

[Print page](#)[Close window](#)Longmont, Colorado
October 17, 2009

Publish Date: 10/17/2009

Debbie Lammers: Seat would add to candidates' varied careers of service

By Victoria A.F. Camron
© 2009 Longmont Times-Call

LONGMONT — Debbie Lammers is a familiar face in St. Vrain Valley School District campaigns.

She volunteered to campaign for the 2002, 2005 and 2006 tax-increase issues. In 2008, she managed the district's successful campaign for a \$180 million bond and \$16.5 million mill-levy override.

But asking people to support the schools is different from asking them to vote for her, she said.

Lammers, 57, has lived in Niwot since 1997. A member of the Niwot High School Education Foundation since 2005, she is now the president of that organization. She also volunteers for Habitat for Humanity.

No one should be surprised that she stepped up to run for the Board of Education's District B seat, she said.

"I see it as a natural progression from that activity," Lammers said.

Her experience gives Lammers insight into what parents and community members know and don't know about schools in Colorado, she said.

The size and demographics of the St. Vrain Valley School District are "surprisingly similar" to those of the Boulder Valley School District, Lammers said.

Enrollment in 2008 in the St. Vrain district was 25,751, compared with 28,875 in the Boulder Valley district, according to the Colorado Department of Education.

In 2008, 29 percent of St. Vrain students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch, while 17 percent of Boulder Valley students did, according to the department. English-language learners were about 14 percent of St. Vrain's students and about 9 percent of Boulder Valley's that year.

In the St. Vrain district, about 33 percent of students were minorities in 2008; in the Boulder Valley district, about 24 percent were minorities, according to the Department of Education.

Lammers would like to see the district better inform the public about how schools are funded, she said.

The district also should help schools inform parents on such matters as what it means to be a focus school, she said.

And the Board of Education has a responsibility not to commit financial resources it may not have in the future, she said.

If she had to trim the school district's budget, she would look first at its facilities, she said.

"It's an education business. It's teachers in classrooms, principals down the hall and folks driving the bus," Lammers said.

The last area she would cut would be in the classroom, including class sizes and curriculum, she said.

As a school board member, Lammers would provide "policy guidance and direction for the district via the superintendent," she said.

"It's a big-picture guidance role reflecting what people expect from their school district," Lammers said.

Victoria Camron can be reached at 303-684-5226 or vcamron@times-call.com.