

2026

LEE'S SUMMIT R-7 SCHOOL DISTRICT
TONY L. STANSBERRY
LEADERSHIP CENTER

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LSR-7 SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE PROFILES

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LEE'S SUMMIT
CHAMBER

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2026 Lee's Summit R-7 School Board Elections

Six candidates have filed to run for three available three-year terms on the Lee's Summit R-7 Board of Education. The candidates are:

- Regina Garrett
- Erica Dolores Miller
- Dr. Kamile Johnson
- Rodrick K. Sparks
- Kirsti A. Martin
- Matt Warton

Christopher Thornton has suspended his campaign, but will still appear on the ballot.

The Chamber encourages residents to make an educated vote on Tuesday, April 7, 2026. Contact Chamber President, Matt Baird, at 816.524.2424 or mbaird@lschamber.com for more information.

Please Note: All answers were copied directly from answers provided by candidates and were not edited by the Chamber. This Program was paid for by the Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce, Matt Baird, President.

Current School Board



Stacie Myers
President



Erica Miller
Vice President



Michelle Dawson
Board Member



Regina Garrett
Board Member



Bill Haley
Board Member



Dr. Kamile Johnson
Board Member



Dr. Nicky Nickens
Board Member

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR FORUM SPONSORS



For more information about the LSR-7 School Board, visit lsr7.org

Map of Lee's Summit R-7 Schools

For detailed boundary maps or to search your address and determine your school, visit lsr7.org.



Elementary

1. **Hazel Grove Elementary**
2001 NW Blue Pkwy
Lee's Summit, MO 64064
2. **Underwood Elementary**
1125 NE Colbern Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
3. **Mason Elementary**
27600 NE Colbern Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
4. **Meadow Lane Elementary**
1421 NE Independence Ave
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
5. **Longview Farm Elementary**
1001 SW Longview Park Dr
Lee's Summit, MO 64081
6. **Cedar Creek Elementary**
2600 SW Third St
Lee's Summit, MO 64081
7. **Westview Elementary**
200 N Ward Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64063
8. **Lee's Summit Elementary**
110 SE Green St
Lee's Summit, MO 64063
9. **Richardson Elementary**
800 NE Blackwell Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
10. **Prairie View Elementary**
501 SE Todd George Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64063
11. **Pleasant Lea Middle School**
630 SW Persels Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64081
12. **Highland Park Elementary**
400 SE Millstone Ave
Lee's Summit, MO 64063
13. **Sunset Valley Elementary**
1850 SE Ranson Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64082
14. **Woodland Elementary**
12709 Smart Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
15. **Hawthorn Hill Elementary**
2801 SW Pryor Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
16. **Summit Pointe Elementary**
13100 E 147th St
Kansas City, MO 64149
17. **Trailridge Elementary**
3651 SW Windemere Dr
Lee's Summit, MO 64082
18. **Greenwood Elementary**
805 W Main St
Greenwood, MO 64034

Middle

19. **Bernard Campbell Middle School**
1201 NE Colbern Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
20. **Pleasant Lea Middle School**
630 SW Persels Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64081
21. **Summit Lakes Middle School**
3500 SW Windemere Dr
Lee's Summit, MO 64082
22. **East Trails Middle School**
1001 SE Bailey Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64081

High

23. **Lee's Summit North High School**
901 NE Douglas St
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
24. **Lee's Summit High School**
400 SE Blue Pkwy
Lee's Summit, MO 64063
25. **Lee's Summit West High School**
2600 SW Ward Rd
Lee's Summit, MO 64082



Regina Garrett

Education: 1990 Graduate of Blue Springs Senior High; Associates Degree through Penn Valley Community College

Occupation: Domestic Engineer

Activities & Organizations: Lee's Summit Educational Foundation, Lee's Summit CARES, Student Board Representatives committee, Parent's as Teacher's Advisory Board, TIF Commissions, and Workforce Alliance, Rotary Club

Political Experience: Incumbent School board member, 1 term

1. What compelled you to run for the R7 School Board?

As a 16-year resident of Lee's Summit and a parent of two children currently in the district (a 13-year old at East Trails Middle School and an 11-year old at Highland Park Elementary), I have a deep passion for our children's education. Attending board meetings over the past two years, I recognized a significant disconnect between the district and the community it serves. My own journey through district programs- including Parents as Teachers, the Great Beginnings Early Education Center, seven years of IEP meetings for my daughter, and the Struggling Readers program for my son- has given me a unique perspective on both our district's strengths and the gaps that need bridging. I want to ensure that LSR7 returns to a focus on educational basics to help every student succeed.

2. If elected what would be your top three priorities during your term?

If re-elected, my decision-making will be guided by these three priorities:

Fiscal Stewardship for Student Success: I will continue to prioritize a balanced budget that directs resources away from unproven initiatives and toward high-impact, evidence-based curriculum. My goal is to ensure that LSR7 remains a leader in innovation-like our Aerospace Academy-while maintaining the financial health necessary to attract and retain the best educators in the region.

Inclusive Engagement and Transparency: I am committed to empowering our students, parents, and staff to be active partners in our district's journey. By fostering open, two-way communication, we ensure that every stakeholder has a voice in the decisions that shape our schools. Transparency isn't just a buzzword; it is how we build the community trust required to pass measures like the Prop C waiver.

A Holistic Culture of Safety: I will prioritize a school climate where every student and staff member feels a deep sense of well-being and physical safety. This includes a zero-tolerance stance on assaults against staff, continued support for our Student Discipline (cell phone) policies, and investment in the mental health resources that proactively prevent conflict.

3. What do you see as your primary role as a school board member?

The primary responsibility of a school board member is the effective oversight and supervision of the superintendent. This role serves as the foundation for ensuring that the district is led with accountability and focus. Beyond this core duty, the role involves several critical functions to ensure the success of the district:

Fiscal Stewardship: As a board member, I am responsible for approving the annual budget, monitoring all expenditures, and sanctioning local tax levies. I am committed to being a trustworthy steward of community tax dollars, ensuring that spending is directly tied to student outcomes and academic success. This includes re-evaluating expensive third-party consultants that do not focus strictly on core education.

Academic Standards and Curriculum: It is the board's duty to review curriculum standards and authorize educational resources to ensure they are in full compliance with Missouri's academic achievement standards. I advocate for evidence-based programs in the "basics" of reading, writing, and arithmetic to improve proficiency rates for every student.

Safety and Welfare: I am responsible for overseeing initiatives focused on safety, security, and student welfare. My goal is to maintain a proactive environment where students and staff feel both physically and emotionally secure, which includes a zero-tolerance stance on assaults against educators. Community Liaison: I function as a vital liaison between the community and the school district. By fostering open, two-way communication and providing 100% transparent data, I work to build the trust necessary to achieve educational excellence together.

4. What three qualities do you have that you think will allow you to be a successful school board member?

1. Civil Discourse: I was raised in a family with diverse viewpoints where we believe "iron sharpens iron"; I am always willing to listen to and consider perspectives different from my own.

2. Empathy: My background in customer service taught me to listen to others' stories with genuine empathy, a quality essential for bringing a community together.

3. Teamwork: I understand the Board of Education is a single acting body; while I may be a "dissenting voice" during deliberations, I believe all members must support the board's final decisions in unison.



Dr. Kamile Johnson

Education: Bachelor of Science Biology, Doctor of Pharmacy

Occupation: Pharmacist, Adjunct Professor

Activities & Organizations: N/A

Political Experience: 3 years on LSR7 school board, elected 2023

1. What compelled you to run for the R7 School Board?

I am running for school board again because our district deserves to have representation from those who have experience that can provide continuity and stability for continued success. The representation should also reflect someone who supports public schools 100% and does not want to divert public funding for vouchers or school choice. I am that representative. I want to continue to increase wages for teachers and staff through a yes vote on Prop C, because it is imperative that we take care of LSR7 staff. I want to support the Superintendent as he continues to focus on the education, well-being, and safety of our students. I feel an obligation to this community and with a level head I know that I can continue to do what's right for all students and all staff.

2. If elected what would be your top three priorities during your term?

- Protect public schools and public-school funding.
- Increasing teacher and staff pay.
- Removing barriers to education for all students.

3. What do you see as your primary role as a school board member?

To oversee the Superintendent.

4. What three qualities do you have that you think will allow you to be a successful school board member?

- 3 years' experience on the school board.
- 10 years' experience managing personnel at a non-profit organization with a multimillion-dollar budget.
- Critical thinking skills that allow me to assess a situation from all sides to make a sound, thoughtful decisions based on facts.

5. How will you as a school board member connect, engage and communicate with the community?

I will connect by attending school board meetings, process action team meetings, community and school events, and dinner with the board. I will also interact through email, phone calls and social media when appropriate.

6. Do you support the Lee's Summit School District's request to voters to consider a full waiver of the state-mandated property tax rate rollbacks associated with Proposition C? Please explain your answer.

Yes, I do support the Prop C full waiver. Over 80% of the districts budget is paid to people. LSR7 is in the people taking care of people business, with that said our staff deserve to be paid wages that are competitive and that enable them to live, eat, and play in the same community they work. 100% of the proceeds from Prop C are committed to doing that, increasing the salary and wages of teachers and staff. Education is the bedrock of our society and touches everyone's life in some capacity. As a community we are responsible for protecting public schools that serve all kids and that includes salary and wages for people who help to make LSR7 a destination district. The community of Lees Summit thrives on successes of LSR7.

7. What do you think the R7 District does well and what do you think they could improve on?

- LSR7 provides quality education that prepares students for success in college, military, or employment in addition to offering award winning extra-curricular activities including sports, music, robotics and academics. The district has a wide variety of classes for advancement that in many cases provide college credit or apprenticeship hours, including AP and IB courses and opportunities provided at STA and local businesses.
- As the district continues to grow in diversity we must continue to improve on communication with parents, students and the community.



Kirsti A. Martin

Education: Bachelors of Science Criminal Justice

Occupation: Social Worker, ReDiscover

Activities & Organizations: Parent in the Lee's Summit R-7 School District; Mental Health Case Manager at ReDiscover; community advocate for children, families, and individuals with disabilities; background in child advocacy and investigative work supporting vulnerable populations

Political Experience: First time candidate for public office seeking election to the Lee's Summit R-7 School Board

1. What compelled you to run for the R7 School Board?

I care deeply about the future of Lee's Summit. I grew up here, graduated from this district, and now I'm raising my daughter here. This district helped shape me, and now I have an amazing opportunity to give back. I want to ensure our schools remain strong, responsive, and student centered for the next generation. Through both my professional work in mental health and my experience as a parent, I've seen how critical strong communication, thoughtful leadership, and proactive systems are to student success. When I saw opportunities to strengthen collaboration between families and the district, I decided the best way to contribute was to step forward and serve. I am running because I believe our district is capable of excellence, and I want to help move it forward with transparency, accountability, and practical solutions.

2. If elected what would be your top three priorities during your term?

1. Strengthening communication, trust, and parent collaboration. Clear and consistent communication builds confidence in leadership. Families deserve to understand not only what decisions are being made, but why they are being made and how they impact students. I want to help create systems that empower parents to be collaborative partners with schools rather than feeling like they are navigating a complex system alone. That means clearer explanations of policies, better follow up after meetings, and ensuring families know who to contact and what to expect. When parents feel informed and respected, trust grows, and that benefits students.

2. Supporting student well being and academic success. Students cannot learn when they are in crisis. Academic success and mental health are directly connected, and we have to treat them that way. As a mental health case manager, I see every day how early identification and proactive support can change long term outcomes. I want to ensure our district equips teachers with tools and training to recognize when a child may be struggling emotionally before it escalates. Being proactive reduces classroom disruptions, protects instructional time, and creates more stable learning environments for everyone.

3. Responsible financial oversight. Taxpayers deserve transparency and accountability. Every funding decision should be tied to measurable outcomes that directly benefit students. That means clear budget reporting, defined goals for initiatives, and honest communication. Before asking the community to support additional funding, we must demonstrate efficiency and strategic planning within our current budget. Fiscal responsibility is not about cutting programs, it is about ensuring every dollar is used thoughtfully, intentionally, and in ways that strengthen our classrooms.

3. What do you see as your primary role as a school board member?

The primary role of a school board member is governance and oversight. That includes setting policy, ensuring fiscal responsibility, hiring and evaluating the superintendent, and representing the interests of the community. My role would be to ask thoughtful questions, review data carefully, consider long term impact, and make decisions that prioritize students and teachers while respecting taxpayers. As a private investigator, I have developed strong analytical and investigative skills, learning how to identify inconsistencies, dig deeper into complex issues, and ask the right questions. These abilities will help me be an efficient and effective board member who seeks the truth, promotes transparency, and makes well informed decisions.

4. What three qualities do you have that you think will allow you to be a successful school board member?

1. Strong listening skills and the ability to bring people together. I am comfortable hearing different perspectives, even when emotions are high, and staying focused on what matters most, which is what helps students. In my work and in my life, I have learned that people do not have to agree on everything to move forward, but they do need to feel heard and respected. As a board member, I will listen carefully to families, teachers, and administrators and work toward balanced, thoughtful decisions that reflect both community input and what is best for students.

2. Real world experience navigating complex systems while staying solution focused. As a mental health case manager and child advocate, I've worked with families who are navigating complicated systems, policies, and barriers. I have learned how to stay calm, organized, persistent, and creative while helping people move toward real solutions. As a mother to a child with cerebral palsy, I understand how important it is for systems to be clear, consistent, and supportive. I do not just identify challenges, I focus and bring practical solutions that can actually be implemented.

3. Analytical thinking and a commitment to fact based decisions. As a licensed private investigator, I am trained to dig deep, ask the right questions, and verify information before reaching conclusions. I do not make decisions based on assumptions or what sounds good in the moment. I look at data, patterns, and long term impact. That mindset is critical on a school board when evaluating policies, reviewing budgets, and measuring whether programs are truly serving students. I will approach every decision with careful analysis and common sense.



Erica Delores Miller

Education: Masters Science Marriage Family Therapy

Occupation: Manager Employee Health and Wellbeing, GEHA

Activities & Organizations: Board Member- LS Cares, Board Member Rings of Care Community Volunteer- Coldwater, One Good Meal, Giving Hope and Help

Political Experience: Current sitting School Board member- LSR7

1. What compelled you to run for the R7 School Board?

I love my community and have valued serving on the school board, helping shape decisions that impact student well-being and academic success while ensuring teachers and staff feel seen and supported.

Leading through action has been one of the most rewarding parts of this role, I am regularly in schools and classrooms, listening and learning firsthand. As a parent of three, I am personally invested in our district's success.

My middle child has dyslexia, and with the right team of specialists and teachers, she is now thriving. Every student deserves access to the resources and support they need, and every family deserves guidance as they navigate their child's education.

As we face challenging times ahead, I am committed to ensuring our students, staff, and district are set up for success, bringing experienced leadership that understands the district and can focus on progress from day one.

2. If elected what would be your top three priorities during your term?

Student Mental health supports and Services Expanding meaningful, school-based mental health supports and trusted community partners; with a focus on bullying prevention, self-esteem and suicide prevention.

Teacher and Staff Support, Retention and Fair Pay Championing competitive pay, manageable workloads and respect for educators and staff. Supporting our great educators is a direct investment in strong schools and thriving students.

Strong, inclusive special education services Fighting for timely evaluations, appropriate staffing and equitable services; while standing with families as advocates for their children.

3. What do you see as your primary role as a school board member?

The primary role of a school board member is to hire, evaluate, and, when necessary, terminate the superintendent. In addition, board members provide strategic direction and oversight on key decisions as they relate to district policy.

4. What three qualities do you have that you think will allow you to be a successful school board member?

First, I genuinely care about people. I am deeply invested in the well-being of our students, staff, and community, and that care guides every decision I make.

Second, I am a good listener and make people feel heard. I prioritize understanding different perspectives, whether from parents, teachers, or community members, and ensure their voices inform our work.

Third, I lead through action. I don't just talk about solutions—I show up in schools, classrooms, and community spaces, turning ideas and feedback into meaningful support and results. Together, these qualities allow me to advocate effectively, build trust, and create positive outcomes for our district.

5. How will you as a school board member connect, engage and communicate with the community?

As a school board member, I connect, engage, and communicate with the community in multiple ways. I have a strong social media presence and will continue using it to share updates, highlight district successes, and provide timely information to families and community members.

I also make myself accessible and available for regular conversation. I often receive calls and messages from community members on a wide range of district issues, and I take the time to listen, answer questions, and ensure their voices are heard. By combining consistent communication, active listening, and a visible presence in our schools and community, I work to keep the public informed, and engaged.



Rodrick K. Sparks

Education: Some College- Kansas City, Kansas Community College and Liberty University

Occupation: Escrow Assistant, Security 1st Title

Activities & Organizations: LS Cares – Board Member; HOA President – Wedgewood Pointe; Fathers Club; Church Leader & Community Volunteer

Political Experience: Lee’s Summit School Board 2021- 2024

1. What compelled you to run for the R7 School Board?

I’m running because I care deeply about our students, our educators, and the long-term strength of our community. I’ve had the honor of serving on the Lee’s Summit R-7 Board before, including as Board President and I know the responsibility that comes with stewarding a district of this size and importance of protecting public education.

I’m compelled to return because there is still important work to be done around student well-being, staff support, fiscal responsibility and ensuring decisions are made with transparency and trust. This district helped shape my own family and I want to continue serving with experience, leadership and a student-centered focus.

2. If elected what would be your top three priorities during your term?

Student Safety and Academic Success Ensuring every student feels safe, supported and prepared to learn will always be a top priority.

Supporting Staff Strong schools require strong educators. Competitive compensation, respectful working conditions and thoughtful policy decisions are essential to supporting and retaining high-quality teachers and staff.

Responsible Financial Stewardship I will prioritize smart, transparent budgeting that protects classroom instruction, ensures bond projects are completed on time and under budget and honors, the trust taxpayers place in the district.

3. What do you see as your primary role as a school board member?

A school board member’s primary role is governance, not micromanagement. That means setting clear policy, hiring, evaluating and supporting our one employee, the superintendent. While ensuring accountability and keeping the district focused on its mission. This work is accomplished collaboratively with the other six board members.

Equally important is listening and being a bridge between the community and the district, asking hard questions when necessary and making decisions that are always in the best interest of our students.

4. What three qualities do you have that you think will allow you to be a successful school board member?

Experience: Having previously served on the Lee’s Summit R-7 Board of Education, including as Board President, I understand how district operations, policy development, and board governance work in practice, not just in theory. I know how decisions made at the board table impact classrooms, staff, and students both immediately and years into the future. That experience allows me to ask informed questions, anticipate challenges, and make decisions that are thoughtful, strategic, and student-centered.

Integrity: I believe trust is foundational to effective leadership. I lead with transparency, honesty, passion and a strong sense of responsibility to students, families, staff, and taxpayers. I am committed to doing what is right, even when it is difficult or unpopular and to making decisions that can be explained in the best interest of the district.

Collaboration: Meaningful progress happens when we work together. I value listening to diverse perspectives, engaging in respectful dialogue and building consensus whenever possible. I understand that strong governance requires collaboration among board members, district leadership, staff, and the community, and I am committed to fostering relationships that move the district forward toward shared goals.

5. How will you as a school board member connect, engage and communicate with the community?

I believe communication should be consistent, accessible and two-way. I will continue to attend school and community events, engage regularly with parents, staff and our students using multiple platforms both in person and online to share information, listen to concerns and gather feedback.

I also believe we should build on successful initiatives such as Dinners with the Board, which began in 2023. Expanding these opportunities would allow for more meaningful, whole family and community engagement, creating space for open dialogue about how the district can better serve the needs of all students and families.

Community trust is built through presence, responsiveness and follow-through. I take that responsibility seriously and am committed to being visible, approachable and accountable to the community I serve.



Matt Warton

Education: Bachelor's in Business Administration

Occupation: Sales Manager, Tech Electronics

Activities & Organizations: Involved in our Church and my four kids sports

Political Experience: N/A

1. What compelled you to run for the R7 School Board?

I am a dad with 4 kids (3 of whom are enrolled in the district: 1 in elementary, 1 in middle school, and 1 in high school and a 7 month old!). I am heavily invested in the district today and for the next 20 years.

2. If elected what would be your top three priorities during your term?

- Driving focus on the classroom (teachers & kids) via discussions, decisions, & votes from the dais
- Encouraging Parental & Community Engagement: best educational outcomes are derived from a strong partnership between schools, parents, & the community
- Advocate for continued focus on STEM & Vocational education programs and awareness. There continues to be such a high demand for these kinds of jobs

3. What do you see as your primary role as a school board member?

Advocating for kids, teachers, and parents by providing oversight to the administration and being an active listener to everyone inside and outside of the district.

4. What three qualities do you have that you think will allow you to be a successful school board member?

- I am in the midst of raising 4 children that are at a variety of ages. I have my finger on the pulse of their concerns as students, the types of challenges that teachers face, and what it means to be a parent in our community.
- I have a successful career in business consulting and leadership spanning 20 years in 2 different industries. My current career is in the building technology space which includes systems like fire alarm and security (cameras etc). I understand how public procurement works and can properly vet many of the low voltage systems that our schools need to purchase.
- I am a person of high integrity and humility. This is the most important qualification for me or anyone else running for public office. We have a responsibility to our children, district, staff, parents, and taxpayers to be faithful and diligent in the execution of this office. I promise to put everything I have into this role.

5. How will you as a school board member connect, engage and communicate with the community?

- I will host regular meetings with anyone from the community, staff, parents etc at a local coffee shop. Open forum, any topic is on the table.
- I also intend to tour all of our schools to understand the unique students, staff, and challenges that each face.

6. Do you support the Lee's Summit School District's request to voters to consider a full waiver of the state-mandated property tax rate rollbacks associated with Proposition C? Please explain your answer.

I am in favor of providing the taxpayers with a choice that is clear and will support their decision.

7. What do you think the R7 District does well and what do you think they could improve on?

- Our district provides a broad range of education tracks, support programs, extracurricular activities that enable all of our students to choose a path that will lead them to success
- I think the district could improve in encouraging parental and community engagement by driving PTA participation and making it easier for parents to engage with teachers, curriculum and student performance.

Lee's Summit Chamber Supports Full Proposition C Waiver

The Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors recently voted to endorse a full waiver of the state-mandated property tax rollbacks associated with Proposition C, which will appear on the April 7, 2026, ballot.

The LS Chamber believes the full waiver would enhance and support the economic ecosystem of the Lee's Summit community, which necessarily lends to the furtherance of the LS Chamber's mission, vision and values.

Prop C is a state-wide 1 cent sales tax for public education, approved in 1982, that supports Missouri school districts. Prop C also requires school districts to reduce or "rollback" their local tax levy unless their voters approve a proposition to eliminate or "waive" that requirement. LSR7 is asking voters to consider a full waiver of its Prop C rollback.

If approved, a full waiver generates additional operating revenue each year that the LSR7 School District plans to use to fund and maintain increases in staff salaries and benefits. Approval also aligns LSR7 with the 91% of Missouri school districts whose communities have already approved a full waiver, provides the district a stable and predictable funding source, helps improve competitiveness with other Kansas City-area districts and supports recruitment and retention of quality staff.

"Approval of the Proposition C waiver is extremely vital to the growth, development and future of Lee's Summit and the Lee's Summit school district," said Matt Baird, President of the Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce. "The LSR7 school district is a key partner and contributor to the success of the Lee's Summit community, and by approving this full waiver, we will ensure our district can retain top talent and that the community is still a top-rated destination for businesses to grow and flourish."

The Lee's Summit Chamber supports a full Proposition C Waiver and encourages the citizens of Lee's Summit and the business community to show their support for by voting yes on April 7!

ABOUT THE LEE'S SUMMIT CHAMBER

The Lee's Summit Chamber was incorporated in 1968 and is a member-supported organization of businesses dedicated to creating opportunities for business success through networking, advocacy, and business and professional development. For additional information, call the Chamber at 816-524-2424.

Interested in other legislative priorities supported by the Chamber? Visit lschamber.com to learn more.

Don't Forget to Vote on April 7th, 2026!