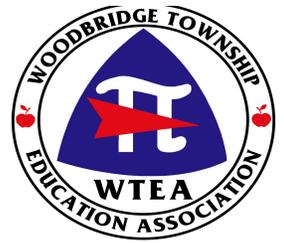


# ADVOCATE



## ***School Board Endorsements***

On August 30 and September 1, WTEA leaders interviewed seven of the eight candidates for seats on the Woodbridge Township Board of Education. Our screening committee spent many hours considering this election and the qualifications of each of the candidates. Specifically, we interviewed two incumbent members of the Board, Jonathan Triebwasser and Joseph Velez, as well as AJ Sidana, who is running with the incumbents as a ticket. Three other newcomers to school board elections were interviewed along with Thomas Maras, who has run in the past. Since our screenings, two candidates have withdrawn their petitions to be on the ballot, including the one candidate who chose not to participate with our request for an interview.

Following careful deliberation, the WTEA Representative Council has voted unanimously to endorse the candidacies of the following:

- #1 – AJ Sidana***
- #4 – Jonathan Triebwasser***
- #5 – Joseph Velez***

As to the candidates who did not receive our endorsement, we are pleased at the interest shown in serving in support of our schools. We are especially gratified by the continuing support our district receives from the South Asian community. Our discussions with the candidates revealed, with rare exception, keen insights and sincere commitment to public education. However, the three candidates endorsed by WTEA were clearly the most qualified to serve.

***AJ (Akshar) Sidana*** is a life-long resident of Woodbridge Township and a graduate of Colonia High School (Class of 2000). He holds a B.S. in Information Technology from NJIT.

Mr. Sidana owns and operates Indianica Academy, an Academy for Performing Arts in

Woodbridge Township. He has worked with students through his academy and as a tutor. He emphasized to us the importance of building a sense of team among all participants in the school community. He is deeply committed to making sure that every student has a positive environment for learning and all the resources needed for success.

***Jonathan Triebwasser*** resides in Colonia with his wife and their three children, who attend our schools. He received a degree from the Culinary Institute of America and has had a long career in both food and transportation services provided to public school students.

Mr. Triebwasser is seeking his third term on the Board and has been deeply involved in many areas of policy, including investment in technology and several partnerships with the municipal administration. WTEA has worked cooperatively and successfully with him during his time on the Board.

***Joseph Velez*** is also a product of our schools, graduating from Woodbridge High in 1978. He has resided in Woodbridge since 1970 and lives in Fords with his wife and two daughters, who are students in our schools. He has served on the Woodbridge Police Department for over 34 years and is currently serving as Police Lieutenant supervising the Detective Bureau.

Mr. Velez has a long resume of community service and organizational experience. We have found him to be a positive and effective member of the Board of Education.

WTEA offers our unconditional endorsement of Mr. Sidana, Mr. Jonathan Triebwasser and Mr. Velez for election to the Woodbridge Township Board of Education.

***Brian Geoffroy, President***  
***September 14, 2016***