

# 2009 Voters Guide



**The League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford**

[www.lwvgh.org](http://www.lwvgh.org)



Clare Kindall	Republican
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## **Biographical Information:**

I am seeking your support for my re-election to the Board of Education. I am a Board financial examiner and the Board representative to PT Council and WHIREC. A graduate of Wellesley College, cum laude, and the University of Virginia School of Law, Order of the Coif, I have served as an assistant attorney general for Connecticut since 1998. My husband Mark, son Keith and I are active members of St. Thomas the Apostle parish, as well as the proud owners of Rosy the basset hound, and MacBeth the Siamese cat.

## **Response to Questions**

### **1. How would you address the state mandate for our West Hartford schools to be more racially balanced?**

Only Charter Oak and Smith are affected by the State Department of Education's inquiry, and both schools are voluntary magnet schools - any neighborhood student at either school may attend another West Hartford school, and magnet students by definition attend voluntarily. Their voluntary enrollment historically has afforded them special status under the state law, which should continue.

As a community, we need to support all of our students. The best way to accomplish this is to maintain our high-quality neighborhood schools, to focus on student achievement, and to address each child's needs, rather than to fixate on racial demographics.

### **2. Can West Hartford maintain a quality school system without a budget increase next year assuming no increase from state aid? Explain.**

Due to the drastic economic times, my Board colleagues and I adopted a zero percent budget increase last year, while maintaining programs. This was possible only because everyone pulled together - unions gave concessions, students and

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staff engaged in a successful energy conservation program, and the Town Council and Board worked together throughout the budgeting process. In the long term, it is not possible to maintain quality schools without an increase in the school budget. In the short term however, as long as the community pulls together, our school system will endure this fiscal crisis.

**3. What can be done to promote respect for differences and to decrease bullying in the schools?**

Our schools' social health depends upon our ability to embrace the vibrant diversity present in our community. While lessons on respect start in the home, our schools have numerous programs to address issues of respect, peer pressure, and bullying. No amount of bullying is acceptable, and we continue to strive to apply these lessons to students' current circumstances, especially in this age of instant electronic communication.

**4. If elected, what initiative would be your top priority?**

My top priority is to maintain the high quality of our schools, and to ensure that every child has the tools to succeed, while maintaining fiscal responsibility. That's why I worked to save programs such as full-day kindergarten and K-12 foreign language last year. In the immediate future, I am committed to the implementation of the EDC report recommendations on how to make our special education programs better, especially in the middle schools and high schools. The achievement gap remains a local, state and national concern, and I am closely monitoring how well our District Improvement Plan closes that gap.