

Caitlin Sendaydiego

I am running for the District 101 School Board to be a part of making our great schools even better by taking a fresh approach to student testing, focusing on attracting and retaining the best personnel, ensuring that our schools remain safe environments where students can focus on learning, and being a responsible steward of our tax dollars.

My husband, Desi, and I have lived in Old Town since 2008. We have four children, Carolyn, 8, and James, 6, both who currently attend Laidlaw, and Desi Jr., 4, and Madeleine, 3, future Laidlaw students. As a Laidlaw alumna, I have always had a great love and appreciation for the excellent education offered by District 101 and desire to help our district build on its successes into the future. I learned the importance of public service as a child when my mother, Carol Masini, served on this school board, and I am committed to seeing every student in the District thrive.

I spent my professional career working in marketing, finance, and operations for BP Products North America. I bring experience managing a team, developing budgets, and performing extensive data analysis to optimize performance and deliver results.

After deciding to stay home with my children, I focused my attention on building community through the Western Springs Newcomers and Neighbors Club, where I served as President for three years, greatly increasing the membership, participation rate, and number of events held throughout the year. I also became actively involved at Grand Avenue Preschool by serving on the Parent Enrichment Group for the last six years, currently as Co-President.

At Laidlaw, I have served as a room mom, library helper and classroom volunteer. The insights gained from each of these roles and regular attendance at public meetings with school and District administrators, has encouraged me to ask questions about how our district functions and identify the following four areas of opportunity for the future.

- Testing – Our district uses multiple tests and assessments to capture the achievements of students of different learning styles and abilities. While these tests have a purpose and value, the time to prepare and take the tests decreases classroom instruction time and increasingly teaches our children that their value lies in a test score. We must analyze the benefits gained from each test and its frequency in relation to amount of instruction time that is lost and whether or not the results are actionable. Of particular concern are the PARCC tests which have fallen short on delivering relevant, timely, actionable results for our students. Given that the Illinois State Board of Education decided last year to stop using PARCC in Illinois high schools, we should work with the ISBE to determine the test's value at the elementary level.
- Teacher retention – The amount of teacher turnover that I have seen in the District in the past four years surprised me. While not all of these departures were due to compensation issues, I applaud the actions taken by the current board to align District 101's teacher compensation with the market. Low turnover encourages cohesiveness amongst our teachers, which enables principals to leverage their staff to serve our students better. We need to continue to look for opportunities to be a district that is an attractive working environment for the best personnel.
- Student safety – As our community grapples with unfamiliar crime and safety concerns, the school board needs to be cognizant of how these situations may relate to our schools. I believe we should continue to work with law enforcement to ensure our schools remain a safe environment for our children.

- Fiscal stewardship – As a taxpayer, I will strive to be a responsible steward of our tax dollars, particularly in light of Illinois' continued struggle to resolve state education funding.

Education

The Ohio State University, 2002, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

Shaker Heights High School, 1998

Employment

BP Products North America, 2002-2008

Civic Involvement and Volunteering

Laidlaw Room Mom, 1st and 3rd grades

Laidlaw PTO directory co-chair, 2014-present

Laidlaw library helper, Kindergarten, 1st grade, 3rd grade

Laidlaw Social Committee

Frequent classroom volunteer for Art Appreciation, math/reading centers, 100th day, field trips, mystery reader, etc.

Grand Avenue Preschool Parent Enrichment Group, Co-President, 2016-present, Vice-President 2014-16, member 2011-present

Western Springs Newcomers and Neighbors Club, President, 2008-2011