

Candidates file for GMCS board seats

Written by Gallupsun Staff
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Huenemann, Menini not running again

***By Bernie Dotson
Sun Correspondent***

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There were several filings Dec. 20 for open seats on the Gallup-McKinley County Board of Education and the Pueblo of Zuni Public School District. The real news within the filings, however, is that the very popular retired educator Joe Menini won't run again.

Ester Macias, Carmen Radcliff, Gerald O'Hara, Amparo Beatty and Michael Schaff are candidates for Menini's District 5 post, Rick Palochak, director of elections at McKinley County, confirmed.

Palochak said Sandra Jeff, Charles Long and Freda Joe are candidates for the District 2 board seat currently held by Lynn Huenemann. Huenemann isn't running again, either.

Brenda Chicharello and Christopher Mortensen filed for the District 4 post currently occupied by Jeff. Chicharello is vice president of the Indian Education Committee. Jeff, who is from Crownpoint and a former member of the New Mexico House of Representatives, was appointed to the seat when Titus Nez vacated the position.

Jeff frequently comes under fire by the general public because it is believed that she lives out of the school board boundaries and the state public Education department has written at least one piece of correspondence in 2016 detailing the residential caper.

"They are the candidates who submitted the proper paperwork to run for school board sets," Palochak said. "This is the first step in the process."

Reached by telephone this week, Menini declined to make a comment on not running. Menini represents a board district that includes Miyamura High, Gallup Mid, Indian Hills Elementary, Jefferson Elementary, Red Rock Elementary and a few other schools. Among the schools represented in District 4 are Gallup High, Juan de Oñate Elementary, Chief Manuelito Middle and David Skeets Elementary. District 2 includes Crownpoint High, Tse Yi Gai and Catherine Miller Elementary.

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The Gallup-McKinley Board of Education and Zuni elections are Jan. 3. Information on salary amounts received by school board members wasn't immediately available. Regarding the Zuni filings, Palochak said Jerome Haskie filed for District 3 and Shelly Chimoni filed for district 4. There were no filings for Zuni's District 5, Palochak said.