

First Name and Last Name

Jeffrey Barke

Are you an incumbent? If so, how many terms have you served?

I have served 3 terms on the Board of Education.

Have you run for School Board Office before? What is your involvement with the School District (past or present?)

I first ran and got elected to the Los Alamitos School Board in 2006. My wife and I have lived in Rossmore for 22 years. Both our kids attended Los Al District Schools.

Do you have a campaign website? Share the link.

[www.BarkeHill2018.com](http://www.BarkeHill2018.com)

In life, who do you look up to? Why? Whose example would you like to follow and why?

I look up to many people. A few examples: John Wooden - he showed you can be a fierce competitor with grace, honor, and style. His "pyramid of success" has had a lasting impact.

I also look up to my wife Mari - she believes in always telling the truth and never promising something you can't deliver. Honesty and integrity are two of her highest values. My 8th grade science teacher Mr. Morrison drilled into me to never give up and always ask questions. Always ask why.

What would be your top 3 priorities; What do you hope to achieve if elected?

School safety and security, Academic excellence, and fiscal responsibility. Without safe schools our outstanding work is compromised. Security means both physical and non-physical measures. Physical measures are more intuitive for us to understand. The non-physical measures are just as important and include: Robust anti-bullying programs, creating a culture of inclusiveness where a diverse group of students feel empowered to succeed, and increased access to mental health counselors. We need to keep working on improving the culture of inclusiveness in our district. We have an outstanding reputation for academic excellence. This also means providing a pallet of opportunities for all students to succeed. As such I would like to add to our already large vocational offerings to provide diverse career option opportunities. The Board has a fiduciary responsibility over the districts budget. We need to continue to be good stewards of the taxpayers money.

What areas of public policy are you personally passionate about? why?

As a Reserve Deputy Sheriff for the Orange County Sheriff's Department, I am passionate about school safety and security. As a primary care doctor I am also passionate about healthcare policy in the United States. I am the medical director of a non-profit Los Alamitos founded charity called Pathways to Independence. We help at risk young women (almost all of whom have been sexually abused by a relative) turn their lives around. I have a team of primary care and specialty doctors that provide free medical care to the clients of Pathways. I believe in acting locally to make our community a better place to work, live, go to school, and play for us and the next generation. It has been an honor to serve my community.

What characteristics or principles are most important for an elected official?

Transparency in decision making, honesty and integrity, and open communication with stakeholders are some of the most important characteristics. I practice Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and in particular - "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." That is why I always seek out opinions especially those that are different than mine so I can learn prior to making a decision.

What do you believe are the core responsibilities for someone elected to this office?

The Board's most important responsibility is to set the vision and priorities for the district and then hold the superintendent accountable for implementing these priorities and vision. At the same time, I view the Board as a voice of the students and the community. We have a core responsibility to listen to the concerns of the parents and the students and implement policy consistent with the values and beliefs of our community.

What legacy would you like to leave?

The legacy I would like to leave is that I served my community with grace, honor, and integrity, that I made a difference in the lives of the students and my community, and that I lived my purpose. I would like every aspect of our District, from facilities to student achievement, to be better than when I was first elected to the Board of Education.

What was your very first job and how long did you have it?

I delivered the Green Sheet Newspaper in the San Fernando Valley at age 8 with my older brother. We had this paper route for about a year. We rode our bikes throughout our neighborhood delivering papers.

If you could be any fictional character, who would you want to be?

I was not into fictional characters when I was a kid. To me the real super heroes are the teachers who influence, mentor, and educate our children. My favorite Youtube Video that illustrates this is the poem by Taylor Mali. Here is his poem:

What's a kid going to learn  
from someone who decided his best option in life  
was to become a teacher?  
He reminds the other dinner guests that it's true  
what they say about teachers:  
Those who can, do; those who can't, teach.  
I decide to bite my tongue instead of his  
and resist the temptation to remind the dinner guests  
that it's also true what they say about lawyers.  
Because we're eating, after all, and this is polite conversation.  
I mean, you're a teacher, Taylor.  
Be honest. What do you make?  
And I wish he hadn't done that— asked me to be honest—  
because, you see, I have this policy about honesty and butt--kicking:  
if you ask for it, then I have to let you have it.  
You want to know what I make?  
I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could.  
I can make a C+ feel like a Congressional Medal of Honor  
and an A-- feel like a slap in the face.  
How dare you waste my time  
with anything less than your very best.  
I make kids sit through 40 minutes of study hall  
in absolute silence. No, you may not work in groups.  
No, you may not ask a question.  
Why won't I let you go to the bathroom?  
Because you're bored.  
And you don't really have to go to the bathroom, do you?  
I make parents tremble in fear when I call home:  
Hi. This is Mr. Mali. I hope I haven't called at a bad time,  
I just wanted to talk to you about something your son said today.  
To the biggest bully in the grade, he said,  
"Leave the kid alone. I still cry sometimes, don't you?  
It's no big deal."  
And that was the noblest act of courage I have ever seen.  
I make parents see their children for who they are  
and what they can be.  
You want to know what I make? I make kids wonder,  
I make them question.  
I make them criticize.  
I make them apologize and mean it.  
I make them write.  
I make them read, read, read.  
I make them spell definitely beautiful, definitely beautiful, definitely beautiful  
over and over and over again until they will never misspell  
either one of those words again.  
I make them show all their work in math  
and hide it on their final drafts in English.

I make them understand that if you've got this,  
then you follow this,  
and if someone ever tries to judge you  
by what you make, you give them this.  
Here, let me break it down for you, so you know what I say is true:  
Teachers make a BIG difference! Now what about you?

What is your favorite holiday? Why?

Fourth of July - Independence Day. I feel blessed to have been born in the greatest country in the world. The American experiment has brought more people out of poverty and oppression than any other country in the history of the world. I feel strongly about giving back to and helping others who are struggling and/or less fortunate than me. Fourth of July reminds me of the sacrifices of others who gave me this opportunity.

What is your favorite book? Why?

Stephen R. Covey- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. It is a manual with enduring universal principles of behavior and effectiveness. A close second is Viktor E. Frankl - Man's Search For Meaning. As a holocaust survivor he learned that even though his physical world was completely controlled by his Nazi captors, his internal freedoms were actually greater than his captor. He divided the world into two races - the decent and indecent.

What is your favorite thing in your home? Why?

I have a bookshelf in my family room that is loaded with a history of my learning and personal development. I frequently read and reread many passages from these books filled with wisdom. On this bookshelf also sits a few of my kids childhood favorites such as Goodnight Moon and The Giving Tree. When I am faced with challenges this bookshelf of wisdom gives me insight and strength!

Where you ever (or still are) involved in sports or Arts?

I played the guitar and piano when I was younger and took vocal lessons. I wrote songs. I played football, baseball, and tennis in high school. I was a ski instructor in Mammoth for a short time. I am an avid exerciser and I play golf. My wife and I enjoy paddle boarding on the weekends.

What is something that has been a struggle in your life?

A book I frequently reread is by Don Miguel Ruiz called The Four Agreements. In particular the 2nd agreement "Don't take anything personally" is something I struggle with. I am multi-passionate and often unafraid to share my opinion, I take criticism too personally. A mentor of mine once told me "If you let compliments go to your head, you will let insults go to your heart. I try to live by these wise words.

What is the primary job of a school board member in your view?

My primary job is to work with my other board members to set the priorities and vision for the district and then hold the Superintendent accountable to implement these priorities and vision. As I represent only one vote out of five board members and only have an impact to the extent that I can gain consensus, it is my job to confer and discuss board policy with my fellow board members bringing my life experience to the table for the benefit of the district and community. On a broader view, I represent the community and the students of the district. I try to advocate and enact policy that is consistent with the values and desires of the community. In addition, it is critical that as a Board member I also understand the concerns and issues of our employees and, most important, our world class educators that are doing the work of the district. Their opinions and input are important and considered prior to enacting any policy.

How would you support the diverse needs of your district's students, faculty, staff, and community?

The only way to address the needs of a diverse community is to first understand their needs. "Seek first to understand, then to be understood." The Board is very concerned about recent acts of incivility. In addition we have received many emails regarding concerns about students feeling unsafe, unsupported, and discriminated against in the district. We believe strongly in supporting all students of any racial, ethnic, religious, cultural, or sexual orientation. Bigotry will not be tolerated. As such, we are moving forward with many of the ideas presented to us recently including but not limited to: Formation of a new Task Force, additional Mandatory Student and Staff Education, Curriculum additions to address diverse needs, and ongoing discussions with our community and staff. We will not rest until all our community, staff and students feel safe, secure, represented, respected, and honored.

In light of the circumstances of NFL players not standing for the national Anthem to protest certain perceived racial injustices, how would you react to a student Athlete protesting at a school athletic event in the same manner?

A student has a first amendment right to peacefully protest including kneeling or sitting for the National Anthem or Pledge of Allegiance. Although I do not agree with this mechanism of protest and feel it is divisive and disrespectful, I would protect his or her right to do so. I would also want to understand why they felt the need to do this and try to address any underlying concern that was occurring in our district that was motivating this type of protest.

How do you expect your staff to address any bullying issue in the classroom or campus, if at all?

The staff should not tolerate any bullying activity at any time. We have a no tolerance policy for bullying behavior and have robust anti-bullying educational programs throughout our district. Most importantly we must model the behavior we desire including our own social media.

How will you do to build a better relationship with parents in the district? what plans do you have to be inclusive of parental involvement?

I believe we have an outstanding relationship with our parents in the district. We can always do better. There are many different mechanisms to build relationships including forums, events and participation in various school activities. We have many parents that already attend our Board meetings and various committee meetings including school site PTA meetings and our standing Operations Steering Committee meeting. We need to meet parents and communicate with them in ways that they desire including: Emails, newsletters, small group discussions, town halls, and personal phone calls. I am open to new ways of building relationships and obtaining parental input.

Do you believe it is important to intentionally recruit with the aim of diversifying the district's faculty, staff, and administration? if so, what would be your policy to achieve this?

I believe in recruiting from a broader base of applicants in order to have a more diverse pool of qualified applicants. The Board and Superintendent are in discussions on ways to do this now, such as recruiting from diverse universities, reaching out to university professors for assistance, getting greater diversity in our student teachers, etc. Of course, we always want to hire the best candidate, but we also need a more diverse applicant pool in order to achieve a more diverse staff.

What issues get in the way of quality education? how would you address these obstacles?

Our Country is more divided now than I have ever seen. To the extent that this divisiveness finds its way into our community and school district, this can be a major factor inhibiting a quality education. Every student must feel safe, secure, respected, honored, and included. Our work on these issues is never ending. Our district has implemented many programs to help with the culture in our district including: a robust district wide anti-bullying program, GWAM (Griffins With A Mission), Peace Week, Anti-bullying/wellness standing Board committee, Increase access to mental health counselors, hired more mental health counselors, parental and student education programs, high school student organizations dedicated to promoting tolerance, student leaders at all schools are trained in conflict mediation, a middle school program advocating compassion, responsibility and social action, PEACE week at all schools, character education incorporated throughout the K-12 curriculum, buddy benches for sharing a moment with someone you don't know, and a newly created Task Force on multicultural inclusiveness and diversity. Our work as a district on these issues will never cease until every student succeeds.

What constitutes good teaching? How will you measure this? How will you support advanced teaching approaches?

Good teaching is when students are treated well, engaged, on task, and learning at high levels. In classrooms, I often see students collaborating, reading, writing, asking and answering questions, using technology, using some of our signature practices, such as CGI, Depth & Complexity Icons, and enjoying the learning process. Many aspects go into measuring good teaching. We have systems in place for administrators to observe and evaluate teachers. The Board of Education has indicators of student achievement included in our Priority Goals. We measure and compare results from year to year the percent of students who meet or exceed standards on state assessments, complete A-G UC/CSU college entrance requirements, take at least one AP course in high school, and are connected to the school through their involvement in academics, athletics, activities, and/or the arts. When I walk on campus, I can see the joy many of our students have in being there, connecting with adults and their peers, and being involved at deep levels. I want to help ensure that we work at this until all students are this connected.

The Board also supports interventions, summer school, and any suggestions that come to us that give students extra time and help when needed and/or desired. We've supported unique courses, such as Financial Literacy, and 17 Career Technical Education classes. This year, we have over 200 students getting community college credit for courses they are taking on the LAHS campus.

To support advanced teaching, I like to see our high-quality, evolving professional development program across the District. This year, over 20 math teachers went to Stanford and started a math collaborative with administrators to address secondary mathematics. We have teachers on special assignment for training and one-on-one and group coaching.

I see many similarities between teaching and being a doctor in that we want results, we collaborate with the best, we reach out when we have patients that have unique problems to find solutions, and we do whatever we can to help all of our patients be healthy, and happy so that they have purposeful lives. I liken this to the teaching profession.

What type of skills should students be learning for success in the 21st Century?

One of the most important skills a student should learn for success in the 21st Century is critical thinking. As technology changes and the job markets shift, LAUSD must stay current with providing students with marketable skills and knowledge that will help them be successful into the future. We do this by consistently evaluating our curriculum and adding (and subtracting) courses that will help prepare our students for the future. For example a few years ago we added a class at LAHS called Financial Literacy and World Markets. In addition we have built strong offerings with over 15 vocational/career classes including: Fire Science, Emergency Medical Technician, Engineering, Sports Medicine, and recently we added American Sign Language. We have also partnered with Cypress College to bring dual enrollment classes to our campus where students get college credit for taking these classes taught by a Cypress College Professor on our campus. One such dual enrollment class we now offer is on Cyber Security.

How might you improve the value of a high school diploma? what should the diploma reflect?

The diploma should reflect that students had the time of their lives, experienced rich and dynamic learning opportunities, discovered their unique talents, found things they are passionate about, learned to navigate the barrage of information available through technology, and that they have values that reflect being a good citizen in our democracy. Students should care about others and the world around them. They should want to volunteer and give back to others. They need to be critical thinkers who respect diversity and opposing opinions. They should also be strong, have a voice, and be prepared to go after their dreams. We need to prepare them not just for college but for career success by providing them with a broad pallet of educational opportunities.

In what areas would you like to expand curriculum? what sort of additional *technical training*, *apprenticeships* and *innovative programming* would you advance if given the opportunity?

I researched and recommended we add Financial Literacy and World Markets a couple years ago and think this is an important course for students to have before they graduate from high school. I am very excited about our new courses that are giving students college credit. Our collaboration with Cypress College will further enhance educational opportunities. These courses are a great addition to our Advanced Placement Program and offer another alternative for some of our students. These community college courses will help students know that they can be successful after high school and help them determine possible careers. We hired our own teachers for classes that used to only be offered through ROP, such as Engineering. These students are in extracurricular programs, such as Robotics, whereby local businesses are helping them build robots and compete throughout the country. We should expand mentorships wherever possible. When our students volunteer throughout our community and get to wear a white cord at graduation, they have gained far more than they have given. I have also been a guest speaker in a few classes. We should bring a diverse, balanced set of speakers to the classroom. I would also like students to see high-quality debates structured with good questions and good candidates/presenters to help them develop their own critical thinking abilities. Our students will be voting and contributing members of our society. We need to help them develop into caring people who are able to make good decisions. I would also like to tap into the wisdom and experience that is in the Leisure World community.

What role do you imagine technology playing in and outside the classroom in the future?

Technology is ever expanding, but it should not replace the connections students currently have with their peers, teachers, and other adults on campuses. Students should be able to use a variety of technological tools appropriate for whatever task is at hand, such as creating a video, writing and editing a paper, and researching, etc. However, the relationship between a teacher and a student is paramount to learning. We must partner with industry to understand what the next generation of technology will be so that we prepare our students for career success.



What strategies or plans would you advance to ensure the schools are properly funded?

California is funded 47 out of 50 compared to other states. We must advocate to our legislators for more funding for K-12 education. Despite this relatively low level of funding, we have a balanced budget and we established a long-term facilities fund a few years ago to help alleviate the current position we are in with the high school. We have been good stewards with the taxpayers money. We have budgets now that include a fund for economic uncertainties, annual maintenance, 10-year facility update, teaching supplies, materials, interventions, professional development, and technology. We took over two years to decide to put Measure G on the ballot. First, we completed two surveys with the community and completed a Master Facility Plan. Then, we analyzed our budgets in a new way so that we would never have to go out for a bond again. If the taxpayers pay to modernize our sites, the District should be able to maintain and improve these sites in the future. The board has supported this plan for all sites, and McGaugh just had their 10-year facility update last summer. We also support board members and others being involved with PTA, NAFIS, and advocacy at the state and national levels. For example, Meg Cutuli is involved at the State level, and last year, I went to Washington DC with Dr. Nien to advocate for the money we currently receive for our two military bases within our district boundaries. In addition, we have a very generous community that supports a range of programs within our district. We have the support of our strong foundation LAEF (Los Alamitos Education Foundation) of which my wife and I are charter members of the Leadership Circle. LAEF provides funding for many of our summer and after school programs. We also have our outstanding PTA groups, the PTA Council, and numerous booster clubs that support a plethora of activities that benefit students.

What principles drive your policies for safety in schools? What will you implement in our schools for our kids and staff to be safer?

I am a Reserve Deputy for the Orange County Sheriff's Department. I serve on the Search & Rescue team as well as serving as a Tactile Physician for the SWAT team. I have led the effort to create a standing safety committee and advocated adding as a distinct priority safety and security. I view safe schools as similar to fire safety. That is, by creating a redundant overlapping system of security and safety measures we will keep our students and staff safe. I divide safety into two broad categories - physical and non-physical measures. On the physical side we have done many things including but not limited to: Closing all campuses (LAHS is the only remaining open campus) and instituting visitor access systems, we hired an SRO for the High School, we installed shatterproof window films on all windows, we instituted a doors locked while students are in the classroom policy, added AEDs at all school sites, repainted numbers/letters on all buildings, doors and roof tops, etc. Non-physical security measures instituted include but are not limited to: See Something, Say Something tip line, we increased access to mental health counselors, we started violent intruder training at all school sites, we have robust anti-bullying programs district wide, we have a voluntary drug testing program, we have a canine drug detection program at the high school and middle schools, we breathalyze at all school dances etc. We have multiple student led organizations such as GWAM. We can never do enough. Our efforts are ongoing. I am proud that OC Sheriff Sandra Hutchens described our efforts as a model for other districts.

How will you support the mental health needs of students/faculty/staff?

This is very important to me and something we have worked hard on as a board. We have added mental health therapists. Part of our threat assessments include students being cleared by a mental health therapist before they can return to school. We have new technology software that alerts experts to signs of immediate danger, such as suicide or violence, around the clock. I care deeply for the well-being of our staff and support programs and ideas brought to us that help unite the staff. If staff members are well connected to each other and their administrators, they will reach out for help and others will notice when they need it. We have to support and model a culture that cares about everyone. Staff and student educational programs need to be added to address the needs of our current climate. Learning is inhibited if our students and staff do not feel safe, respected, and represented.

The importance of Art in the education of our children:

While many districts were cutting art programs during lean budget years, Los Alamitos Unified remained committed to arts education. We like to say we believe in the four As: Academics, Athletics, the Arts, and Activities. We are blessed to have a community that also believes that art education is a critical component to the education experience. This Board is unwavering in its support of our district wide arts programs.