

Statement of **MELISSA BATEN CASWELL**, Candidate for  
**Governing Board Member, Palo Alto Unified School District**

**Occupation:** Community Volunteer, Parent, **Age: 42**  
Past President PTA Council, High-Technology Executive

**Education and Qualifications:**

I am an active volunteer with a strong commitment to education. I hold AB and MBA degrees from Dartmouth and spent fourteen years in executive positions in finance, marketing and strategy. This work honed my planning, teamwork and management skills. For the past six years, I have focused on providing volunteer leadership. As two-year President of the Palo Alto PTA Council, I oversaw seventeen school PTAs, attended nearly every Palo Alto Unified School District Board meeting and actively worked with PAUSD staff, families and community leaders to improve programs and communication. This has given me a deep understanding of our schools and the expertise needed to make a difference.

If elected, I will apply my business experience to help (1) create and share a clear vision for PAUSD's future, (2) set specific, measurable strategic goals, and (3) promote streamlined decision making. I will encourage a strong collaborative culture that encourages new ideas, shares best practices, and sustains a climate of inclusiveness and pride for all. I will use my financial background to assess trade-offs and ensure the highest standards of fiscal stewardship, clear communication of district spending, and regular measurement of the superintendent's objectives against the strategic plan. I will also draw upon both my professional and volunteer experiences to help the Board manage decision making and community involvement.

I want PAUSD to encourage all of our children to be curious and excited about learning for the rest of their lives. PAUSD has a distinguished history, but must plan well for a successful future. We must ensure that all PAUSD students graduate with the skills they will need to succeed in a changing world. We must provide a first rate educational environment and a commitment to reducing the achievement gap. At the same time, we must provide effective support programs to help students make good choices and handle stress.

All children enrolled in PAUSD deserve a top-quality education to develop their full academic and social potential. Working together, we can make this happen. (Please visit [www.melissabatencaswell.com](http://www.melissabatencaswell.com)).

Volunteer Service: PTA Council President; 5 Elected PTA Board offices  
Founding Board Member, Youth Community Service; Campaign Cabinet,  
Palo Alto Art Center Foundation; Parent Advisory Board, Downtown  
Children's Center Preschool; Girl Scout Leader; Two Mayoral Task Forces;  
Family Resources Ambassador; Leader of award-winning Hurricane  
Katrina relief program; Volunteer Coordinator, 2006 Black and White Ball,  
Parent Volunteer AYSO, CYSA, YMCA and Little League teams.