

Thorough Nominating Committee Process Yields Two Excellent School Board Candidates

SBNC Statement from Elizabeth M. Guggenheimer, 2018 SBNC Chair

April 12, 2018 - As the 2018 School Board Nominating Committee (SBNC) has completed its nomination of Woodrow Crouch and Alison Singer for election to the Scarsdale Board of Education, I thank the members of the SBNC for their dedication, thoughtfulness, and diligence in performing this important civic responsibility. I also thank all of the applicants. Scarsdale benefits when many talented citizens are willing to present themselves to the SBNC each year, as well as from the efforts of an engaged SBNC.

Our community created the SBNC to nominate school board candidates who will work to maintain and enhance the quality of education provided by the Scarsdale schools. The SBNC is composed of 30 voting members (six elected from each of the five elementary school areas), a non-voting chair and non-voting vice-chair, and two non-voting appointees from TVCC and SNAP. Pursuant to its governing resolution, it judges and selects candidates “solely on their qualifications to serve the community.”

This year, the SBNC nominated Alison and Woody to fill the two seats that open and begin on July 1, 2018. The SBNC considered many more candidates than could be selected for the two available positions. All current SBNC members signed the nominating petitions.

The Candidates

The SBNC strongly endorses Alison and Woody for election to the School Board. They bring different professional and personal experiences and perspectives to our community. They share a deep commitment to maintaining the excellence of the Scarsdale schools and serving constituents with multiple points of view.

Woodrow Crouch worked at the New York Power Authority (NYPA) for 30 years, where he managed major engineering and construction projects and collaborated with colleagues, residents, politicians and unions, and he continues to work in the industry. He served as president and chaired the construction committee of the US Committee on Large Dams and is a licensed Professional Engineer. He holds a BS from the US Merchant Marine Academy and MS from Columbia University.

Woody and his wife Mary have lived in Scarsdale for 40 years, where he has served as president of the Drake Edgewood Association, chaired SNAP and the Edgewood Athletic Association, coached, and was on the board and treasurer of IHM’s religious school. He currently is a merit badge counselor for Scarsdale Boy Scouts Troop 2 and a board member and past board chair of the Sturge-Weber Foundation. Five of his grandchildren now attend the Scarsdale schools.

Alison Singer is president of the Autism Science Foundation, dedicated to funding innovative autism research and supporting the needs of people with autism. She worked for 15 years in communications, including at NBC, where she engaged in team-oriented work to produce news programs and in business negotiations and personnel matters. Alison holds a BA in Economics from Yale University and an MBA from Harvard Business School.

Alison and her husband Dan have lived in Scarsdale for 18 years, and their two daughters attended the Scarsdale schools. She chaired the SBNC Administrative and Joint Committees and the Parent Committee of the high school speech and debate team. She served on the School District's Committees on Special Education and Preschool Special Education and the search committee for the Director of Special Education and Student Services.

The School Board Nomination Process

The SBNC nomination process involves several stages. In January, the SBNC heard current school board members' views on the role and responsibilities of board members and the School District's opportunities and challenges. SBNC members sought potential board candidates. Each interested applicant submitted a biographical form and then presented orally to the SBNC in February or March.

Pursuant to rules of procedure, committee members conducted due diligence by contacting dozens of people outside of SBNC familiar with the applicants, presented confidential due diligence reports, shared relevant factual information and experiences, focused on the many positive attributes of this year's candidate pool, and listened to one another carefully.

Discussions and deliberations regarding candidates are confidential in order to encourage people to apply, protect the privacy of candidates and references, allow for candid discussion among SBNC members, and select nominees based on their qualifications.

The committee discussed fully and candidly the qualifications of all proposed candidates before there was any vote, and it voted by secret ballot to fill each vacancy. This year's SBNC members devoted an estimated 1,600 total hours (an average of 50 hours per person) to their charge. The process was serious and deliberate, with respect for differing opinions.

For more information about the SBNC and its procedures, visit the "About Us" and "Join the School Board" pages of www.scarsdalesbnc.com.

Please Participate

Scarsdale is fortunate to maintain a nonpartisan election process for the Board of Education that selects candidates based solely on their qualifications to serve, not on their campaigning abilities or positions on specific issues. Informed and engaged residents willing to serve on the SBNC and the School Board, along with voter participation, help to ensure the highest quality school board leadership. Please consider serving or suggesting other school district residents to fill future vacancies.

Finally, please remember to vote on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 on the school budget and in the school board election.