

## Shari Dion's Vision of Quality Education for All:

- All students are supported and challenged to reach their potential.
- District achievement gaps are eliminated.
- Opportunities exist for learners of all ages, including strong early childhood, school readiness, and senior programs.
- Teachers have the proper support and resources.
- Input from all stakeholders is actively sought and valued.
- Innovative ideas and diverse perspective are encouraged.
- All buildings are welcoming and safe.
- Adequate funding and sound fiscal management ensure program stability.

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### Shari Dion Filing Statement

Every student in our district should receive a high quality education – one that addresses their unique needs and abilities and properly prepares them for their future. Truly serving each student in this way and closing our achievement gaps will require commitment from all levels within our district. I am seeking an opportunity to serve on the District 623 School Board because I am personally committed to this mission and am well prepared for this work.

I have had a great deal of experience working directly with students and side-by-side with teachers and other staff. For the past seven years, I have volunteered several hours a week in district classrooms, computer labs and media centers. I have had the pleasure of working with a wide variety of students and in a wide variety of subjects. I also have experience working with young children from my paid teaching and assistant teaching positions. I am well aware of both the challenges and the benefits of our diverse student body.

I have been working on behalf of our youth at the building and district levels by participating in diversity, funding and legislative workshops, PTA meetings and other community involvement forums. I am beginning my third year serving on the District Curriculum Advisory Committee where we learn about and make recommendations regarding curriculum and assessment issues. I served on the K-12 Writing Team for one year and the K-5 Math Team for two years. I understand our district curriculum improvement efforts and challenges.

My education has informed my work on behalf of our youth and our schools. While earning my B.S. Degree in Child Psychology, I first learned about typical and less typical child development, the psychology of motivation and learning, and important program evaluation concepts. A quick scan of my house demonstrates that my relevant education has not ended. I am naturally motivated to read articles, magazines and books devoted to the well-being and education of our youth.

Other work and life experiences contribute to the background I would bring to the board. My experiences working in job placement at Minnesota Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired have influenced me in many ways. While there, I also learned much about the process of developing appropriate accommodations.

While working as Manager of Arbitration Services at the Better Business Bureau, I acquired valuable mediation training and experience helping individuals solve problems and resolve conflicts. When the Maplewood Voters Coalition recently endorsed me, they pointed to these mediation skills and experiences and my ability to remain open minded as strengths I could bring to the board.

As a District 623 school board member, I will work on closing our district achievement gaps and on helping our schools do a better job of preparing all of our students for their next stage in life – be it first grade, ninth grade, college or a job. I will seek more ongoing and explicit involvement of our parents, community members and teaching professionals in district and school improvement efforts. I will seek more support for teachers as they try to individualize instruction to address the unique needs and abilities of each of our students. I am open to exploring alternative teaching and learning options as we address today's challenges and prepare our students and schools for tomorrow.

Quality schools help all District 623 communities and an excellent education can make all the difference in the life of any child.

I enjoy working on behalf of our youth and our schools and will always remain focused on the well-being of all of our students and excellence in all of our schools.

*(Submitted to the Roseville Review & published on 08/28/07)*

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Shari Dion