



Seattle Works
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and inspires people
in their 20s and 30s
to take action in our
community.

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A special thank you to the volunteer team who made this guide possible by generating fearless, on-the-money questions and reaching out to the candidates.

- Patrick Bell
- Jamie Emerson
- Michael Pearce
- Brian Reiffe
- Chris Rule
- Jay See
- Michael Taylor-Judd
- Krystal Wood
- Kendee Yamaguchi
- Intern, Sean McCotter

Seattle School Board

Candidates:

District 5: Kay Smith-Blum, Mary E. Bass

District 7: Betty Patu, Wilson Chin

Salary: reimbursed the actual expense going to, returning from and attending upon directors' meetings or other meetings called or held pursuant to statute shall be paid.

Term: 4 years

What the law says: The board of directors of each school district may exercise the following:

A. The broad discretionary power to determine and adopt written policies not in conflict with other law that provide for the development and implementation of programs, activities, services, or practices that the board determines will:

- i. Promote the education and daily physical activity of kindergarten through twelfth grade students in the public schools; or
- ii. Promote the effective efficient, or safe management and operation of a school district.
- ii. Such powers as are expressly authorized by law; and such powers as are necessarily or fairly implied in the powers expressly authorized by law.

TRANSLATION: The board is composed of seven elected officials, each representing one of seven geographical districts within Seattle. Board meetings are held twice a month and are open to the public. The board members create policy that applies to Seattle Public Schools.

1. What is the purpose of public education?

Candidate chose not to respond to questionnaire.

Mary E. Bass, Dist.

To extend an opportunity for every citizen to be fully educated regardless of economic status. Educated citizens better serve our community and keep us competitive in the global marketplace.

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

The main purpose of public education is to ensure that all children, regardless of their economic, social, cultural, racial/ethnic and language backgrounds and their physical and mental abilities, can build the knowledge and skills they need in order to realize their full potential.

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

Candidate chose not to respond to questionnaire.

Betty Patu, Pos. 7

2. While many Seattleites in their 20s and 30s have children enrolled in Seattle Public Schools, others expect to have children in the future who will graduate high school in 20 years or longer. What policy or program changes do you support that would result in longest-lasting improvements to education?

Provide early childhood learning to all families who are economically strapped immediately, and eventually fund it fully. Extend the school day with public private partnerships that enhance core academics and REQUIRE every child to have music, drama, visual art, physical education, fiscal literacy, wellness curriculum, foreign language immersion, diversity and tolerance training. Teach core academics at the time of day that students learn based on their age. Early for P - 4th - middle of day for 5th thru 12th. Wrap day with other curricula subjects stated above.

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

With my background as a research scientist, I support having measurements and standards, but not high-stakes testing in which only one test is used to measure students' academic achievement. I am in agreement with the Washington Educators Association in terms of using multiple measurements to assess high standard achievement, e.g. using student portfolios, so I would support identifying and implementing effective tools for measuring the performance of today's students and those of the future. I also would work with my colleagues to adopt an accessible and relevant science curriculum that engages students through their interests and exposes them to new opportunities. I support better collaboration among the City of Seattle, the school district, community-based organizations and parents. We all should be working as one team to support children's education and development, but unfortunately, barriers exist that prevent this. Through some policy changes and relationship-building, I believe this would result in cultural shifts that can lead to long-term results where people realign their focus on what would be most beneficial to all children rather than what would protect individual/institutional interests. I also support the expansion vocational education that would link high-school age students to apprenticeships and other training programs. College and white-collar jobs are not for everyone. Public education should help children prepare to be successful in whatever they choose, including professions in the arts, trades, health, business, social/ community service.

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

3. How important are arts classes to a child's education?

Vital. Multiple studies show that students who play in a band or orchestra for just 1 year, score 100 points higher on college entrance exams (SAT). In Chicago, students in arts enriched curriculum scored 18% higher in reading and 22% higher in math achievement tests compared to control group that had no arts integrated into their curriculum.

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

Art classes are very important to children's education. Quality art classes provide a different way of learning academics as well as opportunities for them to express themselves and develop their creative capacities. They can also keep children engaged in school. Even better is the integration and infusion of arts into the curriculum.

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

4. How would use your office to promote volunteerism and community service?

Outreach that is coordinated with the SSD, the PSSD, the Alliance for Ed., the city Education office and numerous other non-profits operating in our schools and communities. have a department at the district that coordinates and enhances these programs and develops one STRONG strategy to reach out into our communities of all incomes and bring parents and others into our schools in a regular and methodical fashion.

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

I have volunteered to coach basketball and soccer and to serve on school site committees, building leadership teams and levy-support organizations. To become a school board director would allow me to deepen my commitment and involvement in public education. Through this position, I would promote community service and volunteerism first by making sure parents and families -- especially those who are disenfranchised because of their language, culture or socio-economic background -- feel they are being heard. I would support outreach efforts targeted to communities who have traditionally been left out of the process; ask how they want to become involved; identify barriers they face to volunteering; and work together with school officials to address those barriers. I would also use my professional and volunteer experience to open up opportunities for public and private industries to become involved in schools. Making connections with the UW, Seattle Vocational Institute, biotech industry, and construction/trades unions would be at the top of my list.

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

5. How would you work to ensure parent/family involvement?

New communication strategies using new technologies and grass roots outreach (like what Beacon Hill is currently doing) to touch those without internet access.

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

In addition to what I mentioned above, I would actively seek out input from communities of color, low-income communities, immigrants and refugees and other disenfranchised groups by using my existing strong ties with these communities and cultivating new ones with the help of ELL staff and community-based groups. I would also go to where these communities gather instead of relying on them to come to district headquarters.

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

6. How would you use social media to engage and inform your constituents?

My campaign leads by example - we are a green campaign using all social media to get our message out. As a board member, I would propose a policy to have a spot on the initial student registration forms for the school district where parents can simply check a box to be emailed or sign up for twitter to be notified what topics are coming up in board WORK sessions LONG before the VOTING meeting. Parents could choose to serve on advisory committees on certain issues as an additional level of thought for the board's consideration. Existing organizations, such as CPPS, could be the filter for feedback, group the top dozen responses to issues in ranking order of importance and be the agent of being sure that the concerns are heard. The point is DIRECT line of communication that is SOLICITED aggressively, not passively, to get parental feedback. The scenario we just went thru with the Math texts should not happen again.

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

Social media can be very effective tools to engage and inform those constituents who have access to technology. I would use Facebook, email and a website to actively communicate by sharing accessible data and information on issues the District is working on, provide notification of upcoming opportunities where communities and families can speak to their issues and voice their concerns, and share what I would like to do to address issues and concerns. Most importantly, these tools would allow students, parents, and all communities to communicate with me directly. I'll be honest and admit I haven't made time to use all these tools frequently or effectively- they all require active maintenance - but my kids have offered to help. However, I am not opposed to being 'old school' - I prefer face-to-face conversations or phone calls where I can devote my full attention to the person and make sure they feel heard.

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

7. What was your favorite class k-12 and why?

8. When you were in high school, what extracurricular activities did you participate in?

3rd grade - I loved learning the math facts and how to write in cursive. Will never forget how perfect Mrs. Moore's handwriting was on the chalk board. 12th grade - learning how to write a really good composition by Ms. Smoot because she left a professorship at the University of TX to teach high school, because she was so frustrated by incoming freshman not knowing how to write!

Band, played the flute French club, wish I could speak it now Cheerleader, it still shows when I speak Drill team, this was Texas remember!

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

Woodshop because you get to use power tools, and sometimes walk away with injuries and scars which make great stories. 2. PE because I was and still am a very active person.

Sports - basketball, cross country, golf

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

9. If a friend came to visit you from out of town, where would you go to show your friend around Seattle?

The waterfront, take a ferry or the harbor tour boats, do the Pike Place Market, the sculpture park, possibly Benoroya or the Paramount Theater depending on performance schedule, favorite neighborhood restaurants in Madrona and Capitol Hill, underground tour in Pioneer Square, West Seattle for views, Alki Beach, walk Greenlake, Golden Gardens, walk Lk. Washington blvd trails thru Leschi.....drive 520 or I 90.

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

Depends on who the friend is. Mostly, I would tailor their visit to meet their interest e.g. museums, sports, nature, waterfront.

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

10. Why are you motivated to run for office?

I have spent the last 5 years setting up our business so that both my husband and I do not have to be there on a daily basis. School board is an unpaid position that takes at least 30 hours per week if you want to do a good job. I have spent 2 decades fundraising and advocating for public schools in Seattle - and decided based on the recent round of closures and funding crisis, it was time for me to take it to the next step. A 30% drop out rate is unacceptable. Over 4000 kids in Seattle not having access to pre-school is unacceptable. It is time to stop building prisons and put our energies into educating our youth. We CAN change things and I am a change agent. The board will benefit from my skills and expertise in many ways and so will our students.

Kay Smith-Blum, Dist. 5

With all four of my children having graduated or still attending Seattle Public Schools, I am invested in ensuring they and all of Seattle's children have access to a high quality education that prepares them to be responsible, contributing members of our community. I've been working at improving public schools through many years of volunteering at all of my kids' schools, including serving on Site Councils or Building Leadership Teams. I've mentored youth through coaching basketball. I've served as a board member for Schools First. Running for the SPS Board is a way of formalizing and deepening my commitment to public education.

Wilson Chin, Dist. 7

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