



**Meet The Hoosic Valley  
School Board Candidates**

Sponsored by Hoosic Valley PTO

**May 10th 6:30pm**

**Elementary School Library**

6 candidates running for 2 seats

Joel Beecroft

Maureen Gifford–Mayer

Susan Martin–Cippola

Christine Pepe

Michelle Wiegert

Craig Wilson

To submit questions for candidates prior to the event  
call/text 518.505.2342, email [hoosicvalleypto@gmail.com](mailto:hoosicvalleypto@gmail.com)

*\*Visit [www.hoosicvalley.k12.ny.us](http://www.hoosicvalley.k12.ny.us) for candidate bios\**

**VOTE May 16th 12pm-9pm**

**Elementary School Gym**

If you live in the Hoosic Valley school district, and are at least 18, you can vote in the upcoming elections for budget items and school board.



## **Joel Beecroft**

My name is Joel Beecroft and I am not only a lifelong resident but also graduated from Hoosic Valley in 1973. I have my Associates Degree from HVCC, my Bachelors from SUNY Plattsburgh, and my Masters from The Sage Graduate School.

My time at Hoosic Valley for the past 38 years has been in many capacities. I started as a substitute teacher, moved to a Teaching Assistant, and finally a Guidance Counselor which I have been for the past 14 years. During this time I served as a Class Advisor, Facilitator for our Distance Learning offerings, and involved in bringing college courses into our College and University in the High School programs.

In addition, for over 30 years I was a part of the Athletic Department coaching various sports at all levels. Throughout this time I was fortunate enough to be a League Representative for both Soccer and Basketball.

I currently reside with my wife Patricia for the past 22 years and 2 of our grandchildren.

## **Maureen Gifford Mayer**

I am here to ask for your vote for one of the two open seats on the Hoosic Valley Central School District Board of Education (BOE). My family has had the great fortune of being part of this community for eight generations and this school district since its establishment. My husband Eric and I have recently moved our family of 4 young children back to the area to establish our dream of operating a modern dairy (on Master Street, you may have noticed). Being away has really grown my appreciation for this community and way of life; supportive, engaged, caring families within the open air, fields and rivers of our beautiful district. We feel so blessed to be part of a community that is supportive of our family and vision.

I am running for the BOE to ensure our children continue to grow academically and are given every opportunity to use the support of this community to launch into anything they aspire to do and be, just as was afforded to me. I am determined to work with my fellow board members, new and existing, to create a shared vision for the future of education for our children. To hold rigorous standards of accountability for the school administration and a fiscally sound budget to support our students, teacher and coaches. To create a supportive healthy district culture for work and learning. To facilitate strategic and creative funding and programming through grant writing and partnerships with local business and community stakeholders to engage, enrich and challenge our students.

Like many, I had a previous life before my career as Mom (and farmer). I have a Masters of Engineering degree from the University of California, Berkeley and a B.S. from Cornell University. I worked in environmental consulting, managing private and government contracts; as an adjunct Professor at the University at Buffalo, teaching, grant writing and as the primary developer a new major and curriculum in ecological engineering with the National Science Foundation; as the Director of Engineering for Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, a nationally allied community based not-for-profit; and served on the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology for Cornell University. I am an effective communicator, listener, consensus builder and decision maker. I feel the energy and enthusiasm that this community has for our kids and our future. I am so excited for our families and communities next adventures and hope to help lead the way on the BOE.

## **Susan Martin Cipolla**

Hoosic Valley has always been an important part of my life. I attended and was involved in many activities at Hoosic Valley, graduating in 1979. After graduating from The College of Saint Rose and starting my career, I continued to support the school in a variety of ways. I now have two sons attending Hoosic Valley – Derek (10th grade) and Alex (2nd grade), and was host parent to a foreign exchange student, Shakhnoza, who spent a year studying and enriching the student body two years ago.

When I'm not working as Director of Human Resources at Catholic Charities, I'm more than likely helping out with something my kids are involved in – assisting with track meets, keeping control of the dugout for Alex's baseball team, helping out the Booster Club, MAC, the school musicals, and the After-Prom Committee. I am a parent advocate for the CSE, and I volunteer with Class of 2019 fund raising.

I'm running for the school board because I love Hoosic Valley and I think I can make a difference; that I can be part of taking our school district to even greater heights. How? By listening to the concerns of the districts stakeholders – taxpayers, parents, administration, faculty, staff, and students and working to find common goals and the means to achieve them.

I am concerned about our declining enrollment, increasing class sizes, lack of transparency, morale among faculty, and dwindling local control of how we educate our students. It would be easy to say "let's just throw money at whatever our problems are" but that's not a good solution. Instead, we need to take a fresh look at things, ask the important questions, and come to the best decisions that will benefit our district. I will do just that.

I'm not going to pretend to have all the answers. But I pledge to listen and work hard to ensure every student who attends Hoosic Valley is afforded the best educational experience that will prepare them for whatever life brings after graduation; to have the best workplace for our faculty and staff; and our taxpayers have a budget that they can afford to support.

## **Christine Pepe**

Please vote for me to represent you on the school board on May 16th.

My husband and I are proud residents of the Hoosic Valley School District, and parents of two young children just entering the school system. I am an entrepreneur at heart, launching firms like Anokha Imports Inc., and now advising my husband's energy consulting firm and managing our real estate business, the Albatross Development Group. I have also led multi-million-dollar merchandise divisions at The Orvis Company.

I've worked with government contracts and am no stranger to managing large budgets. I have 15 plus years of experience running businesses, serving on boards for startup companies and advising small business owners. I understand the power of networking, asking questions and collaborating to get things done. I've negotiated contracts with people and companies from all over the world and worked with municipalities throughout New York State to apply for grant monies to fund special projects.

I have a BA in English from Syracuse University and have a Masters from Cornell University. After graduation, I entered the Peace Corps in China, and subsequently lived and worked in countries like Italy, China and India, before returning to settle in Johnsonville.

My unique background, my ability to dissect large problems, and my creative approach to strategizing for the future will make me a valuable member of the HVCS District BOE. Together, we can fight for the best education we can give our students with fiscal responsibility and loyalty to our educators and the community.

We can do this! Let's bring change and creativity to the board.

### **Michelle Weigert**

- Current Hoosic Valley School Board of Education Member
- Some of the accomplishments of the Board during my term –
  - Installation of the solar panels on the elementary and high school to reduce costs
  - Updating the sound system in the auditorium and high school gym
  - Improving the athletic fields
  - Purchase of uniforms for all teams on an as needed basis
  - Working with the Booster Club to improve the weight room for all athletes
  - Implementation of 13th period so all students have access to extra help when needed, including the elementary level
  - Improving academics through the reading, phonics and enhancements programs
  - Implementation of the Impact testing for all athletes and improvement of the Concussion Policy for all students
  - Reinstating the Technology Committee
  - Improving technology usage via ipads, chrome books and smart tv's
  - Improving the grounds via the planned demolition and removal of the Wanko Building with the inclusion of restoring the site to a flat, safe condition
  - The 2017-18 proposed budget will for the second consecutive year decrease the overall tax levy by 1.15%
- Member of the Board of Education Policy Committee
  - Attended all Board meetings, workshops and policy committee meetings
- Secretary for the Hoosic Valley Football Club
- Active volunteer in Hoosic Valley Athletic Association, Booster Club and Stampede
- A 20+ year resident of Schaghticoke
- Proud parent of a child who has attended Hoosic Valley School District since kindergarten
- Active voice for academics, athletics and special education needs

Having a child go through the elementary, middle and now high school, I understand the challenges our children face and the achievements they can make with the proper guidance of their teachers, coaches, counselors and administrators. As a parent, I feel it is extremely important to be involved with their education, outside activities and as the child gets older, for them to give back to their community, whether it is through fundraising activities or umpiring a little league game. Our future is our children, what we offer them to grow, improve, prosper and succeed is up to us as parents and Board Members.

### **Craig Wilson**

Craig Wilson has served on the Hoosic Valley Central School Board of Education since 2012. During his tenure, high school programming has been expanded to include Syracuse University courses, additional distance learning opportunities, and the Naviance Program to assist with career and college exploration and college applications. In addition, the district implemented the Lucy Calkins Reading Units of Study and Foundations and

instructional technology was expanded in grades K-12. Craig has always been committed to ensuring that all programs are maintained, and there have been no cuts to programs since he joined the Board. The proposed 2017-18 budget includes additional technology and enrichment programs for the elementary school, the purchase of musical instruments and athletic equipment.

Craig has worked with his colleagues on the Board to balance providing access to quality educational and extracurricular programs with fiscal discipline and responsibility. Since 2012, the District tax levy was never increased by more than 1.45 percent, and in most years was held flat or decreased.

In addition to his commitment to the district through his service on the Board, Craig is an active volunteer coaching HVAA soccer and CYO basketball, teaching Junior Achievement classes and donating platelets through the American Red Cross.

Craig is a respected finance professional with nearly 20 years of experience. He holds a BS in Accountancy from St. Peter's College, graduating cum laude. He resides in Schaghticoke with his wife, Lynn and son, Jonathan, who is a 6th grader at Hoosic Valley.