



# 2023 Candidate Information Guide

Primary Election  
**Tuesday, May 16**

General Election  
**Tuesday, November 7**

Dear Oakmont Voters:

On the behalf of the entire Oakmont Democratic Committee, I would like to thank you for your continued support of local, state and national Democratic candidates and in turn, standing up for democratic ideals including: reproductive rights, workers' rights, sustainability, common sense gun reform, inclusion, decency, truth, and democracy.

Voter turnout is critical, and Oakmont Dem voters have consistently turned out in percentages higher than county averages! Because of this level of engagement, your votes enabled Oakmont to:

- Elect ALL NINE of the endorsed local Democratic candidates (5 for school board + 4 for borough council) in 2019
- Defeat Trump in 2020
- Hold Dem majorities on Riverview School Board & Oakmont Council & elect Oakmont's first female Mayor in 2021
- Deliver victories to ALL of the Democratic candidates in 2022 (Shapiro/Davis, Fetterman, Deluzio, and DeLuca won ALL SIX Oakmont voting districts!)
- Elect Joe McAndrew as our State Rep with an astounding 50 point margin in February of this year.

The diverse slate of local Democratic candidates this year, for Riverview School Board, Oakmont Borough Council, and Magistrate are a mix of incumbents seeking re-election and new candidates, all of whom are running to serve and give back to the community they love. They are accomplished, experienced, and will bring a balanced approach to office.

This Candidate Guide provides information to assist you in voting in the primary election on May 16th, 2023, including a biography of each candidate and introduction to their values and priorities.

We also highlight the accomplishments of the current Democratic majority-held council and school board on page 8. We are profoundly grateful to the outgoing public servants for their tireless work and dedication to making the borough and school district world class! Page 13 includes a list of endorsed candidates for your reference.

We are especially asking for your support of Democratic candidates for Riverview School Board in the primary. Typically, school board elections are non-partisan affairs, with candidates from both parties cross filing on the Democratic and Republican ballots. Today, however, there are STARK DIFFERENCES between the values and priorities that each party has for local school boards and public education at large. As you've seen nationwide, Republican-controlled school boards are banning books, censoring curriculum, punishing teachers, and targeting gay and transgender students.

Therefore, it is critical that Riverview Democratic voters are aware that although nine candidates will be on the Democratic primary ballot, only the five candidates shown selected below on the sample ballot are Democrats: Jacobs-Rohan, Chaparro, Paris, Schuetz & Pogoda. Please reference this page when filling out your mail-in ballot or take it with you to the polls on May 16th!

School Director Riverview 4 Year Term Vote for not more than Five
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Leanne Jacobs-Rohan
<input type="radio"/> Seth Wermager
<input type="radio"/> Melissa Botta-Havran
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Jennifer K. Chaparro
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Antonio Paris
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Erin Schuetz
<input type="radio"/> Nick Paradise
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Roger Pogoda
<input type="radio"/> Colette Saxon-Kmetz

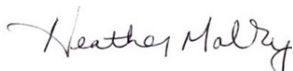
#### Jacobs-Rohan, Chaparro, Paris, Schuetz, Pogoda

- Holistic and equitable approach to support students, teachers, staff, administration, and the community.
- Collaborative, proactive, and ethical decision making in the best interest of the district for the greatest growth potential.
- Open communication and transparency to serve the diverse needs of the families of Oakmont and Verona.

It should also be noted that the Republican candidates are neglecting to identify themselves as Republicans on their literature, signs, and social media, instead going by “Riverview Parents for School Board” or “Friends of Riverview Education.” Why do you think that is?... Be an educated voter and don't let this disingenuousness fool you!

Whether you plan to vote by mail or in person on Tuesday, May 16th, 2023, we humbly ask for your support of the Democratic candidates in this critical primary election!

Thank you,



Chair, Oakmont Democrats

# Jennifer Chaparro

## School Director



- Current Vice President of Riverview School Board and Communications & Marketing delegate
- Brand Manager for the University of Pittsburgh
- Current volunteer with Alzheimer's Association, formerly with RWA, Relay for Life, and Humane Animal Rescue
- Former Tenth St PTO board member
- 12-year Oakmont resident and proud mom to 9th and 5th graders in RSD

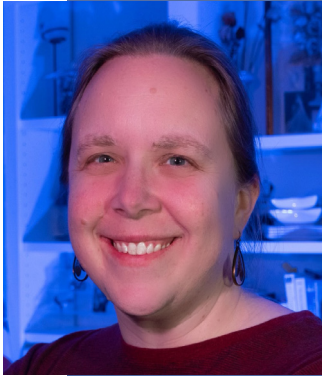
Jennifer's priority continues to be ensuring we provide the highest quality of education and extracurricular activities to our children from kindergarten through 12th grade.

In her first term on Riverview School Board, she helped accomplish several initiatives, including:

- Navigating the complexities of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Hiring a new superintendent, high school assistant principal, athletic director, and many excellent teachers, paraprofessionals, and coaches.
- Enhancing the district's communications channels, including the creation of a Twitter account.
- Consistently updating the website and ensuring timely email communications.
- Creating consistency in our academic and athletic brands and guidelines.

# Leanne Jacobs-Rohan

## School Director



- Social worker who assists people with intellectual disabilities
- Volunteer with Boy Scout Troops 554 & 137 and the Greater Pgh Food Bank; supporter of Black Lives Matter
- Riverview School District graduate, born and raised in Oakmont
- Mom of two boys: a 2nd grader and rising kindergartener at Tenth Street Elementary

As a mother to two young children, Leanne is invested in Riverview School District continuing to provide quality education and a variety of activities for all students. She will draw on her 20 years of professional experience in mental health and social work to make wise decisions for students, faculty, and staff.

On Riverview School Board, Leanne will advocate for:

- School safety, first and foremost,
- Open communication,
- Comprehensive history curriculum,
- Ensuring that books remain accessible to students.

# Antonio Paris

## School Director



- Current Riverview School District Director & Student Life delegate
- Attorney and Conference Producer at American Conference Institute
- Chapter advisor for Alpha Sigma Phi at Carnegie Mellon University
- Oakmont resident of 21 years
- 2012 Riverview School District graduate

A current member of the Riverview School Board, Antonio is compelled to give back to the district that helped shape him into the conscious and caring man that he is today.

During his time on the board, Antonio has made it a mission to make himself accessible to students, faculty, and parents. From attending a wide range of organizational events to sitting down with our student leaders, Antonio focuses on availing himself to the community in order to learn about the amazing things coming out of our district and find ways to help improve it.

Over the last few months, Antonio has taken community feedback and helped to update the district's bullying policy, as well as writing a whole new policy on school visits by school board members.

Antonio believes in putting students first in every sense. He will advocate for additional resources for students with disabilities needing IEPs or 504s, as well as continued support of athletics & activities. Rather than enforcing harsh "no-strike" policies, Antonio believes in fostering a sense of community that helps to keep everyone accountable.

# Roger Pogoda

## School Director



- Data Coordinator and head of the Parenting Employee Resource Group for an autonomous vehicle company
- Volunteer coach, field coordinator, and board member for Twin Boro Soccer Club
- Oakmont resident and proud parent of two daughters who attend Tenth Street Elementary

Roger is running for Riverview School Board Director to ensure that Riverview continues to provide an environment for its students and faculty that is welcoming, safe and engaging.

When deciding on critical matters, he is committed to taking a student-first approach, always putting the welfare of the students first and foremost.

His vision is for Riverview to be a district where students have the space to be the best versions of themselves.

# Erin Schuetz

## School Director



- Student Services Specialist at the University of Pittsburgh
- Co-founder & President of the nonprofit Catelynn's Kindness
- Volunteer with Lasagna Love and Rescue Hero for 412 Food Rescue
- University of Pittsburgh Staff Council Member and Co-Chair for EDI committee
- Oakmont resident and proud parent of a son at Riverview High School

Erin has over fifteen years experience working in higher education, guiding college students from their first year of undergraduate study to earning PhDs. In that time she has seen the impact firsthand that preparation, co-curricular, extracurricular activities, and human development has on students. Success in higher education relies heavily on the foundational experience of kindergarten through 12th grade, and Erin is committed to ensuring Riverview continues to prepare our students for the future.

Erin's ideals as a school board candidate are brought to you by the letter E:

**Equitable** and **Engaging** opportunities supported by

**Efficiency** and transparency to create an

**Educational Environment** where

**Everyone** can thrive!

## Recent School Board Accomplishments

- Managed a balanced budget in the midst of major uncertainty
- Actively pursuing collection of unpaid taxes while making it easier for taxpayers to pay in two installments
- Lobbied for improved state funding with statewide partners
- Obtained state, federal, and special ESSERS funding to upgrade HVAC and bathroom facilities
- Upgrading phone and door lock systems for integrated safety
- Buying and replacing digital devices for all students and upgrading staff computers
- Updating curriculum for career/technical and electives options
- Creating space where all students feel comfortable with who they are and adding individual bathroom stalls
- Increasing training on trauma-informed interaction, social learning, and restorative punishments
- Adding mental health support staff through a state grant
- Increasing equity among our in-house special education students

## Recent Borough Council Accomplishments

Oakmont Borough Council had many notable accomplishments under the leadership of President Lindsay Osterhout.

**Public Safety:** Purchased a new ladder fire truck; implemented body cameras for police (grant funded); obtained \$70K grant for pedestrian safety at Hulton at Ninth; improved pedestrian safety at Hulton & Third; secured ambulance service.

**Infrastructure:** Completed Crystal Dr flood mitigation project; repaired College Ave retaining wall & sinkhole; completed multiple stormwater repairs; built and repaired ADA ramps; began necessary wastewater treatment plant upgrades.

**Sustainability:** LED street light conversion on ARB (grant funded); installation of public electric vehicle chargers (grant funded); purchase of first electric fleet vehicle; installation of glass recycling dumpster (grant funded); introduction of goatscaping; passed ordinance prohibiting toxic tar-based sealant; publicly opposed proposed Plum injection well; finishing Phase 3 of the trail in Dark Hollow Meadow.

# Deborah Ormay

## Borough Council



- Certified Professional Medical Services Manager & Certified Professional Credentialing Specialist with 30+ years experience at major healthcare companies
- Volunteer with Oakmont United Methodist Church, Carnegie Library of Oakmont Board of Directors, PA Association of Medical Staff Services
- 25-year Oakmont resident, devoted sister, and loving aunt

Deb is running for Oakmont Council to serve fellow residents and preserve Oakmont's livability. She believes everyone deserves to be heard and pledges to listen to resident's ideas and concerns.

Bringing a unique skill set to council, Deb is organized, focused, detail-oriented, and not afraid to ask tough questions others may shy away from. She values a balanced approach grounded in facts and reason, and can hold ideas in tension: looking at the "both/and" rather than the "either/or."

Deb is skilled in guiding discussions and helping groups reach consensus on difficult issues. She believes serving one's community can be fun, and would also like to bring good humor and positivity to council proceedings.

One of Deb's priorities is to explore options to increase Oakmont's sustainability with respect to renewable resources and increasing green spaces.

# Jennifer Paris

## Borough Council



- Licensed Professional Counselor and Nationally Certified Counselor with tenure at UPMC Western Psych and Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute as both a therapist and Program Manager
- Volunteer with Holy Family Parish and active alum with Alpha Sigma Tau
- 20-year Oakmont resident with nephew Antonio and three beloved dogs: Leo, Giovanni, and Isabella

Jennifer made the decision to run for Oakmont Borough Council after a family tragedy occurred in the borough.

Prioritizing her concern for public safety, she will draw on her experience as a mental health professional to implement ideas to ensure that Oakmont is safe for all residents and that the police force is well-trained and supported.

Infrastructure is also a priority, and she will work to secure the resources necessary to fund public works projects, such as updated roads and proper stormwater runoff measures.

Jennifer is also passionate about sustainability and will work to build on the initiatives developed by the current borough council.

# Nancy Ride

## Borough Council



- Three-term borough council member and former council president
- Current Vice President of borough council and head of Finance Committee
- Retired estate, trust, and tax paralegal
- Former Oakmont Boulevard Project committee member and Oakmont Carnegie Library board member

As a lifelong resident Oakmont with years of public service experience, including three terms on Borough Council, Nancy knows that Oakmont is a great place to live and cares deeply about safeguarding the borough for the future.

As head of the borough finance committee, Nancy works with the borough manager, treasurer, and council on the creation of the annual budget and the responsible management of borough funds. Nancy will continue to work to ensure the best use of borough resources.

Nancy is focused on delivering upon the council's outstanding goals and priorities, including:

- Improving the condition of the brick boulevard & other brick streets.
- Maintaining the vitality of our local library.
- Establishing a volunteer board to oversee the restoration and maintenance of Dark Hollow Woods.

# Dr. Melanie Pallone, Esq.

## Magistrate, District 5-2-32



- Attorney with 30 years experience, professor, journalist, and mentor
- Riverview School Board Director
- Volunteer with Western PA Police Athletic League, G.A.S.P, PA Resource Council, St. George Orthodox Church, Hope Domestic Violence Shelter, and Oakmont Democrats
- 31-year Oakmont resident and loving godmother of three

Melanie is the only attorney in this race, and the only candidate experienced in legal areas a district justice handles: landlord-tenant cases, criminal cases, private civil claims, traffic hearings, children's issues, and code violations.

Melanie has worked for civil firms and non-profits, as a prosecutor and as defense counsel, as a Common Pleas law clerk, and for Human Services in our county's criminal courts.

With a mom who worked at Oakmont Presbyterian Home and a grandfather who attended Tenth Street High School, Melanie has always known the value of this community.

She is dedicated, experienced, and fair. For 35 years, she's volunteered with numerous charitable groups, seeking good government and social justice, helping kids & women at risk, and supporting conservation projects.

Melanie will strive for principles Democrats hold dear - especially equity and justice - and pledges to treat people in the courtroom respectfully.

## Allegheny County Democratic Committee Endorsements

### **County Executive**

John Weinstein

### **County Controller**

Corey O'Connor

### **County Treasurer**

Erica Rocchi Brusselars

### **County Council at Large**

Bethany Hallam

### **County Council District 7**

Nick Futules

### **District Attorney**

Matt Dugan

### **Court of Common Pleas**

Patrick Sweeney

### **Magisterial District Court 5-2-32**

Melanie Pallone



## Pennsylvania Democratic Committee Endorsements

### **PA Supreme Court**

Dan McCaffery

### **PA Superior Court**

Jill Beck  
Timika Lane

Please consider Bryan Neft for Commonwealth Court,  
the only candidate from Allegheny County!

# Make a plan to VOTE!

If you are not registered to vote or need to check on your voter registration status, please visit [www.VotesPA.com](http://www.VotesPA.com) or call the Allegheny County Elections Office at 412.350.4500.

## There are two ways to vote:

- 1.** You can vote in advance of election day by using a MAIL-IN or ABSENTEE BALLOT. Request your ballot online at [www.VotesPA.com](http://www.VotesPA.com). Make sure to return your ballot!
- 2.** Alternatively, you can vote at the polls on election day. Polls are open from 7AM to 8PM. Oakmont polling locations are:
  - Tenth Street Elementary (District 1 & 2)
  - Oakmont Borough Municipal Building (District 3)
  - Oakmont United Methodist Church (District 4 & 5)
  - Riverview Community Action Corporation (District 6)



**Join us!** Please consider joining the Oakmont Democrats as one of our recognized “Friends.” Our monthly committee meetings are generally scheduled on Zoom for the 3rd Tuesday. Email us at [oakmontdemocrats@gmail.com](mailto:oakmontdemocrats@gmail.com) for a Zoom link or to volunteer your talents, time, and energy to elect good candidates and preserve our democracy.

### Continue to help by donating online or by check!

Online: Our partners at ActBlue process all of our online donations. It’s easy! Type [secure.actblue.com](https://secure.actblue.com) in your browser window, then enter **Oakmont** in the search box.

By Check: Make check payable to Oakmont Democratic Committee and mail to: Oakmont Democratic Committee, c/o Treasurer, 700 Fourth Street, Oakmont, PA 15139

Paid for by



Chair: Heather Malky  
Co-Chair: Richard Williams  
Secretary: Tracey Holst  
Treasurer: Michael Federici  
Social Media: Dave Decker

District 1:  
Arlene Loeffler & Jeff Allen

District 2:  
Sophia Facaros & Bill Yukstas

District 3:  
Derek Malky

District 4:  
John Griffin Conley

District 5:  
Hilary Felix & Tom Whalen

District 6:  
Jennifer Paris & Bryan Peffer