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Letters to the Editor: Candidates state their case

To the Editor:

Our school district will face many challenges in the next few years and it is imperative to elect school-board members who already have a high level of institutional knowledge and have demonstrated an interest in and passion for our schools. That is our team. I am a consensus-builder who will collaborate and strive for the best outcome for all stakeholders. In light of the Act One budget constraints, it is essential that we focus on our core curriculum to preserve excellent educational opportunities for all children. The necessary cuts to the budget should be made in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner. I can make an enormous contribution to this process because I am a professional educator and have been an extremely involved parent leader at all levels of the school district. I understand how money can best be used for the most effective educational impact on our students.

While serving as the president of the Radnor High School PTSA and as the past president of both the Radnor Middle School and Radnor Elementary School PTOs, I gained insight and knowledge about our school district. As a certified school psychologist with an M.A. from Immaculata University, I bring specialized expertise in the field of education. My past work experience as a program director for Educational Testing Service (ETS) prepares me very well to perform the tasks of a school director, such as managing projects within a budget and working hard to meet the needs of all participants.

With a B.S. from Cornell University and an M.S. from the University of California in economics, I have the financial background to be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers. Fiscal responsibility is a top priority of mine and I believe that we can offer the highest caliber of education within the Act One budget constraints. I believe that maintaining our current small class sizes, hiring and retaining the best teachers and focusing on our curriculum need to be the top priorities of the board. This can be achieved while working to identify wasteful spending in the district. The idea is to target spending towards initiatives that have a direct impact on the students' classroom experience. Our slate of Rob Armstrong, Brucie Rapoport, Doug Blazey and me has put forth excellent ideas and suggestions on how this can be achieved. Please refer to our Web site: www.radnorexcellence.com.

As a community leader I am committed to demonstrating the highest level of ethical behavior. I am married and have three children who attend Radnor schools. I have a daughter who is a 2009 RHS graduate, a daughter in Radnor High School and a daughter at Radnor Middle School, which puts me in a unique position to be involved and represent all levels of our school district.

While résumés and credentials are important, voters must also consider which candidates have already demonstrated the passion, knowledge and ability to best manage our school district through challenging times. This is the critical difference in your choices for school-board director.

In closing, I would like you to consider a quote from Linda Walters:

“In a few days you will have the opportunity to vote for school-board members. Unfortunately in Pennsylvania this process is inexplicably tied to party affiliation. How the education of children is a partisan subject escapes me. But I write to challenge you to consider not whether the person is Democrat or Republican. I write to ask you to vote with me for someone I have known for over eight years to be the most passionate, informed and involved member of the Radnor school community: Lydia Solomon.

“Her résumé includes past president and vice president of RHS-PTSA 2007-2009, RMS-PTO 2005-2007 and RES-PTO 2003-2005. She chaired the parent committee for the school-superintendent search, served on other principal and vice-principal search committees and is a certified school psychologist. She has sent all three of her children to our schools.

“More important than that impressive list to me is the fact that she is capable of listening and debating school issues about which she has nothing short of a passion with grace, civility and an open mind. And her vision for Radnor is that it can be nothing short of the best system in the state. That is what I ask of my elected officials and I know she will deliver.

“Please join me in voting for Lydia Solomon for school board. She will make Radnor proud.”

I view it as an honor to serve the community. If you believe that more transparency on the school board and a focus on offering the best education possible within our budget constraints are top priorities, then I ask for your support.

Lydia Solomon, Candidate for School Board Director