

West Valley teachers angry

Choice for school board vacancy is criticized

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Maricopa County School Superintendent Shelli Boggs is facing criticism for her recent choice to fill a school board vacancy in the southwest Valley's Liberty Elementary School District.

On April 2, Boggs announced that she had selected Michael Todd, the Liberty Elementary School District Governing Board's former president, who resigned in September, out of frustration with the superintendent's handling of a school assault. Todd ran against one other candidate for a two-year seat on the board in November but lost with about 43% of the votes.

He was one of nine people who applied for the position, alongside the district's former communications director and another former board member. Todd applied for the vacancy several weeks after a community forum, where five applicants participated.

"Although I did not submit my name as an interested person for the position earlier, I have been asked by several people within the district to consider applying for an appointment," Todd wrote in an email to Boggs on March 24. He told Boggs that current board members are "quite new" and "are missing a lot of historical knowledge that will help them to make informed decisions," and said he brought "years of experience staffing and proceeding over public meetings."

Todd gave Boggs a list of achievements from his time on the board. They included “adopting a policy to prohibit boys from using girls’ bathrooms,” “passing a policy that restricted psychologists to only work in special education classes for evaluations and placement,” removing critical race theory, diversity, equity and inclusion and social and emotional learning “and instituting six pillars of character judgment,” “restricting school counselors from practicing mental or behavioral health services unless licensed” and with parent permission, instituting a “traditional discipline plan,” removing positive behavior interventions and support and restorative justice and “implementing a policy to prohibit political ideology in schools.”

Boggs, who took office in January, has previously said she was looking for school board applicants who “reject” diversity, equity and inclusion programs, which the Trump administration has been trying to eliminate in public schools.