



Nine compete for four seats on D86 board

Voters April 2 will choose individuals for three four-year terms and one two-year term

Seven candidates are running for three four-year seats and two are seeking one two-year seat on the Hinsdale High School District 86 Board.

Incumbent Kathleen Hirsman, Cynthia

Hanson, Erik Held and Nagla Fetouh have organized themselves as the "4H" slate. Hirsman, Held and Fotni Bakoupoulos have the endorsement of the D86 Caucus.

Matthew Marron, Yvonne Mayer and Urszula Tanouye also are running for a four-year term, and Marty Turek seeks the two-year seat.

— compiled by Pamela Lannom

Four year term



Fotini Bakoupoulos

Background
Age: 43
Years in district:
Attendance area:
South
Education: BA, secondary English education, DePaul; MS, education, Chicago State University; doctoral degree in administration and leadership, CSU
Occupation: special education access facilitator at Community High School District 218

Community service: various charitable organizations and church-affiliated community service projects
Board experience: has served on building-level advisory committees and district professional learning committees

Qualifications
She has worked in education for 20 years in several districts and has extensive experience working alongside administrators, teachers and union leaders. She has worked directly with students and her training allows her to assess issues through a broader lens, applying research and seeking solutions from every angle.

Why is she running?
A strong proponent of public education, she believes the board needs someone at this juncture who views issues from an educational viewpoint.
"I believe my background in education and extensive work experience in a variety of schools will bring a unique and professional vantage point on issues affecting all stakeholders that the board of education must effectively address," she said.



Cynthia Hanson

Background
Age: 46
Years in district: 43
Attendance area:
South
Education: BA, psychology, U of I; MA, higher education and counseling, Loyola
Occupation: licensed professional counselor; adjunct faculty, Moraine Valley Community College; academic advisor, UIC; program coordinator, DePaul; admissions counselor, Aurora University

Community service: We are Hinsdale South founding member; Hinsdale South Community Advisory Team; Gower District 62 referendum and facility planning committees
Board experience: four years on D62 Board

Qualifications
She brings school board experience, professional experience in education and counseling skills, which enable her to listen to the nuances of a discussion and identify unperceived perspectives so she can work to steer seemingly mutually exclusive points into commonalities.

Why is she running?
She said this is a difficult and exciting time, as the initiative to redefine District 86 with one united curriculum is in its early stages.
"I think it is a perfect time to take the experiences that I have gained during my time on the Gower District 62 Board and offer to use those learned insights to serve at Hinsdale High School Township District 86," she said.



Erik Held

Background
Age: 37
Years in district: 20
Attendance area:
Central
Education: BA, English/creative writing, Miami University
Occupation: financial advisor at UBS
Community service: Maercker Education Foundation
Board experience: none

Qualifications
Held has worked in wealth management for more than 13 years as part of a team with \$2.5 billion under management. He is experienced reviewing cost concerns and marrying those to reach defined goals. He believes with accountant Bill Carpenter coming off the board, his financial and analytical abilities will be an asset.

Why is he running?
Held, a 1999 Central graduate, pointed to some poor previous boards and bad actors who have left the district facing substantial facilities and programming concerns.
"I recognize the need for consensus-building and long-term financial planning and know I have the skill set and experience to make a meaningful contribution."

Why is he running?
She wants to continue the work she started when she was elected, including serving on the negotiating team for a new teachers contract. She also wants to be part of implementing the master facilities plan if the referendum is successful.
"If it's not, then I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and work with the board and administration to continue our excellent education programs within the constraints of our budget," she said.



Kathleen Hirsman

Background
Age: 64
Years in district: 34
Attendance area:
Central
Education: BA in English, Kalamazoo College; MA in linguistics, UIC; JD, Loyola University Chicago School of Law
Occupation: full-time faculty, Loyola University Chicago School of Law
Community service: 34-year member, Notre Dame Parish, Clarendon Hills
Board experience: four years as D86 board member, serving as board secretary, policy committee chair, board negotiating team member

Qualifications
She teaches education, policy and labor and employment law to law students, teachers and school administrators. As an attorney, she has counseled schools districts in effective administration and guided boards and administrations in tackling a variety of complex legal issues.

Why is she running?
She believes the district can operate with more unity. He hopes to represent the students in his neighborhood (15 on his street attend D181 schools) and the entire district.
"I have a passion for the students and best outcome for the district and finances," he said.



Matthew Marron

Background
Age: 58
Years in district: 15
Attendance area:
Central
Education: BA, Saint Mary's University; MBA, Keller Graduate School of Management
Occupation: sales and marketing for Crossmark, insurance agent for Augustyniak Insurance Agency
Community service: has led several ministries (Men's Group, Transitional Housing), ushered and held basketball coaching positions at St. Isaac Jogues; former Hinsdale Little League assistant coach
Board experience: co-chairman, Muscular Dystrophy Association, 2001-11

Qualifications
He serves as a trusted advisor for insurance clients and retail customers and has experience in zero-based budgeting for multi-million-dollar clients. He is dependable, a good listener and able to offer creative input.

Why is he running?
A 1979 Central graduate, he points to several teachers who had an impact on his life learning. He believes the district can operate with more unity. He hopes to represent the students in his neighborhood (15 on his street attend D181 schools) and the entire district.
"I have a passion for the students and best outcome for the district and finances," he said.



Yvonne Mayer

Background
Age: 57
Years in district: almost 18
Attendance area:
Central
Education: BA, economics and political science, Northwestern; JD, University of Michigan Law School
Occupation: former attorney, assistant professor of law
Community service: Burr Ridge Environmental Quality Commission; D181 Facilities Committee; D85 Citizens Facilities Task Force; other school volunteer posts
Board experience: former board member, D181 and Pillars Community Service

Qualifications
A regular attendee of D86 meetings and member of two facilities task forces, she is well-versed on fiscal, curriculum and communication issues. Her past experience, including four years on the D181 Board, and analytical, investigative and legal skills will position her to hit the ground running.

Why is she running?
She believes the district is in the midst of a fiscal, curriculum and communication crisis that has divided the seven communities it serves and hopes to work toward its resolution.
"I am running for the D86 Board because I believe I have the skill set, proven experience as a fiscally responsible school board member and commitment to the D86 community to serve as an effective board member," she said.



Urszula Tanouye

Background
Age: 35
Years in district: 23
Attendance area:
South
Education: BA, biological sciences, University of Chicago; MS, bacteriology, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Occupation: former maker, swim instructor, former microbiologist
Community service: Stop Sterigenics leadership team member; District 63 Facilities Committee member; Concord School classroom and CARE volunteer; precinct committeeman
Board experience: none

Qualifications
Her involvement in Stop Sterigenics has trained her focus on big picture goals and demonstrated what a group dynamic built on mutual trust and respect can accomplish. Her duties as a precinct committeeman and volunteer for federal and local candidates have helped her meet people and have conversations about their concerns.

Why is she running?
A Hinsdale South graduate, she said she is frustrated with the divisive conversations in the district. She believes residents need to be able to ask more questions, see more data and better understand the board's choices.
"I am running for a seat at the table to ask those questions and clearly outline what choices are being made and why. We all deserve a more complete picture of the situation," she said.



Nagla Fetouh

Background
Age: 38
Years in district: almost 5
Attendance area:
Central
Education: BS in biology, MA in secondary education, University of Michigan
Occupation: education consultant; former middle and high school science teacher
Community service: D86 Strategic Planning Committee and Parent-Teacher Advisory Council, Gower Foundation for Excellence in Education, D62 PTO, The Mecca Center Youth Committee member and volunteer, DC Project Reach co-founder
Board experience: board secretary on Gower Foundation, past PTO Board president

Qualifications
Secondary education has been her passion for almost 20 years, leading to positions in teaching, curriculum development for the Smithsonian and other museums and as the regional manager of a series of youth leadership conferences for gifted students. Through her board experience, she's learned to bridge diverse perspectives and build a common platform.

Why is she running?
After serving on the D86 Strategic Planning Committee, she said she is driven to be part of its implementation.
"My role will be to ensure that the right environment, tools, resources and people are available for the teachers and district to prepare each student for their ideal future," she said.



Marty Turek

Background
Age: 48
Years in district: 40
Attendance area:
Central
Education: BA, MBA, University of Illinois
Occupation: director at cyber security company
Community service: none
Board experience: D181 board member, former board president

Qualifications
After serving eight years on the D181 Board and two as president, he has a good grasp on the tax levy process and public school funding.

Why is he running?
He said he wants to continue to give back, make the schools the best they can be and be a good steward of taxpayer dollars.
"I think the D86 Board could use some recent experience of mine in D181, successfully getting the HMS referendum passed and overseeing the build of the new HMS and coming in one time and under budget," he said, adding that there is more to being a board member than the pending referendum. "It is one of many things a board member has to manage."