



## First Legislative District Democrats

*The Fightin' First - Fighting for **YOU!***

# First District Democrats

Here are our endorsement recommendations for the **August 2025 primary election**.

Our endorsement recommendations for the November 2025 General Election will be presented separately.

## King County Council

### Executive: Dual Endorsement

#### **Girmay Zahilay**

Incumbent King County Council Member Zahilay has successfully championed affordable housing and mental health care, and has successfully worked to advance public safety through community-based solutions. Girmay is a South Seattle resident who initially came to Seattle as a refugee and, thanks to public assistance, educational grants, and hard work, became a successful lawyer prior to entering electoral service. Our community has greatly benefited from his perspective and his advocacy as a King County Councilmember: Girmay has consistently delivered results that uplift working families and underserved communities.

#### **Claudia Balducci**

Incumbent King County Council Member Balducci has guided the successful expansion of affordable housing and public transit while concurrently improving public safety. As Bellevue Mayor she championed Sound Transit's East Link light rail line and fought for improved transportation safety. Claudia has also worked with other city leaders to improve housing, address homelessness, find ways to locally address climate change and worked to improve public parks and pathways. Claudia has consistently prioritized equity, transparency, and collaboration.

## Kenmore

### City Council, Position 2

#### **Tracy Banaszynski**

Tracy is our pick for position 2 and will bring a fresh, dynamic voice to the Kenmore City Council. An experienced leader in environmental restoration and stewardship, Tracy will be a strong and consistent voice for protecting our environment and promoting climate action. She has city leadership experience as a Kenmore Planning Commissioner and is now the elected Chair. She brings a progressive vision encompassing both novel and proven initiatives for developing more affordable housing options in Kenmore. Tracy openly addresses challenging development issues while remaining true to our party's

values. She is a public official who believes in transparency, listening, and bringing all residents together to make Kenmore a great place to live and prosper.

## Kirkland

### City Council, Position 3

#### **Shilpa Prem**

We endorse Shilpa Prem for her dedicated, ongoing advocacy for inclusive policies, sustainable infrastructure, and public safety initiatives. Her commitment to affordable housing, walkable neighborhoods, and responsive governance reflects the values we stand for. We commend her vision for improving contracting policies and expanding opportunities for women-, minority-, and LGBTQIA+-owned businesses. Her involvement in the local PTA and her professional experience as a successful lawyer provide her with skills that will make her an effective and thoughtful public servant.

### City Council, Position 5

#### **Neal Black**

Incumbent Council Member Black continues to serve the City of Kirkland well and has again earned our endorsement. Neal has worked with the Council to make the City more approachable and transparent. He has championed affordable housing, climate action, and safer streets. His collaborative approach and broad community support—from environmental groups to housing advocates to local leaders—reflect his ability to unite diverse voices around practical solutions.

## Lake Forest Park

### City Council, Position 1

#### **Semra Riddle**

Incumbent Council Member Riddle brings an experienced voice to the city council, augmenting her deep knowledge of public works and city planning with expert project management and personal skills. We value her long-standing contributions to our community as a Council Member, share her vision for increasing housing diversity options that best meet the needs of Lake Forest Park residents, and stand behind her commitment to successful implementation of the Climate Action Plan.

## Woodinville

### City Council, Position 3: Dual Endorsement

#### **Rebecca Elbaum**

Rebecca Elbaum's deep roots in Woodinville, coupled with her extensive experience as the local Chair for the grassroots Moms Demand Action group and her work with the state Legislature advocating for gun safety, give her a solid foundation for serving on the City Council. She has repeatedly demonstrated her ability to listen to and collaborate with community members, forming broad coalitions and passing policies to improve community safety and save lives. We share her vision of "safe neighborhoods, housing options for every stage of life, and a local government that listens."

### **Amber Wise**

With a background rooted in labor activism, Amber cares deeply about working people in our community. She is committed to bringing new voices into the political process who may not otherwise feel represented or heard. Her willingness to take on the crisis of affordability head-on makes her a compelling candidate to represent her city. As a Public Spaces Commissioner, she has championed safe and connected neighborhoods, and we endorse her pledge to “plan boldly for Kirkland’s future while staying true to what makes it special.”

### **City Council, Position 5**

#### **Sarah Arndt**

Council Member Arndt champions affordable housing, sustainable transportation, and environmental stewardship. She brings empathy to everything she does, whether listening to concerns from constituents or ensuring city policies support working families. Her collaborative approach and commitment to transparency demonstrate the kind of responsive, forward-thinking leadership Woodinville deserves.

### **City Council, Position 7**

#### **James Randolph**

Council Member Randolph has successfully worked to expand transit access, protect natural spaces, promote thoughtful growth management, and improve local amenities. In his role as Deputy Mayor and on the council, he has demonstrated a commitment to inclusive decision-making and pragmatic solutions that reflect the kind of leadership that helps Woodinville thrive.

## **Lake Washington School District No. 414**

### **Director District No. 3**

#### **Angela Meekhof**

Angela Meekhof’s platform centers on expanding mental health support, reducing financial barriers, and creating personalized learning pathways, especially for students of color and LGBTQIA+ youth. With a background in social work, Angela’s trauma-informed approach and advocacy for programs like Running Start and the Washington Network for Innovative Careers (WaNIC) make her a powerful champion for inclusive, equitable education.

### **Director District No. 4**

#### **Aspen Richter**

Aspen Richter has built strong relationships across the district and consistently championed policies that support diverse learners, safe schools, and transparent governance. Through their work on the Lake Washington School District’s Facilities Advisory Committee and volunteer work with the Lake

Washington Citizens Levy Committee, Aspen has demonstrated their ability to balance goals of district administrators with those of students, teachers, and parents. Their collaborative style and forward-thinking approach make Aspen a trusted voice for families and educators alike—and a powerful advocate for the success of every student.

## Northshore School District No. 1417

### Director District No. 1: Dual Endorsement

#### **Arun Sharma**

Arun Sharma is a long-time Bothell resident, engineer, educator, and founder of the UTSAV and UTSAV Voice organizations serving south Asians in Washington state. Arun has spent more than 20 years connecting community, education, and leadership. Arun will prioritize inclusive teaching, holistic development, and equitable funding for programs like STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics), special education, and the arts. We believe Arun will be a thoughtful, solutions-oriented voice who uplifts every student and strengthens our schools for the future.

#### **Carson Sanderson**

Carson Sanderson is a champion for public schools, inclusive education, and supporting neurodiverse learners. Her platform focuses on balancing the district's budget, strengthening community partnerships, and ensuring legislative accountability—all while maintaining high standards for academic excellence. She brings an in-depth understanding of the challenges Northshore School District faces in budgeting, and in planning for growth while retaining programs that support all students whether they are highly capable or benefit from other supportive programs. We believe Carson's thoughtful, community-rooted leadership will help Northshore schools thrive.

### Director District No. 4

#### **Sandy Hayes**

Incumbent Director Hayes led the district through the trying challenges of COVID-19 coupled with ongoing budget constraints, and has earned our respect and gratitude. She has served on the Northshore School Board since 2009 and has held the positions of Legislative Representative and President. She works to address the unique needs of each school, and has volunteered weekly at different schools throughout her time on the board. Her commitment to prioritizing best outcomes for students has helped her guide our district through the tumult of recent years. She is currently working on addressing funding challenges, and also to improve broadband access and digital equity among our students.

### Director District No. 5

#### **Holly Muenchow**

Holly is deeply committed to developing a strong, inclusive public education system and supporting the Northshore School District, and has served as the Vice President of Advocacy for the Northshore Council Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA). We share her commitment to fully funding our public

schools and ensuring that resources are equitably distributed, so that staff and students are effectively supported. Holly's advocacy for students with special needs and proper funding of Washington schools provides a strong foundation for her future service as a Northshore School District Director.