

Featuring:

Voting Information

Candidates

Los Alamos Public Schools District

Bonds

Prepared by:



The League of Women Voters of
Los Alamos

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Los Alamos is grateful to the
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Voter Guide to the 2023 Regular Local Election

Prepared by the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization for men and women, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

As a non-partisan organization, the League does not support, oppose, or make recommendations regarding any political party or candidate.

Essential Dates

Voter Registration Closes

Tuesday, Oct. 10. Applications must be received by 5 p.m. at the County Clerk's office in the Los Alamos County Municipal Building or online through the NM Secretary of State Portal (NMVote.org) by 11:59 p.m.

Same Day, In-person Voter Registration. The voter must register and vote on the same day in this period. This may be done at all scheduled voting sites.

Tuesday, Oct 10 thru Friday, Oct 20 Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 21 thru Saturday, Nov. 4 Monday thru Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 7 Vote Centers open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Absentee Voting by Mail

Tuesday, Oct. 10. Absentee ballots will begin to be mailed out.

Registered voters wishing to vote absentee by mail must request an absentee ballot application. Applications can be obtained online at www.NMVote.org, in-person at the County Clerk's office, or by mail. Fill them out and return them right away. The last day to request an absentee ballot is **Oct. 24**. Absentee ballots can be dropped off at any scheduled

polling place during voting hours or at the County Clerk's office. Absentee ballots must be received at the Clerk's office by 7 p.m. **Nov 7.**

Early Voting in Person

Tuesday, Oct. 10 thru Friday, Oct. 20 Monday thru Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers

Early Voting in Person (continued)
Saturday, Oct. 21 thru Saturday, Nov. 4, Monday thru Saturday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers
White Rock Town Hall – Training Rooms

Monday, Nov. 6 - Voting is CLOSED

Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 7 Vote Centers open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Registered voters of Los Alamos County may vote at any of the following Vote Centers on Election Day:

Los Alamos County Municipal Building: Council Chambers
White Rock Town Hall: Conference Training Rooms
LAC Golf Course Community Building: Multi-Purpose Room
Betty Ehart Senior Center: Downstairs Classroom
University of New Mexico-Los Alamos: Building 2, Room 230.

Voting Information

You must be registered to vote by Oct. 10 (Nov. 7 if using same-day in-person registration) to vote in this election. If you have moved or changed your address or your party affiliation, you should re-register to vote. The County Clerk's office is in the County Municipal Building at 1000 Central Ave, Suite 240, 505-662-8010. Application may be made in person, by mail, or online.

For **same-day in-person voter registration only**, the applicant must appear in person at the County

Clerk's office or at any scheduled voting site, and immediately before voting shall provide:

- A New Mexico driver's license or New Mexico identification card;
- Any document that contains an address in the county together with A photo identification card; or
- A current valid student photo identification card from a post-secondary educational institution in New Mexico accompanied by a current student fee statement that contains the student's address in the county.

For **mail-in registration only**, if the applicant is registering for the **first time in New Mexico**, he or she must submit a copy of one of the following types of identification showing both the name and the New Mexico address of the applicant:

- A current and valid photo ID such as a driver's license (note that the DMV can issue similar IDs to non-drivers)
- A utility bill
- A bank statement
- A government check, paycheck or other government document.

No identification is required if a voter is merely changing their registration (name, address and/or party affiliation) within the state of New Mexico.

When voting at the Vote Center, you will be asked for your name, address as registered, and year of birth. If you cannot provide this information orally, or if you registered by mail, you will be asked for one of the above forms of identification. With the exceptions noted above, no physical voter identification is required at the poll.

Since electioneering within 100 feet of polling places is prohibited, and since displaying buttons, t-shirts, hats, or other such items is considered electioneering, voters are

reminded not to display these items when voting at any Early Voting site or Vote Center.

Information Online

Sample ballots will be available online at www.NMVote.org (Voter Information Portal). Fill in the requested information, and all your voting information will be available. NMVote.org is only available to those individuals who have been issued a New Mexico Driver's License or Identification Card.

The LWVLA Regular Local Election Voter Guide 2023 is available at www.lwvlosalamos.org. You can also visit the website VOTE411.org for an interactive look at your ballot and all the candidates' responses.

Local voting information is available on the Los Alamos County Clerk's website at www.losalamosnm.us/clerk.

Candidate Responses to Questions from the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos sent questionnaires to all Los Alamos candidates for the 2023 Regular Local Election, and all candidates are reported here.

Because of space restrictions, the League advised the candidates that the length of the responses would be limited. The responses of candidates are printed as received by the League other than possibly being truncated at the maximum permitted length or removing excess white spaces. We have in no way edited for meaning, grammar, or spelling. The League assumes no responsibility for the content of any candidate's reply.

In this Voter Guide, candidates are listed in ballot order. Candidate order within each office was determined by a public alphabet randomization.

Thanks

We would like to thank the League of Women Voters of New Mexico Voter Services Director Edwina Jaramillo and Editor Maia Pugh. The editor of the Los Alamos Voter Guide is Lynn Jones, with the help of Akkana Peck, Jody Benson, and Judy Prono.

Thank you also to the United States League of Women Voters for the support of our on-line Voter Guide at VOTE411.org.

The Los Alamos County Clerk’s office and the Secretary of State’s office provided necessary and helpful information.
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Los Alamos Public School Board Member, District 3

The Los Alamos Public School Board elections are divided into five voting districts, although only Districts 3, 4, and 5 have openings this year. Voters only choose board members from their own district. School board members develop educational policies for the school district; employ the superintendent of schools; acquire, lease, and dispose of school property; provide for the repair and maintenance of such property; and issue general obligation bonds for the school district. Members serve a four-year term.

To determine your LAPS voting district, go to NMVOTE.org (Voter Information Portal) and click on the “Find My Registration and Election Information” box. Fill in the requested information, and all your voting information including your School Board District will be displayed.



Christine Ann Bernstein

1. How have you prepared yourself for serving on the School Board?

As a current board member, I have had 3 years and 9 months to learn and grow as a board member. As a board member, I have attended all but a couple of the NMSBA (New Mexico School Board Association) conferences, workshops, and trainings. I have done my homework and have made sure to seek out information when I do not know how to proceed or what the laws are. I am also prepared because I recognize that this position will always be a learning process.

2. How can the school district address academic performance disparities among students?

The district is currently working on a new strategic plan to do this very thing. We want 100% of our students to be successful. The first step is acknowledging that there are disparities, the next step is getting to the root of the problems. Then, the hard conversations. Action is the key as well as holding ourselves and others accountable. And, we need to utilize data to make informed decisions about learning. And lastly, it is about bringing our kids along beginning with where they are.

3. What can the school district do to reduce the incidence of bullying and racism?

We need to promote a culture of acceptance and civility. We must provide our students with a safe forum to have a voice in their own experiences

around bullying and racism. They need to be heard. We need to get to the root of the problem and ask why. We can help those who are bullied, and we need to understand what drives the bullying and help those students as well. Racism is a long conversation and a lot of listening. We have a lot of work to do.

4. How do you envision the lease and/or sale of school property for optimal benefit to the school district?

The bottom line: How does the lease and/or sale of school property impact kids? There are potentially many uses for the district’s land, and it should be used to create revenue that will support students or the LAPS district employees. The district needs to be mindful of the population growth and be forward-thinking. There may come a time when a new school is needed.

5. What are the main challenges for the school district for the next 5 years?

The main challenges are getting 100% of our students to meet or exceed expectations in Academic Success, Student Well-Being, and Civic Responsibility. As we move into and develop the new strategic plan, the challenges will be to hold the district accountable, change the district’s culture, and make data-driven decisions. It will be a challenge to see the impact of small incremental steps over time.



Lauren R. Coupland

1. How have you prepared yourself for serving on the School Board?

I’m an educator with experience reaching underserved students. I have been attending board meetings & reading the packets regularly for over 3 years. I directed stakeholder attention to agenda items that potentially impacted them, worked with & built strong relationships with district leadership. I served on district advisory committees, spoke to current and past board members about their experiences, & worked

to keep the public informed about how to stay involved and provide meaningful input.

2. How can the school district address academic performance disparities among students?

We must look at the whole student to properly identify their needs. Students are often told to “work harder” without having the tools to turn their hard work into learning.

With evidence based instruction, early intervention, and data driven decisions, we can close the learning gap. But the key to this safety net is full support for our teachers & staff. Struggles and disabilities, like hunger or dyslexia, can go overlooked when teachers lack support. Our students rise when we lift our teachers.

3. What can the school district do to reduce the incidence of bullying and racism?

Racism and bullying should never go unchallenged. We must believe the students affected, no matter how uncomfortable. Students have said they don't feel reporting racism leads to meaningful change. We must welcome and act on their feedback while examining our biases. Data on discipline and student reports can inform the intervention and cultural awareness that training will help us grow into the district we can be. The culture of minority groups MUST be valued equally with the majority.

4. How do you envision the lease and/or sale of school property for optimal benefit to the school district?

Leased funds allow the district to address unexpected issues as well as trying new programs and strategies. The teacher driven summer institute is exactly the innovation we need to encourage and fund. Students thrive when they have meaningful early childhood programs. Subsidized leases for education-related community partners will save money and time on future interventions to support our students. Aging infrastructure in leased facilities and schools must also be a priority for these funds.

5. What are the main challenges for the school district for the next 5 years?

We must look ahead to prepare our students for a quickly changing world. Education has changed since many of us were in school. Technology plays a much larger role, and AI is changing the landscape as we speak. To address this, we must focus on teacher recruitment and retention. LAPS has seen a high rate of staff turnover in recent years, regularly losing staff to higher paying LANL jobs. We must address deficits in special education by providing meaningful support to students and staff.



Sean B. Stanfield

1. How have you prepared yourself for serving on the School Board?

Reviewed the current strategic analysis performed by an independent consultant in May of 2023. One of the parents interviewed by Dr. Robyn Jackson during the process to create the strategic analysis document. Reviewed the current facilities master plan that initially estimates needs through 2023. Discussed current needs with most of the administrative and teaching staff within the last year. Active in many EC activities and discussing needs with past and current students within LAPS.

2. How can the school district address academic performance disparities among students?

The school district can address disparities by consistently reviewing and understanding all the available data on each student and the overall data for schools. The school board needs to oversee budget to ensure that adequate funding goes to the schools to provide the staff, resources, and materials that teachers need to provide instruction and timely intervention and enrichment for all students. Using data from the recent strategic analysis from Dr. Robyn Jackson should also be considered.

3. What can the school district do to reduce the incidence of bullying and racism?

The strategic analysis plan from May of this year speaks specifically to racism and bullying. Specific instances of racism and bullying are cited from direct interviews with students and teachers. There is a lack of transparency at times from the current school board on many of these issues that need to be addressed. The plan speaks also to clear engagement and consistent treatment for these issues. The board needs to make sure that there are clear policies and procedures in place.

4. How do you envision the lease and/or sale of school property for optimal benefit to the school district?

The school district's land is an important asset that must be valued and maintained for current students and future generations. Every school board member needs to have good understanding of all districts owned property and how it is currently being used. The facilities master plan written in 2019 does contain specific and detailed information about the facilities and use through 2023. When revenue can be generated within the strategic plan of LAPS that should be evaluated by the board.

5. What are the main challenges for the school district for the next 5 years?

Getting back to the basics of education so that all our students have the academic and learning skills they need to be successful. Hiring and keeping highly qualified staff within the school district to meet these needs which continues to be one of the most important challenges. Address bullying, racism and mental health within schools in a transparent and consistent manner. Implementing CTE programs within the district so students can go to college or the work force after High School.

Los Alamos Public School Board Member, District 4

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Melanie A. Colgan

1. How have you prepared yourself for serving on the School Board?

I have served on the LAPS Board for three years now. As a result, I am well versed in the responsibilities and functions of a school board member in Los Alamos. As an active board member, I understand the dynamics of the board and the challenges our district is dealing with. I have a strong educational foundation. I hold a Masters in Nursing Education and am a professor at a local college. I understand what is needed to ensure the success of our students once

they leave LAPS.

2. How can the school district address academic performance disparities among students?

Addressing academic performance disparities is a complex and multifaceted challenge. It requires a combination of short-term and long-term strategies, along with a commitment to equity, resources, and collaboration. Some steps that LAPS can take include providing teacher training and support, individualized student support, early intervention, fostering parent and community engagement, and offering extended learning opportunities to all students.

3. What can the school district do to reduce the incidence of bullying and racism?

Reducing the incidence of bullying and racism requires active involvement from various stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community. I would like to see LAPS engage parents and caregivers in anti-bullying and anti-racism efforts through workshops, informational sessions, and even PTO / PTA involvement. Our students, teachers, administrators, and staff have all completed similar training. We need to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

4. How do you envision the lease and/or sale of school property for optimal benefit to the school district?

Optimizing the lease of school property involves careful planning, community engagement, and a focus on the long-term goals of the district. LAPS should conduct a thorough assessment of the school district's current and future needs. Our long-term facilities plan must align with our educational goals and enrollment projections. As LANL continues to hire more employees, our student population continues to grow. We must use our assets wisely to ensure the success of current and future students.

5. What are the main challenges for the school district for the next 5 years?

Ensuring that all students, regardless of their background, achieve academic success will remain a significant challenge. Addressing achievement gaps and improving overall academic performance is a top priority. Other important challenges include a lack of clarity around and need for more Social Emotional Learning (SEL) resources, and racism. Funding for facilities

maintenance and upgrades will continue to be an issue, so please support the school bond!

Los Alamos Public School Board Member, District 5

The Los Alamos Public School Board elections are divided into five voting districts, although only Districts 3, 4, and 5 have openings this year. Voters only choose board members from their own district. School board members develop educational policies for the school district; employ the superintendent of schools; acquire, lease, and dispose of school property; provide for the repair and maintenance of such property; and issue general obligation bonds for the school district. Members serve a four-year term.

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Sondra L. Wyman

1. How have you prepared yourself for serving on the School Board?

My preparation evolved organically by raising kids in Los Alamos, volunteering in their classrooms, and working as a substitute teacher, an instructional aide, and the Athletics secretary for the schools. My children each had different educational experiences which gives me a well-rounded perspective. We have an exceptional school district with excellent educators and a communi-

ty that cares about its kids. I would like to contribute toward resolution of the issues that need attention.

2. How can the school district address academic performance disparities among students?

The district will need to determine the root cause of disparities, and work with the teaching staff, site administration and district administration to develop a plan to address this issue. Lack of consistency across schools and at individual schools has emerged as a concern from parents and students and may contribute to the disparities in academic performance. Improved consistency would be a good starting point for addressing the issue.

3. What can the school district do to reduce the incidence of bullying and racism?

On-going education of acceptable behavior, community, and consequences is key at all ages. Students and parents don't have much faith in the current reporting systems, although they appreciate that systems are in place. I would like to see the district develop a comprehensive plan for all sites with articulate and significant consequences for offenders, and then implement the plan swiftly and consistently when incidents occur.

It is also important to understand why such behavior is present.

4. How do you envision the lease and/or sale of school property for optimal benefit to the school district?

I am a member of the Facilities Master Plan Work Group and am looking forward to participating in this group. I think a balanced approach is best. Lease of school property provides on-going revenue while sale of school property should be thoroughly researched with the assistance of experts. The district must weigh the cost of maintaining school property against the benefit of sale. School property typically has great value and should be managed carefully and transparently.

5. What are the main challenges for the school district for the next 5 years?

The main challenge for the school district the next five years will be to identify and implement methods to meet the Superintendent's goal of 100 percent success in academics, social emotional well-being, and civic responsibility. It may take several attempts, but I think we have an excellent team of teaching staff, school-based administration, and district administration that are up to the task. We all want each and every child to be safe, respected, and successful.

University of New Mexico–Los Alamos College Board Member

The University of New Mexico–Los Alamos Advisory Board consists of five members elected at large for four-year staggered terms. Two seats will be filled in the 2023 election by the two candidates receiving the most votes. Members act in an advisory role to UNM-LA, especially regarding budget and tax levy recommendations.



Chris Luchini

1. What do you see as your primary function as a member of the UNM-LA Advisory Board?

Members of the Advisory Board should stick to the mandate of evaluating presented materials and proposals and advising courses of action based on the presented data. The function of the members is to present an outside perspective to issues generated by the management and staff of UNM-LA.

2. What are the principal issues facing UNM-LA in the coming 5 years?

UNM-LA as a small extension of UNM

will need to adapt to remote learning, and leverage this change to enhance the quality and quantity of education opportunities provided to residents of LA. The population of LA County is likely to skew younger as hiring and population turnover bring more early career people into the county. Demand for both physical facilities for hands on labs, as well as remote classroom learning will likely increase dramatically over the next 5 years.

3. What do you think the value of UNM-LA is to our community?

It is a unique access point for continuing education, vocation training, and a resource that could allow county residents to pursue advanced degrees locally. Without UNM-LA, county residents would be facing 3–4 hours of travel time to access the UNM educational system, a prohibitive time sink for most part time students.

4. What have you done to become familiar with UNM-LA?

I have attended UNM-LA Advisory Board Meetings. I regularly read the minutes of those meetings as well.



Kristin M. Henderson

1. What do you see as your primary function as a member of the UNM-LA Advisory Board?

My primary function as a member of the UNM-LA Advisory Board would be to look out for the needs and interests of the community as well as for the future of the school. As the Board and school look at a potential bond election in the near future, it is also important that Board members be willing to reach out to the community about the potential ballot question, answer questions, listen to concerns, and

help inform the public, and I would stand ready to do that.

2. What are the principal issues facing UNM-LA in the coming 5 years?

I think the principal issues facing UNM-LA in the next five years include recruiting and retaining staff, supporting students with their challenges, and evolving the campus for the future. Post-COVID, staffing has been an issue for many employers. Students may face challenges with work conflicts, transportation, child-care and housing. Evolving the campus to be more useful and inviting is important to the future of the institution. Partnering may be key to solving these in the future.

3. What do you think the value of UNM-LA is to our community?

UNM-LA is an important institution in our community. Primarily, it offers an opportunity for many community members to enhance and change their lives. Whether learning to speak English as a foreign language, living at home while attending college, or participating in a workforce development program that leads to a new career, UNM-LA provides a way for people to change their lives. That, in turn, benefits the community as a whole. We are fortunate to have UNM-LA in Los Alamos.

4. What have you done to become familiar with UNM-LA?

I learned more about UNM-LA at a meeting several years ago hosted by past Advisory Board members to educate the public about the school and an upcoming bond. But I also became familiar with the dual credit program when my kids were in high school, have had friends or colleagues teach at the school, advance their careers through course work, or be so appreciative that their family member could live at home and attend college. I have also met with various leaders at UNM-LA and toured the campus.



John R. Pawlak

1. What do you see as your primary function as a member of the UNM-LA Advisory Board?

It's hard to give advice when I have to admit that I don't have solutions at hand. And so, my primary function would be to listen. There is ample input from faculty, students, the public schools, the community, and coordinated activities from several integrated programs. I was a process engineer in Bell Labs. I recognize the need to identify and capitalize on successes, set realistic goals, and

move forward with the expectation that assumptions and situations are always changing.

2. What are the principal issues facing UNM-LA in the coming 5 years?

Even a cursory review of Board minutes over the past years underscores an ever present issue; how to prioritize and balance budgetary decisions against so many important issues, such as increased enrollment, changing demographics, faculty retention, summer activities, community projects, etc. As State educational priorities fluctuate yearly, the challenge will be to deal with volatile revenue streams so as to best guarantee sustainability of progress towards our stated goals.

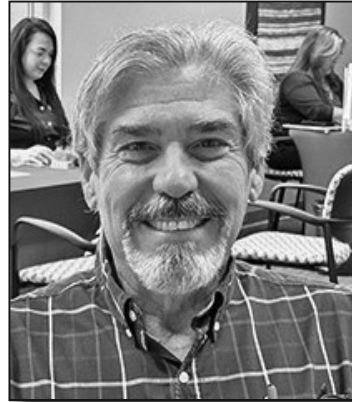
3. What do you think the value of UNM-LA is to our community?

The values enumerated in the UNM-LA Strategic Plan are: Excellence, Integrity, Diversity, Respect, Collaboration, Innovation, Creativity, and Accessibility. These are all important values to our community. Condensing these into a few words: affordable high quality education. Los Alamos enjoys a culture of demonstrating a real passion for education. The coordinated efforts of UNM-LA with our community enables the realization of that passion.

4. What have you done to become familiar with UNM-LA?

When we moved here, my first exposure to UNM-LA was volunteering in tutoring sessions for LAHS and Adult Education students, followed by my teaching a summer course (College Algebra) at the university. I then taught (math) at LAHS and my wife was on the UNM-LA faculty (psychology). We live in a community in which UNM-LA is closely associated with numerous efforts to improve business and regional development.

It's hard not to be aware of the many contributions of UNM-LA.



Jose Luis Carreno

1. What do you see as your primary function as a member of the UNM-LA Advisory Board?

My, and the Advisory Board's, primary function is to serve as representatives of the community in the guidance of UNM-LA. This includes getting input from the general public on issues affecting UNM-LA; interacting with LANL through the RDC; reviewing and giving preliminary approval to the campus' budget, any bylaws changes, and to any program changes; and giving input into the campus' strategic 10-20 year plans.

2. What are the principal issues facing UNM-LA in the coming 5 years?

One of the most important issues which was addressed, but is ongoing, is the need for more local funding for Capital Improvement Projects (CIPs). The mill levy, thanks to our citizens, was increased after many years of too-low funding. Some of the facilities were and are overdue rehabilitation. Building 6 is being revamped, though much over budget for unforeseen reasons. Buildings 1 and 2 will need work, though not as extensive, in the next few years.

3. What do you think the value of UNM-LA is to our community?

UNM-LA is a vital component of our community. It has a number of certificate programs in a variety of fields, in addition to 2- and 4-year degrees in much-needed areas. Approximately 1/3rd of its students are dual-credit LAHS students. UNM-LA has some of the lowest tuition, with courses being taught by an outstanding faculty. And, new freshmen can get their first UNM semester tuition at this campus paid for, since the lottery money at the main campus will not start until the second semester.

4. What have you done to become familiar with UNM-LA?

Since I've been teaching at this campus for 7 years, I'm very familiar with UNM-LA. It has been a great privilege and honor to be part of this campus, and to see my students succeed and thrive as they proceeded with their futures.

Los Alamos Public Schools General Obligation Bond Question

Shall the Los Alamos Public School District be authorized to issue up to \$30,000,000 of general obligation bonds for the purpose of (1) erecting, remodeling, making additions to and furnishing school buildings, (2) purchasing or improving school grounds, (3) purchasing computer software and hardware for student use in public schools,

(4) providing matching funds for capital outlay projects funded pursuant to the Public School Capital Outlay Act, or (5) any combination of these purposes?

- FOR General Obligation Bonds
- AGAINST General Obligation Bonds