

Candidates field questions at Edmonds-Woodway High

By Jesse Blair | Oct 04, 2018



Courtesy of: Kelly Franson

Sen. Maralyn Chase speaks during a candidate event at Edmonds-Woodway High School. Front row: Incumbents Cindy Ryu and Strom Peterson, with challenger Brian Luke, a Libertarian running for a seat in the Congressional District 2. In the back row are candidate Mario Lotmore and E-W Principal Terrance Mims, the event's moderator. Other candidates arrived later.

Local state Legislative and Congressional candidates took a two-fold approach of mentorship and campaigning while addressing high school seniors at Edmonds-Woodway High School Thursday, Sept. 27.

The social studies department hosted that candidate forum, where local candidates from the 21st and 32nd Legislative Districts, as well as the 1st and 2nd Congressional Districts, were invited to speak to the next group of voters, the school's senior class.

All of the seven candidates finished first or second in the primary – meaning they are going on to the Nov. 6 general election – and were given 10 minutes to

present their cases for why they either should win or maintain a seat serving Edmonds residents.

Most of the candidates used their speeches to drop a pearl or two of wisdom to the up-and-coming voters.

Democratic incumbent Rep. Cindy Ryu of the 32nd Legislative District – which serves Edmonds' southern portion, as well as Lynnwood and Shoreline – spoke about overcoming adversity. She said she overcame her shyness from having a Korean accent, and has only been in politics since she was 45.

Chase's opponent, Republican Diodato Boucsiequez, did not appear.

Sen. Maralyn Chase, the Democratic incumbent from the 32nd Legislative District, meanwhile, said she was pleased with the political process of high school these days.

"You need to step up," she told students. "It's important."

Chase's opponent, Democrat Jesse Solomon, said he worked as a public defender for 10 years. He saw there was a lot of repeat offenders, and is running to unseat Chase because he's tired of what he called "the broken-down nature of this world" that no one is doing anything to remedy.

“I’m going to refuse to fail you guys,” he said.

Salomon edged Chase in the Aug. 7 primary with 38 percent of the vote, with Chase garnering 37.76 percent.

Republican Mario Lotmore, running against incumbent Sen. Marko Liias in the 21st District, didn’t hesitate to point directly at students and ask questions. He said his goal is to make students more career-ready after high school.

Democratic Rep. Strom Peterson, hoping to maintain his seat in the 21st Legislative District, position 1, stressed the importance of voting, saying that one time he lost an Edmonds city council race by a mere 132 votes.

“I’ve got one of the coolest jobs around,” he said. “I love my job in Olympia.”

Peterson’s challenger is Amy Schaper, a Republican who did attend the event at Edmonds-Woodway.

Democrat Loren Davis, who won the primary in the race to for Position 2 in the 32nd Legislative District, spoke about how she quit her career in international development to nurse her ailing friend, who struggled with opiate and alcohol addiction.

Since then, she said she has been advocating for mental health at the state level.

Davis will face Republican Frank Deisler, who did not attend the event.

After candidate speeches, students were ready with questions, the first dealing with “solving” low-income housing.

“Solved may be a stretch for this answer,” Peterson said. “I think we’ve taken a much better run at [it] the last couple years. I am the vice chair of the capital budget committee in the House, and we’ve invested record dollars into building affordable housing across the state, everything from worker housing to seniors, veterans, and homeless youth. That’s a start.”

Lotmore said it’s important to focus on family and education. Many who enter low-income housing are single parents, he said.

“That’s just a fact. Going through life by yourself is tough. Imagine having a kid, right? So that’s why you have to be selective with who you are going to be with, who you’re going to love, and (how to have) positive family values.”

Chase pushed for a Department of Housing.

“We have a Department of Transportation to deal with how we move on our road,” she said. “We need a Department of Housing that addresses the issue of low-income housing – and I’m really glad you brought that up. We need to address it in a coordinated effort all across the state.”

Another question: Should convicted felons have the right to vote once they served their time?

“Absolutely,” Davis said.

“Some of my best friends are individuals who were formerly incarcerated and have multiple felony convictions typically related to their active addiction. And actually, in our state, the right to vote is automatically restored when people are what we would

call, 'put off paper' – when you are no longer under the Department of Corrections' supervision.”

“Yes and no,” Lotmore said.

“Yes, I would say. But they have to have a certain period of time, like seven to 10 years where they have not had any type of felony or any other type of convictions. But it also depends on the type of crime. That's important, right? You don't want to have certain people with certain types of felonies to be voting.”

Among candidates or incumbents not attending were Marko Liias, Lillian Ortiz-Self and Petra Bigea. Rick Larsen and Suzan DelBene were in session and could not make it.

The League of Women Voters was present, encouraging the students to vote after leaving the forum.

Comments (0)
