



Editorial: Our Endorsement for Council, School Board

September 10, 2021

More and more, given the last year's pandemic, voter registration mobilizations and changes to the law, voters in Virginia are enjoying greater opportunities to cast their ballot for this November's election earlier and more conveniently. As a result, those in the City of Falls Church (who routinely produce the highest voter turnout in all Virginia) have a wide range of options to vote beginning just next week, starting Friday, Sept. 17.

On the ballot are statewide races for governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general, for our 53rd District state delegate seat and for two hyperlocal boards.

Unfortunately, most organizations planning to offer the public opportunities to examine the candidates are waiting to hold forums and debates until mid-October, at the earliest, and some right before the Nov. 2 election day. By so doing, they deny those who wish to vote early a full exposure to what the candidates stand for. In the context of this, the Falls Church Education Association is planning to post its results early of questions to the F.C. School Board candidates, and we are ready to report those results as soon as possible.

We could advise our readers that this may be a good year to hold off on early voting so as to get a better read on who's running and why, especially in our hyper-local races for City Council and School Board.

But rather, we've decided to make our studied endorsements early, hoping they will spur readers to explore candidate options through their various websites and other public means (noting that a number of both City Council and School Board candidates have already begun flooding resident mailboxes with glossy fliers).

This is an especially important election, given the national climate that remains heavily tainted by the effects of four years of Trump and the fact that key leaders of the national Republican Party have chosen to go "all in" with Trumpism, including defending the Jan. 6 sacking of the nation's capitol, outrageous efforts to restrict voting rights at the state level in the context of insisting the outcome of last November's presidential election is somehow in doubt (it's not), and passing draconian, vigilante-style anti-abortion laws in states such as Texas.

An element of this is the GOP's stated move nationally to gain leverage by running campaigns at the local level for positions such as school boards and city councils.

We see this in Falls Church where a prominent leader of the rightwing Cato Institute, Ilya Shapiro, is running for the school board, even though, among other things, he's on record opposing federally-guaranteed public education.

In this context, we're announcing here our endorsements for these local positions before voting begins. That said, we heartily endorse the following:

F.C. City Council — Marybeth Connelly (incumbent), David Snyder (incumbent) Debbie Hiscott (incumbent), Caroline Lian.

F.C. School Board — Lori Silverman, Kathleen Tysse, Jerrod Anderson, David Ortiz.