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Vote for Lammers, Schmidt, Smith and Van Lone for school board

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One needs only to look to the number of students returning to the St. Vrain Valley School District from Boulder and private schools for evidence of growing confidence in St. Vrain's public schools.

With the help of the mill-levy override and bond, our school district is investing heavily in educational facilities, technology and curricula designed for multiple learning types. Parents and students in SVVSD have more choices than ever in the public education system — expanded International Baccalaureate programs, dual-language teaching, a Montessori program, and schools with technology and arts focuses, to name a few.

In general, Colorado Student Assessment Program scores and the graduation rate for the district are improving.

Our district must now look to the future and how to prepare students for a globally competitive world in which new technologies emerge every day.

To do that, we need to elect forward-thinking school board members who understand future fiscal realities that will result from state budget shortfalls, and who can help superintendent Don Haddad steer the district's vision.

In November, St. Vrain Valley School District voters will cast ballots for four school district seats. For two seats — District D, which includes the Erie and southeastern Longmont area; and District F, which covers northeast Longmont and Mead — voters have a single option. Dori Van Lone, who represents District D, and Rod Schmidt, who represents District F, are running unopposed for re-election.

The district is in the strongest position it's been in for a decade; Schmidt and Van Lone have been a part of achieving that position.

In District B, which covers Niwot and south Longmont, voters have two well-qualified choices on the ballot: Niwot residents Debbie Lammers and Alexander Sharp.

Both are energetic and passionate and have shown their commitment to the district. Retired Navy Capt. Sharp is a straight talker who has done his homework when it comes to SVVSD. Since announcing his intention to run, Sharp has attended numerous school district meetings in Longmont and in other parts of the district. Though he would serve the district well, voters should consider casting their ballots for Lammers, who has long been an advocate for the district.

She served on the ballot measure campaign committees in 2002, 2005, 2006 and 2008 and has been on the Niwot High School Education Foundation board since 2005. Having lived in the area for 12 years, she knows SVVSD extremely well.

For District C, which covers central Longmont, voters also have two choices: community activist Strider Benston, who would like to see more public involvement in public schools; and incumbent Bob Smith, who was appointed to the seat in 2007.

Smith is the clear choice. Since his appointment, he has worked in concert with the board for the improvement of the district. He understands the economic challenges the district will face next year and the year after, and the need to close the achievement gap in the district. Smith also is committed to partnering with other organizations in the community.