

School Board Candidate Info Sheet, 2021
Eastchester Union Free School District / PTA Council

1. Name: David Carforo

2. Education:

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science & Economics • Manhattan College, Bronx, New York
Master of Public Administration • Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio
Master of Science in Real Estate Investment • New York University, New York, New York

3. Current occupation/professional experience:

Real estate portfolio manager.

4. How many years have you lived in Eastchester? Do you have children who are currently attending or have graduated from Eastchester public schools?

I have lived in Eastchester for 27 years. My two daughters Rachel and Annie graduated in 2011 and 2013.

5. Have you been elected to any leadership roles in the school district or in community organizations? What have you learned from these positions?

I served as Board President for the 2012-2013 school year and have been the Chair of several committees in my 12 years of service including Finance, Audit, and Facilities. As President of the Board I learned that open and clear communication is important in the Board room and the community. I especially learned the value of listening to different viewpoints to help understand the big picture.

Chairing different committees gives good, detailed, insight to very different issues that impact the schools and the community at large. Being on the Facilities Committee for all 12 years of my tenure has informed me on the physical needs of the district and how to provide the best environment for learning. I think this is important because providing a modern, up-to-date learning environment shows students that we respect them and their efforts at school.

My long tenure on the Audit Committee keeps me thinking about my overall responsibility to the community. I think it is an important function because tight control of public money is essential in garnering the trust of the public and winning their support for public education.

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6. What do you see as the role of a School Board trustee?

The primary role of a School Board trustee is to set education policy for the district. The Board gives direction to the administration and monitors the result of programs implemented. A second function is to be an advocate for the school community: parents and students. In this second function I have always been willing to listen to parents and converse with them about how they see their child's school experience. I bring any concerns I hear to the attention of the superintendent.

7. What skills do you see yourself bringing to the School Board?

For much of my career I have been in the middle between developers and investors. In that role I had to have a full understanding of the contractual rules defining both positions, and an ability to find some flex room in between both positions to resolve a problem.

As Board members we sometimes find ourselves stuck between parental expectations and the requirements put on us by the NY State Education Department (SED). Additionally, Federal requirements are imposed on school districts, sometimes varying widely from administration to administration. Dealing with these levels of government has made me a stronger advocate for local control of schools.

At a more micro level, I have worked as an internal auditor which serves me on the Audit Committee, I have experience in construction management and property management which helps on the Facilities committee and my experience in finance helps me on the Finance committee.

8. What is your educational philosophy and how would it inform your work as a Board member?

My educational philosophy simply stated is that I want every student given an opportunity to learn how to think clearly and evaluate options put before them to their best advantage. I want to give students every chance to succeed at whatever path they take in life.

To meet this end as a Board member I think it is important to hire the best people you can and push them to innovate educational processes. Good administrators will bring

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forward plans to improve education. Good, principals and teachers will carry out those plans. Board members have to periodically assess the results of these plans and decide if they are working to advance the goals I stated above.

9. How do you see the state tax cap impacting school budget decisions in the coming years? What will be your approach to budget decisions?

When I first moved here tax increases were substantial (8%, 9%, and 10%) and were compounding on themselves annually. It was not sustainable. As a tax payer I see the need of limiting Annual Tax Levy increases.

As a School Board member I see the Tax Cap as it is currently structured as being harmful to public education in the long run. Structuring the Cap as the lesser of the inflation or 2% leads to an erosion of the main funding source and can only have a negative impact on public education. Additionally there was never a provision in the Tax Cap to account for the growth of a district. Few if any school districts in Westchester County have grown like Eastchester since the Tax Cap was instituted.

I believe there is some need to restrain tax growth. I think it can be done in a better way than the system currently in place.

10. What are your top three priorities for the Eastchester School District? How would you help advance these priorities?

- 1) Primarily, I want to continue to improve the education experience for every child in the district. This is a never ending process of implementation of plans and evaluation of those plans. Change is necessary to keep up with broader changes in society. The economy today is vastly different than the one I entered out of school in 1985. Students have to be taught to be more adaptive and to accept, and grow with rapid change. The district is currently working to develop a strategic plan and I see this as a step forward in improving the learning process in Eastchester
- 2) I think it is important to continue to offer students a broad range of extracurricular activities from sports to our exceptional play productions, music and all others. I think it is important to augment what students learn in the classroom. It helps students develop interest, and socialize with other students.

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- 3) I want to continue to work on improving the facilities of the district. It is a difficult process keeping up with the aging infrastructure in this district. In spite of our two recent additions many of our buildings are old and aging. If this weren't enough there are newer concerns such as security and providing a healthy environment for students. I truly believe the conditions a community provides its students to learn in is a true reflection of its values. Modern facilities that offer a safe and secure place to learn help teach students that the work they are doing is important and valued.