



## Alum Rock school board needs a fresh start

LEYBA AND FREUDENBERGER ARE EXCELLENT CHOICES,  
WHILE MORALES, AT LEAST, IS A KNOWN QUANTITY

A school board's most important job is to hire a superintendent. Its next most important is to work constructively and cooperatively with the person hired.

The Alum Rock Union Elementary school board can't seem to do either right, based on a constant succession of superintendents and incessant infighting on the board. The turmoil continued last week when Superintendent Alfonso Anaya announced he'd retire next year. His exit, under pressure, will likely make it harder to find candidates willing to put themselves through Alum Rock's wringer.

Next month, voters will elect a majority on the five-member board. It's a great opportunity for a fresh start; we only wish there were three good candidates who could make that happen.

There aren't. But with some seasoning, one candidate, John Leyba, has the potential to become a new leader the district urgently needs.

At 25, Leyba has the confidence of youth, without the experience to have earned it. But the Dartmouth College grad is smart, he knows Alum Rock, and, most important in a district with weak financial controls, he knows finances.

Leyba is a financial analyst for Agilent Technologies and a native of Alum Rock. Friends and teachers coaxed him into running, and for the past year, he has attended school board meetings and immersed himself in the details of the district.

Leyba would be the only candidate with the confidence and talent to challenge Esau Herrera for the board presidency. Until Herrera, a domineering and divisive presence on the board, is pushed aside, there will be no stability.

Leyba is running for a two-year seat to fill the va-

cancy created by the resignation of Adriana Garza. Running against him are Darcy Green and Joe Fausto. Green, 22, also shows great promise. A graduate of Alum Rock and James Lick High, she has been politically active since a teenager and spent the last several years working for various local campaigns, which is why so many pols back her. But while polished for her age, she'd be over-

matched on this quarrelsome board. For now, we hope she pursues her commitment to Alum Rock and East Side in another way.

The choices are tougher among the four candidates running for two four-year seats. We favor Tanya Freudenberger, and, by default, Abelardo "Lalo" Morales.

A longtime community volunteer with grown children and an activist with the group PACT, Freudenberger was appointed to the board last spring to fill Garza's seat. She is now seeking a full term. She's a good listener with a big heart, someone whom parents can approach. She has energy and time. She'd be good on a superintendent search committee.

While Freudenberger is, at times, irrepressible, Morales has been tight-lipped and uncommunicative during his first term. Though he's a former principal in Alum Rock who understands the community, Morales has been a disappointment; he also became an obstinate opponent of Anaya.

But at least Morales is a known quantity. The same cannot be said for Andrew Lucero and Francisco Martinez, who did not respond to requests for interviews.

Vote enthusiastically for Leyba and Freudenberger. And to lower the odds of more surprises, choose Morales.



Leyba



Freudenberger



Morales