



# Fairfield Taxpayer

A forum for keeping Fairfield desirable and affordable for all residents

## ELECTION COVERAGE

**This Week's Focus:**

## BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

### HARTFORD HAS COME TO FAIRFIELD

For the first time, the local Teachers' Union (the Fairfield Education Association) has endorsed five candidates for OUR Board of Education, AND its members have been going door-to-door campaigning for ITS chosen candidates.

**WE ASK ALL VOTERS WHO CARE ABOUT THE LONG-TERM BEST INTERESTS OF OUR TOWN TO CONSIDER WHETHER IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR FAIRFIELD TO ELECT BOE CANDIDATES WHO HAVE BEEN ENDORSED BY THE UNION, ONLY 30% OF WHOSE MEMBERS ARE FAIRFIELD RESIDENTS.**

For many years, public employee unions have been successfully endorsing candidates at the State level, which has obviously not worked out so well for Connecticut.

Indeed, Fairfield Taxpayer believes that excessive growth in public-employee labor costs is the single greatest challenge faced by our Town and our State.

Knowing that the BOE must negotiate the salaries, benefits and work rules that determine half of Fairfield's total spending, **HOW CAN IT BE GOOD FOR OUR TOWN** to elect BOE candidates endorsed by the school unions?

The BOE is very important to our Town because: (1) the children are indeed our future; (2) the quality of our schools does affect our property values; and (3) the cost of our schools has a major influence on our overall spending and tax increases. So we all care deeply about both the quality and the cost of our schools.

There is no simple way to measure the QUALITY of our schools, but the BOE recently adopted a new District Improvement Plan that will provide much better performance data and information.

On the COST side, including the \$24 million in debt service and other education costs that are not in the BOE budget, we are spending \$185 million on our schools, which represents 64% of the Town's total spending of \$291 million. The average annual cost per student is ~\$18,250, and the cost of educating one student K-12 is ~\$238,000. School spending (not including debt service) has increased \$19.6 million over the past five years.

Each town must decide how much it wants to spend on its public services. If it spends too much on one service, its tax rate will be too high or it will have to cut back on other services, and either way more people will choose not to live there, property values will decline and the town will eventually be forced to cut spending on everything, including its schools.

The BOE must therefore work with other Town bodies, parents and all other stakeholders to find the right balance between education spending and affordability, and must then determine how best to allocate the resources available to produce the best possible outcomes for our students. We should all understand the meaning of community, and keep the entire Town's best interests at heart.

***You can vote for up to five candidates, and five will be elected.***

[Laura Bernaschina \(R\)\\*\\*](#)

[Phillip Dwyer \(D\)\\*](#)

[Jason Li \(R\)\\*\\*](#)

[Anthony Calabrese \(R\)\\*](#)

[Jessica Gerber \(D\)\\*](#)

[Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly \(D\)\\*](#)

[Patricia Donovan \(R\)\\*\\*](#)

[Matthew Hutzelmann \(D\)\\*\\*](#)

[Trisha Pytko \(R\)\\*](#)

\*The Union endorsed this candidate. (Incumbents are *Italicized*.)

**\*\* The Union does not want you to vote for this candidate, but Fairfield Taxpayer believes it is essential to good government that our elected officials must be free from undue influence by public-employee unions, which exist to serve the self-interests of their members rather than the best interests of our Town and our State.**

**By going to [FairfieldTaxpayer.com](http://FairfieldTaxpayer.com) and clicking on "2015 Election" you can:**

- o Find out what each of the candidates thinks.
- o Review "bio's" and photos of all candidates.
- o Send candidates your comments or questions with simple "1-click" links.
- o Find out where you should vote after the recent redistricting.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT MOST VOTING DISTRICT NUMBERS HAVE CHANGED AND MANY VOTERS WILL HAVE NEW VOTING PLACES.**

*Fairfield Taxpayer, founded in 2012, is a non-partisan organization dedicated to preserving Fairfield as a desirable and affordable community for all its residents. More than 4,500 of Fairfield's 37,000 registered voters are now on our e-mail list and more than 1,400 people connect with us through our Facebook page. These neighbors represent a diverse cross section of ages, occupations, incomes, districts, and political affiliations.*

[www.FairfieldTaxpayer.com](http://www.FairfieldTaxpayer.com)

**MOST OF US DON'T CARE?** In 2009 and 2013, less than 30% of Fairfield's voters turned out for our municipal elections, even though the people elected will have a MAJOR IMPACT on our quality of life, our schools, our taxes and our property values. If you don't vote, who do you suppose will come out and elect our leaders?

**PLEASE VOTE ON ELECTION DAY, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD.**