

Voters' Guide

August 1, 2017 Primary

***San Juan Island School District #149 — Director #1
4 candidates for this position — pages 1 through 4
vote for one***

School Board Director 1 San Juan Island School District #149

4-year term



Neil Curtis

Elected experience: None

Other Professional Experience: Small business owner and parent

Education: B.S. Wildlife Management from Humboldt State University

Community Service: Coached Youth Soccer for five years

Statement: As a parent of two children in the elementary school, I have a long term vested interest in helping to sustain and improve our children's educational experience. During these uncertain financial times, I aim to listen to the students, educators, and community to guide our priorities and to help us build creative solutions to our financial challenges. I believe the number one issue facing our schools is the budget. Working with our Superintendent to find the best uses of our limited resources is my number one goal.

We are fortunate to have a strong school district backed by community support. As our local demographics shift, with an increase in cultural and demographic diversity, another goal would be to inspire a grassroots movement to increase parental and community involvement throughout the district in a variety of ways to celebrate and share our unique strengths.

Contact: (360) 298-0957

ncurtis@me.com

[Who donated to this candidate's campaign?](#)

School Board Director 1 San Juan Island School District #149

4-year term



Heather Christensen

Elected Experience: Precinct Committee Officer

Other Profession Experience: Physician Assistant at San Juan Healthcare, Medical Technologist.

Education: Masters of Physician Assistant Studies Idaho State University. Bachelors of Science in Biology with emphasis on Medication Technology Utah State University.

Community Service: Member of San Juan Island School District Emergency Committee. Helping backstage at San Juan Community Theater. Chorister for children.

Statement: I am running for school board because I think the education of our children is important for our community now and in the future. As a mother of two children in the school district I have seen the importance of engaging all stakeholders of education. Every child deserves to have the benefit of a great education. I have worked with children and their parents in my professional life. I am a good listener, communicator and problem solver. I am asking for your vote for School Board Director 1 in San Juan Island School District.

Contact: (360) 370-0097

Heatherchristensen.schoolboard@gmail.com

Heatherchristensen.org

[Who donated to this candidate's campaign?](#)

School Board Director 1 San Juan Island School District #149

4-year term



Ruth McKenna

Elected Experience: No information submitted.

Other Professional Experience: My 43 year career includes experience in *Local Districts* – teacher, administrator, and Superintendent; *State Department* – Chief Deputy Superintendent of Instruction, California Department of Education; *Educational Consultant* – district and school improvement training in WA, CA, AZ, MS, TN as well as educator training and curriculum guides for the Smarter Balanced Assessment System.

Education: B.A. in English, University of California Davis; M.S. in Human Resources Management, Golden Gate University; Secondary Teaching Credential, California State University Fresno; Administrative Services Credential, California State University East Bay.

Community Service: No information submitted.

Statement: My experience in education gives me a broad perspective to assess the benefits and challenges in San Juan Island School District. I will listen to student, staff, and community input, and make thoughtful decisions to achieve the greatest benefit for students.

I hope to contribute to Board teamwork and ensure the district continues to provide all students with a quality education helps them be self-reliant and creative in this challenging 21st Century.

Contact: (360) 378-6192

RMcKennaforSchoolBoard@gmail.com

[Who donated to this candidate's campaign?](#)

School Board Director 1 San Juan Island School District #149

4-year term



Sarah Werling-Sandwith

Elected Experience: No information submitted

Other Professional Experience: Sarah has served as the Center Manager, Lead Teacher, and Family Advocate at San Juan Head Start from 2006-present.

Education: BA Evergreen State College 2002-2006/AA Early Childhood Education Skagit Valley College 2006-2008

Community Service: Sarah Werling-Sandwith serves as the Vice President for San Juan Island Service Scholarship. She is an active member of the San Juan County Early Childhood Consortium, and she acts as a mentor to a variety of high school student's community projects.

Statement: It is with great passion and enthusiasm that I respectfully announce my desire to serve as the SJISD Board Member Position 1. I would like to offer the board a new perspective through the lens of a parent, Head Start teacher and family advocate. I want to continue taking an active role in our island community by supporting education; while building strong and honest relationships, strengthening communication, and to continue promoting community based partnerships.

I am fully dedicated to help our district properly plan for the future challenges in funding public education locally. If elected to this office, I will bring an informed, conscientious and thoughtful approach to the process of decision making for our public school system. It is my mission to support our students, families, teachers and staff. I will work honestly and collectively to be the eyes, ears, and the voice for our community.

Contact: (360) 317-7648

Sarah.Werling.Sandwith@gmail.com

[Who donated to this candidate's campaign?](#)

**San Juan Island School District #149 — Director #2
3 candidates for this position — Pages 5 through 7
vote for one**

School Board Director 2 San Juan Island School District #149

4-year term



J. Alphonsine Haslet-Phillips

Elected Experience: Executive Board member SJI Agricultural Guild, May 2011 until June 2012.

Other Professional Experience: Has worked in the culinary industry for 17 years from baker to chef.

Education: B.S. Biology, 1998, University of Washington.

Community Service: Alphonsine has a long history of volunteering and serving in her communities, beginning as a teenager stuffing envelopes for the ACLU. Throughout her career she has volunteered for organizations whose missions dovetail with her values. These organizations have supported the growth of sustainable and local agriculture, childhood education on nutrition and marketing, and providing resources to those in crisis. These experiences included fundraising, working with diverse people, and teaching.

Statement: Alphonsine has the firm belief that public education is one of the greatest pillars of our democracy. It provides the tools for families and children to have upward mobility. A great public education can allow children to become productive members of our communities who contribute to the tapestry of individuals that make up our country. We do this by providing them with the education to reach their goals and dreams. It is especially important at this time, to continue to support and advocate for public education for everyone. Alphonsine is committed to working with our board to provide the best possible outcomes for our schools, teachers, and *all* children.

Alphonsine will work to provide transparency to the community concerning board business, help to reach budgetary goals, and continue the work of improving student learning. As a mother of 3 children, she knows how vital this work is.

Vote Alphonsine!

Contact: (360) 298-3328
jahasletphillips@gmail.com

[Who donated to this candidate's campaign?](#)

School Board Director 2 San Juan Island School District #149

4-year term



Barbara Bevens

Elected Experience: No information submitted

Other Professional Experience: Barbara spent twelve years as a teacher, seven in the San Juan island School District. She served as the Home School Liaison/Alternative Learning Coordinator with Griffin Bay Schools. District-wide she served as the State Testing Coordinator. She was active in the state-wide initiatives concerning Alternative Learning Experiences during the 2008-2013 school years.

Education: B.A. Linfield College; MIT Seattle University

Community Service: Barbara served as a San Juan County 4-H Leader and as Leaders Council Treasurer for several years. She currently serves on the San Juan County Fair Board, after more than 20 years of volunteering at the Fair.

Statement: Having had two daughters, two cousins and a multitude of honorary children graduate from Friday Harbor and Griffin Bay Schools, I am still passionate about good education. We have very good schools here, we offer an excellent opportunity for students, we have an even greater opportunity moving forward.

My first career in business (20 years) and my second career in education (12 years) along with my most important career as a parent (25 years) puts me in a unique position to see the various sides of many issues facing today's schools. I can bring those perspectives to the San Juan Island School Board and help make our schools and our students even more successful. I would be honored to have your vote and together we can make the best better.

Contact: (360) 298-4594

mrs.bevens@gmail.com

[Who donated to this candidate's campaign?](#)

School Board Director 2 San Juan Island School District #149

4-year term



TJ Heller

Elected Experience: Secretary, San Juan Golf & Tennis Club Board of Directors, four years; Chairperson, Burrell Osburn Scholarship Committee, four years

Other Professional Experience: Instructional Designer/Trainer for over 20 years

Education: A.A. in Journalism, Meramec Community College; B.A in Mass Communication, Northeast Missouri State University; Dale Carnegie Sales Training

Community Service: United Way Day of Caring

Statement: As state legislators resolve the directive from our state Supreme Court, the McCleary decision impacts the day-to-day operations of San Juan School District, limiting future planning. At the federal and state level, many suggested education proposals may further impact our district, financially and academically. It is incumbent that we provide quality education for all students, while maintaining fiduciary constraints. Children are and should be our number one priority; delivering quality public education in a safe environment is paramount. Our hard-working teachers and para-educators deserve our thanks and appreciation for their daily leadership, and we should all be grateful to our parent and community volunteers for their assistance in the classroom.

I will work with our current Superintendent and Board members to support everyone involved with students' education, ensuring that we operate in a fiscally responsible manner and that all tax monies are used wisely and appropriately.

Contact:

tjheller@rockisland.com

[Who donated to this candidate's campaign?](#)