratic Party of Oregon, Young Democrats of Oregon Caucus of Democratic Party of Oregon, Stand for Children Oregon, 4J Board members Maya Rabasa, Jenny Jonak, and Tom DiLiberto, Bethel School Board members Curt Nordling and Ashley Espinoza, Eugene Mayor Kaarin Knudson, Lane County Commissioner Laurie Trieger, State Representative Lisa Fragala, Rose Wilde Lane ESD Board Austin Fohnagy LCC Board, Eugene City Councilors Matt Keating, Eliza Kashinsky EWEB Commissioner Tim Morris, Chris Wig, Springfield School Board Member Jonathan Light, Dr Sami Al-Abdrabbuh, Corvallis School District Board.

Danny McDiarmid 5.0

I have not received any endorsements for my campaign to date.

4J school district board position 3

4J position 3

Judy Newman
Senior Advisor,
Early Childhood CARES
PAC Filing **YES**



CANDIDATE
SCORE

10

Donald Easton

College Faculty, High School
Teacher, STEM Consultant
PAC Filing **NO**



CANDIDATE
SCORE

6.1

Please provide a brief bio including your professional background, volunteerism and any affiliations with local businesses or organizations.

Judy Newman 10.0

Judy Newman brings over 40 years of leadership in education, early childhood development, and community collaboration. She is running for re-election to the 4J School Board to help ensure every student in the district has the opportunity to thrive—academically, socially, and emotionally.

Judy co-founded and led Early Childhood CARES at the University of Oregon for nearly 30 years, serving thousands of young children and families with developmental delays and disabilities. She currently serves as a Senior Advisor to multiple education and community initiatives, including United Way's Early Childhood Hub, and has been deeply involved in state and national efforts to improve access and outcomes for students of all backgrounds.

Since 2017, Judy has served on the 4J School Board, where she champions student-centered strategies such as improving attendance, expanding mental health supports, advancing career and technical education, and retaining high-quality, diverse educators. She is committed to ensuring a successful superintendent transition and protecting the integrity of public education.

Judy is a proud 4J grandparent, longtime Eugene resident, and tireless advocate for children and families. Her experience, values, and results-driven approach make her a trusted and steady voice for our schools.

Campaign Email: judynewman1950@gmail.com
Campaign Website: electjudynewman.com

Donald Easton 6.1

I am a Lane County resident, born and raised here. After high school, I joined the U.S. Army and served for 10 years before coming back to Eugene. I started my family here, with all of my children attending 4J schools. I attended graduate school and have 2 Masters degrees, one in Public Administration and the other in Information Security. During my time in school, I worked in technology, in local government, companies and in Big Tech. My last job in private industry was as a Cybersecurity Engineer before I left to work in education. I am a lead faculty member at Lane Community College, where I have been for 10 years. I am also a licensed Career Technical Education (CTE) teacher and worked in 4J both as a substitute and as a part-time teacher. I have been on several committees at the state and local level, mostly focused on improving CTE opportunities for students. I am the former president of the Eugene Chapter of the Information Systems Security Association (ISSA), an organization focused on cybersecurity education and industry. I am also a member of the International Information Systems Security Certification Consortium (ISC2) and the International Council of E-Commerce Consultants.

Campaign Email: easton4eugene4j@gmail.com
Campaign Website: easton4education.org

4J position 3

**Please share with us your primary reason for running in this election.
Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the School Board?**

Judy Newman 10.0

I'm running for school board to bring my lifetime of professional and personal experience in early childhood, K-12, special education and community leadership to the broader challenges facing our district. I am deeply committed to public schools. They are at the heart of a community and a place where all children, youth, families and staff should be welcome and safe. I am committed to helping 4J schools create opportunities for every child to be successful and graduate prepared for what they choose to do in life.

4J is hiring a new permanent superintendent to lead our District and I am committed to ensuring there is a successful transition to lead our school district and provide stability and support.

We are living in a polarized world and this can distract from our mission of supporting and educating students. We need leaders who will listen and keep us on track and will protect our public schools, including standing up to recent federal attacks on public schools and equity when needed, while continuing to commit to academic excellence and success for all children.

Donald Easton 6.1

I have been in the 4J community as an educator, parent, and community member. One key issue that I believe is at the forefront of everyone's mind is the budget shortfall we are expected to have. I feel that things have been mismanaged and we need transparency for the community to understand.

4J position 3

What are the top two issues facing the school district today and how would you address those as a Board member?

Judy Newman 10.0

The main issues facing the school district are complex and inter-related: At the top, learning outcomes for students in 4J need to improve.

Learning outcomes are negatively impacted by high rates of **absenteeism**, **lagging social emotional developmental skills** and **mental health struggles**.

Absenteeism needs to be addressed on several levels:

Vigilant tracking so students, at all levels, who are falling behind, are identified early and are given supports and interventions before the problem grows. As much as possible, we need to get families involved with attendance.

Students must feel **safe and welcome in schools** by providing peer supports, AVID cohorts, affinity groups, clubs, sports, mental health services and supports, free nutritious meals, and enhanced, clear safety protocols.

Students must be **engaged with curriculum** that is meaningful; project based learning; Career Technical Education (CTE); and the arts. I also support instruction in social emotional skill development.

And we must **recruit and retain high quality and diverse staff**. Some strategies include "Grow Your Own Teacher Program"; promoting a supportive and healthy workplace culture, and continuously improve based on regular feedback. I also support providing good compensation and staff recognition for their work.

Donald Easton 6.1

The top two issues facing the school district now are budget shortfall and difficulty in recruitment and retention. Unfortunately, these issues are often at odds with each other. Fiscal mismanagement has contributed to the budgetary issues they are facing, as they spent significant amounts of money in the last fiscal year and should have been more conservative as we were in an uncertain time politically. By being more conservative with the funds they have, the district could afford to spend where it is needed to ensure our students receive the education they deserve.

4J position 3

As a board member, how would you approach the budget issues facing the district?

Judy Newman 10.0

I have had 30 years of experience developing and managing public education budgets- through both growth and reduction cycles. Being a responsible and informed steward of public resources is very important to me.

The last time Eugene 4J district had to make budget reductions was 2008 and we are now facing the need to cut spending for the next few years. It is important for the board, staff and community to understand why we need to make cuts at this time.

The board recently updated the district's reserve fund policy to provide clarity and flexibility to manage cuts gradually and thoughtfully. We established a "values framework" based on the district's goals and priorities and the intention of keeping cuts as far away from classrooms as possible, keeping instructional days and hours stable, and providing security for staff and their employment. The values framework will be applied to each proposed reduction.

Transparency and doing the work in public is important. Understanding the impact budget reductions have on the lives of employees and students and doing the work with empathy is important. I believe in frequent, clear and transparent communications about the reasons for budget cuts, the priorities and decision making process.

Donald Easton 6.1

I believe it is important to first consider ways to reduce the shortfall through some austerity measures, such as evaluating purchasing practices, I believe it is important to keep things as local as possible, but be conscious of the attempt to receive the most for the money. I also feel that there is a possibility of selling some real estate to recoup some funds. I realize this is a short term solution, but it would buy some time.

4J position 3

What should we be doing as a district to prepare our students to be successful in the workforce after graduation?

Judy Newman 10.0

The first priority is to teach children to read proficiently by the end of third grade. This provides a the necessary foundation for all future learning and success in school and life. Our new reading curriculum is based on research and proven teaching practices for teaching reading. We also support teachers to deepen their knowledge and skills through targeted professional development.

We must expand and deepen the career technical education (CTE) pathways the district offers and strongly encourage students to enter them. 4J data shows that students who participate in a pathway, graduate high school at higher rates and have fewer absences than peers who do not. This matches national data. Our current CTE pathways are: Technology; Culinary Arts; Health Professions; Future Build; Digital Media Arts; K12 Educator; Engineering Technology; Environmental Science. Each requires collaboration with industry partners and for licensed teachers to learn current industry standards. We integrate K-12 standards with pathway curriculum. It is hard work and very exciting!

We must Incorporate critical thinking skills and team work skills into teaching of required state core standards needed to graduate in Oregon. These are necessary professional skills.

Donald Easton 6.1

I feel that the drive to send everyone straight to college is misguided. Opportunities exist in so many ways, such as apprenticeship programs and workforce training while in high school. Businesses host students for mentorship is another method to get students really motivated and interested in the working world and where they can make their mark.

What endorsements have you received for your campaign to date?

Judy Newman 10.0

I have many endorsements from individuals, all current school board members, and many past board members and local elected officials. I am just beginning this process with organizations. I would greatly appreciate an endorsement from the Chamber of Commerce.

Donald Easton 6.1

Maya Rabasa, Ericka Thessen

4J school district board position 6

4J position 6

Maya Rabasa

Teacher

PAC Filing **YES**



Please provide a brief bio including your professional background, volunteerism and any affiliations with local businesses or organizations.

Maya Rabasa 6.8

An essential component of my life story and identity is rooted in my experience as an immigrant. After immigrating to the US from Mexico, I learned English in the public school system and grew up in a trilingual, multicultural home (Mexican father and French mother). My family came to the US to pursue educational opportunities – the value of public education was always centered as one of the greatest offerings of this country. As a result of taking various educational pathways, several family members are small business owners in their chosen fields.

The product of a high school Career and Technical Education program, I am a former educator, with two decades of teaching experience at all levels ranging from preschool through undergraduate. After leaving the classroom, I devoted over 7,000 hours volunteering in Eugene 4J schools – all prior to my volunteer service to the district as a board member.

Additionally, I am a longtime member of the Board of Directors serving Plaza de Nuestra Comunidad (formerly Centro Latino Americano/Huerto de la Familia/Downtown Languages). Plaza is Lane County's main agency serving our Latinx and immigrant community – a sampling of our offerings includes programs: 1) training folks in starting and running small businesses; 2) teaching English; and 3) delivering mental health therapy and substance abuse prevention and recovery support.

Campaign Email: mayarabasa@gmail.com

Campaign Website: www.mayarabasa.com (under construction)

4J position 6

What are the top two issues facing the school district today and how would you address those as a Board member?

Maya Rabasa 6.8

Two of the top issues Eugene School District 4J is currently facing are as follows:

- 1) Stabilizing leadership: As Chair, I helped lead the Board in the process to recruit and hire Colt Gill to serve as our Interim Superintendent. Over the past year we have been experiencing steady, thoughtful leadership. I am deeply invested in selecting a permanent Superintendent this Spring who will be committed to us for a period of time that will contribute to moving us in a direction that will help 4J to further set our course.
- 2) Mental Health: Increasing access to mental health services is critical so we can address the uptick in depression, anxiety, and suicidality. Along with increasing access to services, we must also increase access to quality training for our staff. Our staff need effective tools to support our students – and each other – through both chronic and acute mental health challenges.

As a board member, how would you approach the budget issues facing the district?

Maya Rabasa 6.8

There are two significant ways to address budget challenges: 1) make thoughtful, fiscally responsible budgeting decisions, including reductions; and 2) pursue additional revenue sources. When facing reductions in budgets in public education, it is critical to make cuts as far away from students as possible, without compromising the functioning of the district. In our case, this means looking at passive cuts through attrition and focusing on making the bulk of our adjustments in the realm of materials and services. In terms of revenue, I am committed to serving as an advocate for stable and/or increased school funding. I had the opportunity to join a delegation of Oregon school board members in Washington, DC, where we made the case to Oregon Senators Merkeley and Wyden and Oregon Representatives to protect federal education funding (specifically IDEA and Title I funding). Similarly, as a member of our school board's Legislative Subcommittee, I am part of a team focused on collaborating with the Oregon School Boards Association and the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators to leverage an increase in the governor's proposed school budget. Both of these elements will directly ease the impact of the budget challenges Oregon school districts are facing.

4J position 6

What should we be doing as a district to prepare our students to be successful in the workforce after graduation?

Maya Rabasa 6.8

One of the most significant ways that we can prepare our students for the workforce is to give them a taste of the workplace. Our Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs offer diverse choices in exploring post K-12 pathways – including careers in the medical field, construction, computer science, engineering, graphic arts, education, culinary arts and more. Since the passing of Measure 98, Oregon has invested significantly in CTE. Recent data shows that students who take two or more CTE classes have graduation rates upwards of 98%. This is compelling data as it demonstrates a correlation between participating in CTE and the successful completion of high school, an absolutely necessary step in becoming embedded in the workforce.

What endorsements have you received for your campaign to date?

Maya Rabasa 6.8

I have been endorsed by over 130 community members, including a significant number of leaders, both elected and non-elected. Included in this list are beloved teachers and district staff members, leaders of community based organizations, elected school board members from 6 different school districts, Mayor Kaarin Knudson, former Mayor Kitty Piercy, Lane County Commissioner Laurie Trieger, and other elected officials as well. I have also been endorsed by the Oregon Working Families Party, the Eugene Education Association, and the Oregon School Employees Association. I am also pursuing the opportunity to renew the support of the many organizations, unions, and political parties I earned endorsements from in 2021 (such as the Democratic Party of Lane County and Stand for Children).

bethel school district board

The Bethel School Board oversees the education of over 5,000 students in West Eugene—home to a significant portion of our region’s industrial and manufacturing base. Board decisions impact student outcomes, budget priorities, and workforce development programs. Strong schools help attract families, support working parents, and equip students with the skills local employers need. These roles matter to businesses that depend on a reliable talent pipeline and a thriving West Eugene economy.

bethel school district board position 6

bethel position 5

Brian Hynd
Sales,
Wine Industry
PAC Filing **YES**



Please provide a brief bio including your professional background, volunteerism and any affiliations with local businesses or organizations.

Brian Hynd 6.3

I am a community member, father, and husband that has been living in Eugene since 1997. After moving here from Athens, Georgia to pursue my college career, I fell in love with the area. Though college wasn't the right fit for me at the time, I've spent the ensuing years working in various industries and positions while enjoying all that being in Eugene has to offer. After graduating from LCC in their aviation pilot training program in 2007, I met my wife, got married, and began a new while trying to negotiate the troubling financial world of 2008. I found myself in the grocery industry through Market of Choice, eventually leading to a passionate and successful Wine Sales career. I raise two boys age 8 and 10 with my wife in the Bethel area for the past 8 years, and love the community, especially around their schooling. Along with wine, I'm passionate about all aspects of aviation, and have recently gotten into Amateur (Ham) Radio. I am a member of the Active Bethel Community, the Lane County Public Health Reserve Corps, and have recently gotten on to the Bethel School District Budget Committee for the coming year.

Please share with us your primary reason for running in this election. Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the School Board?

Brian Hynd 6.3

After experiencing the school district throughout the years from my kid's perspective, and seeing the way that the district has actively tried to foster a sense of community, respect, and responsibility, I am in full support of a lot of the policies of the district. My primary reason for running for this seat is that I want to maintain and improve the school district wherever I can. I find that school districts can be the heart of a thriving community, and that relationship they have in that community can easily be destroyed by a school board that is dysfunctional or not invested in the future of our children. I could not sit back and watch that happen.

bethel position 5

What are the top two issues facing the school district today and how would you address those as a Board member?

Brian Hynd 6.3

Budget and Student Success would definitely be my top concerns. We, like most school boards in Oregon, are facing a budget deficit over the next few years. Declining enrollment due to housing and demographic changes over the decades have impacted us greatly, and we will have to work hard to make that work. Through honest and transparent management of funds, I know that we will be able to overcome these challenges, but hard decisions will have to be made. One decision that cannot be compromised however is the district's goals as related to student success. Through many of the policies that the district currently has, our graduation rates have become some of the best in the area. Our dedication to science based programs for early childhood literacy have just started to show signs of success, and we've just started a new program in math that should show improvement in the coming years. Our new Career Technical Education program has promises to be a hub of learning for those kids that want a successful career outside of higher education. We must continue these programs for the future of our area.

As a board member, how would you approach the budget issues facing the district?

Brian Hynd 6.3

The budget issues that the district are facing are daunting, and they can't be solved by local means only. However, we must have responsible budget management, and we must make difficult decisions. Closing another school will unfortunately be one of those options, and responsible negotiations with employee groups will be essential. We are poised to make some tough decisions, but those can be done without affecting the stated goals of student success. I will also make sure to be an advocate in the state legislature for new ideas on how to make education a priority when it comes to funding.

bethel position 5

What should we be doing as a district to prepare our students to be successful in the workforce after graduation?

Brian Hynd 6.3

As I mentioned above, one of the things that we can be very proud of is our new Career Technical Education program, with a state of the art new facility. This program provides a direct path to active and thriving careers here in Eugene and throughout the country that can provide living wage jobs to thousands of students. This provides a fantastic opportunity for kids that don't find a fit in higher education, and prefer more hands on work. Another way that the district can help students be a success in the modern workforce is by giving them lots of opportunities to see themselves in that world. Through working with both Lane Community College, the University of Oregon, and other learning opportunities throughout the state, Bethel has a lot of opportunities that need to be encouraged for our graduating seniors to really see the possibilities, and what it takes to make those a reality in their own life.

What endorsements have you received for your campaign to date?

Brian Hynd 6.3

I am endorsed by the Democratic Party of Lane County, Eugene Education Association, and the Young Democrats of Oregon.

LCC board of education

Lane Community College (LCC) serves over 15,000 students annually, offering vital workforce training and career pathways that bolster our regional economy. In the 2021–22 fiscal year, LCC alumni contributed \$554.7 million to the region's income and supported 7,500+ jobs. The LCC Board of Education is responsible for guiding institutional strategy, approving budgets, and ensuring programs align with local labor needs—making these elections critical for employers who depend on a competitive, job-ready workforce.

LCC board of education zone 1

LCC zone 1

Jeff Cooper

Chief Operating Officer,
Paramount Ironworks

PAC Filing YES



CANDIDATE
SCORE

9.3

Jerry Rust

NA

PAC Filing YES



CANDIDATE
SCORE

7.6

Please provide a brief bio including your professional background, volunteerism and any affiliations with local businesses or organizations.

Jeff Cooper 9.3

I have deep roots in Junction City as a dad, coach, referee and in my work with Paramount Ironworks. I serve as Chair of the Lane Community College Advanced Tech-CTE Advisory Committee. I attend trade fairs and regularly engage with students. I am active in my church. I know what is on the heart and minds of people in our West Lane Communities because I listen and learn every day.

Jerry Rust 7.6

Jerry Rust is a lifelong Oregonian and former Lane County Commissioner who served for 20 years. He is the founder of the Hoedads tree planting collective, a student and teacher of Chinese, and a past gubernatorial candidate.

LCC zone 1

***Please share with us your primary reason for running in this election.
Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the School Board?***

Jeff Cooper 9.3

My reason for running: Community colleges are an important part of our future to equip our workforce for success and help our communities thrive—especially in West Lane County. I will bring needed common sense, hands-on experience and a commitment to West Lane County to the LCC Board.

Jerry Rust 7.6

My primary reason for running for the board is to preserve protect and enhance the mini qualities and programs offered to the citizens of Lane County.

LCC zone 1

What are the top two issues facing the college today and how would you address those as a Board member?

Jeff Cooper 9.3

1. Building connections with West Lane communities and high schools to ensure we are providing LCC access and needed services.

2. Ensuring we are meeting employers' needs in the program offerings to contribute to our economy.

Overall, I plan to address these issues by doing a lot of outreach to the business community and high schools, especially in West Lane County, find the connections between the two and advocate for those student and business needs at the board level.

Jerry Rust 7.6

I want to work with a high functioning board working in cooperation with the president of the college to:

Ensure that the Florence campus, which has been under utilized since COVID is fully functional and can provide more classes and can serve the local small business community.

LCC is especially important to low income families in Lane County I will work to assure that marginalized populations are given respect and opportunity. Lane community college is a steppingstone, a pathway for many students in our community.



LCC zone 1

As a board member, how would you approach the budget issues facing the college?

Jeff Cooper 9.3

There are always finite resources in a budget, especially for a public entity. Community colleges serve a unique and increasingly important purpose both in equipping our students for their future success and in meeting the needs of the area for a trained workforce. I would look at budget decisions with both of these in mind. I especially will look at those issues through the lens of the needs for West Lane County students and businesses. I think I would offer a fresh set of eyes in looking at the budget. I love to ask questions and look at new ways of doing things efficiently and effectively.

Jerry Rust 7.6

The budget expenditures must equal the revenues. The main source of revenue is tuition. I want to focus on growing our student population through outreach to high schools, high school counselors and directly to students. LCC provides quality instruction and training at a reasonable cost.



LCC zone 1

Eugene is facing a workforce shortage. How can we better train and retain students from LCC and encourage them to join Eugene's workforce?

Jeff Cooper 9.3

I think the outreach I described in question two is how we begin to build the connections between students/workers and employers. It won't be a fast process—it requires time, energy and desire to understand the employers' needs and to understand how we prepare students to meet those needs. And then, we need to effectively communicate the need and a pathway via LCC to meet those needs to students and potential students. We often think we know the answers to these things without really putting in the work to truly understand.

Jerry Rust 7.6

As noted above, I believe we can do a better job of outreach and promotion to the high schools of Lane County. This also means being in close touch with business organizations to understand the future needs of business, and what kind of skills are important in this changing business environment.

What endorsements have you received for your campaign to date?

Jeff Cooper 9.3

Boomer Wright, State Representative, Ryan Ceniga, West Lane County Commissioner, Robert Carp, Florence City Councilor, Ken Wells, Junction City Mayor

Jerry Rust 7.6

I have been endorsed by the Democratic Party of Lane County as well as the LCC faculty union.

LCC board of education zone 3

LCC zone 3

Julie Weismann

Finance Director,
Hope & Safety Alliance
PAC Filing **NO**



CANDIDATE
SCORE

10

Devon Lawson

Student
PAC Filing **YES**



CANDIDATE
SCORE

NA*

*Candidate did not participate

Please provide a brief bio including your professional background, volunteerism and any affiliations with local businesses or organizations.

Julie Weismann 10

After 8 years, I just stepped down as the Executive Director and I'm now the Finance Director for Hope & Safety Alliance (formerly Womenspace). I am proud to have hired and sustained one of the most diverse staff in the state. I was appointed to the LCC Board in July 2024. I'm a Cornerstone Community Housing Board Member, past Poverty & Homeless Board rep, past Dev. Director, Cascades Raptor Center, Pro tem Instructor, UO Nonprofit Law Clinic, creator of QueerEugene Web, and nonprofit consultant. I owned a million-dollar business in California, chaired a City appointed business development committee in Pacifica, CA. Even ran for city council and lost by 11 votes. I lived in Whitaker neighborhood for 13 years and have lived in Springfield over by McKenzie hospital for last six years. I have been very active attending community and business meetings, especially around housing. Back in 2011, I had the opportunity to return to college to complete my bachelor's degree I started in my early 20s. The Ford Family Foundation awarded me their Restart scholarship – allowing me to start at LCC, get my associate's degree, and then transfer to UO for not only my bachelor's in political science, but a masters cert in Nonprofit Management. I fell in love with LCC!

Campaign Email: julieweismann.lcc.zone3@gmail.com

Campaign Website: coming soon

Devon Lawson NA

I am a student, activist, and advocate for public education and workers' rights, running to bring real leadership and accountability to the Lane Community College Board of Education. My experience in education policy, community organizing, and government advocacy has prepared me to be a strong voice for students, faculty, and classified professionals at LCC. I currently serve on the Lane Community College Bond Oversight Committee, ensuring taxpayer funds are spent efficiently on infrastructure projects. I have worked on 32 political campaigns, co-authored HJR 20 (2023) in the Oregon Legislature, and testified on over 200 education-related bills. I successfully pushed for a student representative seat on my local school board, advocating for increased youth participation in governance. In the past, I was an elected member of the Pacific Green Party of Oregon's State Coordinating Committee but left due to internal party conflicts and re-registered as a Democrat to better advocate for my values. I have worked alongside labor unions, local education groups, and community organizations to fight for fair wages, expanded student resources, and strong public education funding. Unlike Julie Weismann, who has neglected her duties and left the LCC Board in deadlock, I will show up, take action, and put students and workers first.

Campaign Email: lawsonforlane@gmail.com

Campaign Website: lawsonforlane.org

LCC zone 3

Please share with us your primary reason for running in this election. Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the Board of Education for LCC?

Julie Weismann 10

I want to ensure that LCC is financially stable, leadership has what it needs to achieve the college's goals, that students' needs are met, and they are successful, and finally to assist in addressing the growing needs of our community – by supporting workforce partnerships and collaborative efforts with local and regional businesses. As a non-traditional student who attended both LCC and the University of Oregon, and who is an experienced executive director, business owner, and board leader, I bring a unique lens to the board. It is imperative that the Board supports President Bulger and her team, and that the board governs effectively, representing all of the college's stakeholders: students, faculty, staff, leadership, and the community.

Devon Lawson NA

I'm running for the LCC Board of Education because Lane Community College deserves leadership that reflects the genuine needs of our students, staff, and broader community. My opponent, Julie Weismann, represents a dysfunctional status quo—her recent refusal to participate fully in board decisions has paralyzed governance at a time when our community needs decisive action. As a committed advocate for educational equity, fairness, and workers' rights, I've seen firsthand how poor leadership disproportionately harms working families and marginalized communities. My platform prioritizes accessible education, economic fairness, and transparency in governance, principles essential for building a thriving local economy that benefits everyone, not just a select few. My experience advocating on over 200 education-related bills at the Oregon Legislature, combined with my service on LCC's Bond Oversight Committee, has shown me the urgent need for progressive reform. Education shouldn't reinforce inequality—it should challenge it. As a Board member, I will ensure LCC's resources directly support students and staff, fostering a skilled workforce and healthier community. I'm ready to collaborate constructively across traditional divides, championing initiatives that benefit working families, small businesses, and sustainable economic development, guided by fairness, accountability, and genuine community-driven leadership.

LCC zone 3

What are the top two issues facing the college today and how would you address those as a Board member?

Julie Weismann 10

Financial stability and sustainability – working with the President and her team to understand where we can adjust, where our vulnerable funds are, analyze effective forecasting and projections. We have good plans and goals, but in times of uncertainty we must have the tools to be able to pivot, as well as react and respond when the time comes. LCC has a great financial team, and I will continue to ensure they have the support and tools they need to give the Board and President Bulger the information we need to make decisions.

Student access and education costs – students cannot bear the burden of LCC's costs. We need alternatives to higher tuition. The community needs trained and skilled workforce, but if the cost of that training is too high, we lose students. I would like to explore tuition saving trainings where business helps subsidize some of the costs – something, I don't have the answer, just the desire to work with President Bulger in expanding and continuing her efforts in this area.

Devon Lawson NA

As a candidate for LCC Board of Education, my top priority is to shield our community college from the unprecedented chaos and harmful policies unleashed by the Trump administration. Trump's dismantling of the Department of Education—gutting staff by nearly 50%, closing critical offices, and his targeted attacks on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs—is a direct threat to the fundamental values we share here in Lane County. His plans to slash the Pell Grant, which countless students rely on, directly undermine our local workforce, economic growth, and educational accessibility. I am committed to protecting LCC's funding, preserving DEI initiatives, and resisting any attempt to erode equitable access to education. Equally pressing is LCC's budget crisis, which lacks the transparency our community deserves. As your board member, I will advocate fiercely for transparent budget processes, openly engage the community in financial planning, and ensure every dollar is spent effectively to support staff, students, and our shared future. Transparent budgeting will enhance accountability, rebuild trust, and strengthen our institution against external threats.

LCC zone 3

As a board member, how would you approach the budget issues facing the college?

Julie Weismann 10

Continue to evaluate the financial statements and analysis provided by the finance team and President Bulger and asking lots of questions. We have challenges, but I am committed to keeping costs down for students, ensuring competitive wages for faculty and staff, inclusivity and expanding our workforce objectives. We are fortunate to have an incredibly experienced cabinet and financial team. We receive projections and what if scenarios, so I believe we can make some difficult or contrarily creative decisions when that time comes. I am looking forward to having 4 years to work with the team if elected.

Devon Lawson NA

I believe budgets are moral documents reflecting our values and priorities. Currently, LCC faces deep challenges with shrinking resources, opaque decision-making, and misplaced priorities, leaving faculty, classified professionals, and students uncertain about their futures. As your board member, my approach will be clear: open the budget process fully, inviting input from all stakeholders—especially workers and students—to ensure financial decisions directly align with community needs. Rather than burdening classified staff, faculty, or students with cuts, I will prioritize reallocating administrative excess toward educational quality, staff stability, and student services. By transparently engaging all affected parties early, we can make smart, pragmatic budget decisions reflecting a commitment to equitable pay, accessible education, and strong student support programs. Furthermore, I will fight aggressively for increased public investment from state and federal partners, and actively explore sustainable revenue streams, including partnerships within our local business community. Our budget is not just numbers—it's our moral compass, guiding our commitment to fairness, dignity, and education as a public good.

LCC zone 3

Eugene is experiencing a workforce shortage. How can we better train and retain students from LCC and encourage them to join Eugene's workforce?

Julie Weismann 10

First, LCC cannot solve this alone, we need business assistance. We have some amazing vocational programs now – to expand further we need a roadmap of needs and how to we pay for this new training when we are in uncertain times around funding. We must think collaboratively – can we build in an apprentice program where the business industry helps fund the tuition for this training – this helps pay for the training and helps minimize the costs for the students. I will support the President's efforts in this area and do what I can as a Board member to ensure she has the tools/support she needs.

Devon Lawson NA

Lane Community College is key to solving Eugene's workforce shortage, but only if we invest boldly in our students and workers. The solution lies in creating clear pathways between LCC programs and local, sustainable, family-supporting careers. As your board member, I will expand partnerships between LCC and Eugene's businesses, unions, and industry leaders to develop robust apprenticeship and internship programs, ensuring real-world training and direct pathways into local jobs. Additionally, I'll champion expanded support services—childcare, housing assistance, and stronger advising—to reduce barriers keeping students from completing their degrees. By investing in high-quality career-technical education and building deeper community partnerships, we empower students, strengthen our local economy, and foster a stable, committed workforce. Retention improves when students see clear opportunities ahead; a well-supported, well-trained graduate is far likelier to stay in our community, build their future here, and contribute meaningfully to Eugene's economic growth.

What endorsements have you received for your campaign to date?

Julie Weismann 10

Sean Van Gordon, Mayor, City of Springfield, Kaarin Knudson, Mayor, City of Eugene, Steve Mital, LCC Board of Education, Rosie Pryer, Former LCC Board of Education, Heather Quaas-Annsa, Springfield School Board, Kori Rodly, Springfield City Council, Marshall 'Marty' Wilde, Former State Representative, Kevin Alltucker, LCC Board of Education

Devon Lawson NA

Oregon Working Families Party, Lane Community College Education Association, Austin Fohnagy, State Rep. John Lively, and State Rep. Rob Nosse.

LCC board of education zone 4

LCC zone 4

Richard Andrew Vasquez

Self-Employed Legal
Education Consultant
PAC Filing YES



CANDIDATE
SCORE

8

Austin Fölnagy

Business and
Employment Specialists
PAC Filing YES



CANDIDATE
SCORE

6

Please provide a brief bio including your professional background, volunteerism and any affiliations with local businesses or organizations.

Richard Andrew Vasquez 8

Richard Andrew Vasquez holds an associate's in Criminal Justice, a Bachelor's in Legal Studies, and a Master's in Education Administration. He is seeking a doctorate in educational leadership and certification in nonprofit management. He also has a passion for serving on committees and pursuing volunteering opportunities. Currently, he sits on the Parks & Recreation for Lane County and chairs the Urban Forest development committee for Cottage Grove. He has been the past president of the service club Coast Fork Kiwanis. Richard is a publisher of three educational books, which give him the value of succeeding in all areas of life. He has over three years of experience as a legal and educational consultant for a nonprofit and enjoys volunteering when able.

Campaign Email: rvasquez2227@gmail.com

Austin Fölnagy 6

Austin Fölnagy (Ful-Na-Gee) joined the LCC Board in 2021. He previously was elected to the Klamath Community College Board and Southern Oregon ESD Board. His work includes almost 14 years in workforce development, business services, political organizing, labor relations, and education. Austin attended North Idaho College and University of Idaho where he majored in Political Science and Organizational Science, with graduate studies in Organizational Dynamics.

Previously Austin served as Chair of the Lane Community College Board, and currently Austin Serves as President of Oregon Community College Association OCCA, where he leads its board and advocates for community colleges at a state and national level. Austin is also the current Owner/ Founder of Magyar Property Management and Investment, which has been praised recently for its work with local nonprofits.

Austin lives along the McKenzie River and was directly impacted by the fires in the summer of 2020. It was the compassion/love from the community post fire that inspired him to run for the Lane Community College board and give back to this community that gave him so much during the worst days of his life. "I hope my efforts help rebuild a greater McKenzie community and continue to build a greater Lane County."

Campaign Email: austin4lcc@gmail.com

Campaign Website (if applicable): www.austinfoelnagy.com

LCC zone 4

Please share with us your primary reason for running in this election. Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the Board of Education for LCC?

Richard Andrew Vasquez 8

Yes, there is a particular motivation for seeking this office. As a former Community College Trustee of San Joaquin Delta College, I have gained more development as an educator and leader in the community. I want to help Lane Community College seek success in all areas of academics, accredited or certification program training, and student enrollment.

Austin Fölnagy 6

I am running for re-election for Lane Community College because I believe in the college's promise that individuals can make courageous changes to their lives through education. That as an institution we can create a more just and equitable community, and that you and all of us belong here at our "community's college". This aligns with your mission "in creating a vibrant and diverse economy that drives economic opportunity and well-being" and we want to partner with our business stakeholders in accomplishing this. I am also motivated to run because I want Lane Community College to be the Workforce HUB, and that allows us to respond to the needs of the community and workforce demands of our Sector Industries. We do this by following a value of the chamber, which is to "including diverse voices, building relationships, and empowering others to play a role in creating the best community possible."

LCC zone 4

What are the top two issues facing the college today and how would you address those as a Board member?

Richard Andrew Vasquez 8

Increase sustainability by creating ways to connect to the community and students so that they are more engaged in campus learning. Some issues, such as Project-based learning, allow students to work on long-term projects that require them to use knowledge from multiple disciplines. Place-based learning is where Students learn about how places shape social, economic, and environmental systems. Environmental issues are where Students learn about climate change, pollution, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss.

Enrollment is another challenge that needs to be addressed; creating new advertising or rebranding can improve enrollment and student/community involvement. As trustees, we rebranded our image by improving our website's search engine ranking to attract more organic traffic from prospective students. Ensure your website is easy to navigate, mobile-friendly, and uses relevant keywords. Social media can also engage potential students and their families, highlighting LCC school's unique features and student success stories. Making financial aid accessible, offering a range of scholarship options, and clearly communicating these opportunities to prospective students and their families are all excellent ways to increase enrolment. Broadening the bachata program is another excellent opportunity to increase enrollment.

Austin Fölnagy 6

There are several issues over the next 4 years that have to be addressed. I want to discuss two of importance with the current climate. My approach towards these and other issues shares a similar value that the chamber has, which is to be "solution-oriented and relentlessly optimistic."

Advocating for Funding: Pushing back against budget cuts to critical services needed for our students and for workforce development. Currently I am lobbying for state funding to support wrap-around services for our students, to create more programs to train the next generation of workers, and expand opportunities for economic growth within our community. Through replenishing our reserve, we will be able to pivot and have more options for our institution to change with our changing world. Along with advocating for state funds, I will also create a budget line item to invest more resources into government and corporate grants writing. This will bring more resources into our community without the need for additional revenue from business or tax base.

Protecting Student Rights: Upholding protections under Title IX and other policies to ensure all students feel safe and supported, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, and international student status. We are the "community's college" and everyone should feel like they belong to enhance student success and economic opportunities.

LCC zone 4

As a board member, how would you approach the budget issues facing the college?

Richard Andrew Vasquez 8

I would like to communicate with the foundation board to help generate ideas for fundraising and other ways to retain funds. Most of the college's income comes from enrollment. Therefore, my job as a trustee is to ensure that our board directs the administration to seek opportunities to increase enrollment and/or create new programs that are economically suitable for Lane County. Enrollment, Grants, and Donors can help balance a budget, but it also takes community involvement and stakeholder collaboration to achieve financial stability.

Austin Fölnagy 6

The budgetary issues we are facing are a result of decades of lack of investment in community colleges around the state. Additionally, we are prepping and pivoting for whatever comes out of the Trump Administration, which could also affect our budget. Thankfully, we are seeing increased enrollments since I have been on the board, after almost a decade of enrollment decreases. This is because of budgets, policies, programs, and hiring a President that supports dynamics for enrollment increases. What we are currently doing to help prepare us for the next 4 years is building up our reserve fund to give our institution the greatest number of options as possible. This is an important dynamic that allows our institution to figure out what is the best choice for our community and not be cornered into a decision. As I mentioned earlier, I want to invest dedicated efforts to maximizing available state, county, and federal resources to help bolster our budget outlook.

LCC zone 4

Eugene is experiencing a workforce shortage. How can we better train and retain students from LCC and encourage them to join Eugene's workforce?

Richard Andrew Vasquez 8

Providing opportunities for partnering with local businesses in Eugene. As a trustee, our board partnered with regional companies that were based locally such as Caterpillar Inc. and Heavy Equipment Operations and created a post-academy for policing helping our students be committed to local job opportunities. The workforce and LCC can create opportunities to strengthen the relationship between students and the workforce industry. Committing students through local business companies can ensure students stay employed locally.

Austin Fölnagy 6

To the last point, LCC students have a higher retention rate within our community, more than even the Universities in our area. To expand on this, we need to become a touch point education institution where throughout workers' careers they upskill, reskill, and receive work-based learning. Community colleges serve a vital role in ensuring the workforce also reflects the available industries. I would love to continue and increase my collaboration with the members of your organization to ensure that our programs are being tailored to match the workforce needs.

Training Students

Expand Vocational and Technical Education: Partner with local industries/businesses to create programs that align with current job market demands.

Flexible Learning Options: Provide online, hybrid, evening, or bootcamp courses to accommodate diverse student needs.

Clear Career Pathways: Guide students toward in-demand fields and help them map out clear career paths.

Retaining Students

Mentorship Programs: Pair students with a network of mentors to provide guidance, support, and networking opportunities.

Community Building: Foster a sense of belonging through clubs, events, and peer support groups.

Mental Health Resources: Offer counseling, benefits navigators, wrap-around services, and stress management programs to help students navigate challenges.

LCC zone 4

What endorsements have you received for your campaign to date?

Richard Andrew Vasquez 8

None

Austin Fölnagy 6

Congresswoman Val Hoyle, Senator James Manning, Rep. Lisa Fragala, LCC Board Chair Zach Mulholland, LCC Board Member Denise Diamond, Eugene Mayor Kaarin Knudson, Eugene City Council Members Matt Keating, Lyndsie Leech, Eliza Kashinsky, Jennifer Yeh, East Lane County Commissioner Heather Buch, Lane ESD Linda Hamilton, 4J School Board Rick Hamilton, Tom DiLiberto, Maya Rabasa, Ericka Thessen, Oregon AFL-CIO, LCCEA (faculty union), LCCEF (classified professionals union), Working Families Party, Lane County Central Labor Chapter, Lane Coos Curry Douglas Building Trades, SMART, SEIU, IBEW Local 280, Iron-Workers Local 29, Eugene Tenant Alliance.

LCC board of education zone 7

LCC zone 7

Jesse Maldonado

Adjunct Professor,
University of Oregon

PAC Filing YES



Please provide a brief bio including your professional background, volunteerism and any affiliations with local businesses or organizations.

Jesse Maldonado 6

I grew up in Lewiston, ID where, at the age of 18, I became the youngest City Councilor ever elected in the State of Idaho and the first Latino elected in the city. After spending years working to improve my community – including leading the successful effort to build a \$60 million high school & regional career technical facility in Lewiston – I wanted to return to school to further my education. When deciding where to receive my master’s degree, I immediately fell in love with Eugene, making it a no-brainer to attend the University of Oregon. I received my Master’s in Public Administration in 2023. Since moving to Eugene, I have thrown myself into the community by becoming a board member of the Eugene Parks Foundation. I currently serve as a Citizen Member on the Eugene Budget Committee, as the Fundraising Chair for the Democratic Party of Lane County, and as Secretary of the Democratic Party of Oregon. I also spend Tuesday and Thursday afternoons teaching 150 Ducks about Public Policy as an adjunct professor in the School of Planning, Public Policy, and Management.

Please share with us your primary reason for running in this election. Is there a particular issue that motivates you to serve on the School Board?

Jesse Maldonado 6

My parents are small business owners but I am the first in my family to graduate with a four-year degree, and now the first to receive a Master’s Degree. I understand that not everybody needs a four-year degree, or a post-grad degree to be successful. I believe that the foundation of any community is affordable and accessible education – for everybody. LCC is uniquely positioned to be this foundation and provide numerous opportunities for those seeking higher education. Growing up in a blue-collar community, and managing a campaign to build a new high school, I’ve long championed Career Technical Education and believe that we must do more to promote these offerings in our high schools and continue to fund them at LCC. CTE can help tackle workforce shortages, build more housing, and keep trained individuals in Eugene and Lane County!

LCC zone 7

What are the top two issues facing the school district today and how would you address those as a Board member?

Jesse Maldonado 6

The two biggest issues facing the College are enrollment and the budget.

We must continue to work to market LCC's offerings to our community, especially those in our school districts. We cannot keep pushing our students solely to four-year institutions where they will be crippled with debt. We have the opportunity to share with students in area schools that LCC provides them an opportunity for a living wage job right in their backyard without the debt of a four-year school.

As a former elected official, I'm no stranger to budgets and the tough decisions that come along with working on budgets. At the end of the day, our job as board members is to ensure that LCC remains a staple of this community and continues to educate students. As a board member, I will not back down from making decisions, even when they're tough, to ensure that in the end, LCC is strong, solvent, and poised for the future.

As a board member, how would you approach the budget issues facing the district?

Jesse Maldonado 6

As mentioned previously, approaching the budget with an open mind and the willingness and ability to be decisive, even when it's tough.

Also, as I outlined above, we must take LCC on the road and get into schools and community groups to share that LCC provides an opportunity for everybody. We can increase enrollment by getting to students early in their lives and letting them know that they have the option to get a living wage job in numerous fields right here in Lane County! We must get creative to highlight our offerings and increase enrollment.

LCC zone 7

Eugene is experiencing a workforce shortage. How can we better train and retain students from LCC and encourage them to join Eugene's workforce?

Jesse Maldonado 6

We must continue to support the programs that are working at LCC. The ITEC and the Health Professions offerings are imperative to training and retaining students for the workforce in Lane County. As mentioned above as well, ensure that we get to students early so they consider LCC from the get-go when they're considering post-high school educational opportunities!

What endorsements have you received for your campaign to date?

Jesse Maldonado 6

Congresswoman Val Hoyle, Mayor Kaarin Khudson, State Rep. Lisa Fragala, Lane County Commissioners Laurie Trieger & Heather Buch, Eugene City Councilors Matt Keating, Lyndsie Leech, Eliza Kashinsky, and Jennifer Yeh, Former Eugene Mayor Lucy Vinis, LCCEA, IBEW Local 280, IW Local 29, IAFF Local 851.

A wooden sign for Lane Community College is set in a field. The sign is made of horizontal wooden planks and has the words "LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE" carved into it. The background shows a field with some trees and a cloudy sky.

LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

appendix

With the direction from the Chamber's Board of Direction and positive feedback by our members, the Eugene Chamber maintains consistency in a process to engage with candidates in local, non-partisan races. For the 2025 May election, the Board has directed a process to provide endorsements to qualified candidates, for consideration by voters.

This process helps us showcase each candidate's alignment with Chamber priorities, as identified by its members in the latest member survey. This strategy includes a candidate questionnaire (highlighted in this guide), candidate interviews, assigned scores and Board-issued endorsements. All candidates running in local non-partisan races were invited to participate.

methodology for interview scoring

We believe it's important for Chamber members to understand the unique qualities that make business-friendly candidates stand out. To assist members in understanding these differences, Eugene Chamber staff and members of the Candidate Review Committee, composed of members of the Eugene Chamber Board of Directors and government affairs council members, developed a candidate scoring rubric.

The rubric was tailored to the perspective of each specific elected position, but all questions aligned with Chamber member priorities as identified in our latest member survey. These priorities included homelessness and public safety, housing, government regulations and taxation, and greater economic development opportunities – both downtown and throughout the area as a whole.

Each candidate was interviewed by a panel of at least three Candidate Review Committee Members and a Chamber staff person. As candidates answered questions from the rubric, panelists issued scores based on a range from 1–5, where 1 represented that a candidate's answer "demonstrated intent for policies that would have an adverse effect on attracting, retaining, growing, and starting business in Eugene", and 5 represented an impression that a candidate's answer "demonstrated clear methods that lead to attracting, retaining, growing, and starting new business in Eugene." After panelist averages were tabulated, each score was doubled to a scale of 1–10, allowing for greater differentiation between scores.

Averaged scores by topic are highlighted in each quick reference table at the beginning of each respective section, and overall scores are noted next to each candidate's picture.

candidate interview questions

For each position, candidates were asked a series of questions developed in alignment with Chamber member priorities, as established in the most recent member survey. The same questions were administered to all candidates running for the same office, to ensure consistency with scoring. Scores were based on an established rubric and averaged among multiple scorers. A full list of questions and pre-tabulated individual scores is available by request.

methodology for endorsements

All candidates in local non-partisan races featured in this guide were invited to participate in the review and endorsement evaluation process.

For consideration by the Board for a Eugene Chamber endorsement, candidates must have received a total average overall score above 8.5. Additionally, scorers were asked to affirm a recommendation for endorsement by the Board. In all instances, the endorsements issued by the Board received unanimous recommendations by the participating scorers of the Candidate Review Committee.