

# Jonathan Lifton

for Metuchen School Board



Thank you for your interest in my campaign for school board. I have lived in Metuchen for 11 years with my wife, Paula. The two eldest of our four young children are currently in grades 5 and 3. In addition to being personally “invested” in the Metuchen school system, my professional background, listed below, would be an important asset to the school board.

- **Owner of my own business employing unionized labor** – One of the biggest responsibilities of both the school board and administration is successfully working with its unionized labor force.
- **President of the New York Electrical Wholesalers Association and a member of its Negotiating Committee for the last 19 years** –One of the association’s major functions is to negotiate collective bargaining agreements between the electrical wholesaling industry and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local #3. I have been a part of six contract negotiations since 1990.
- **Chair of the Joint Labor-Management Grievance Committee** – This committee hears and adjudicates all disputes arising from interpretation of the union contract. I have been chairperson for five years.
- **Trustee of the Employees Security Fund of the Electrical Products Industries** – The Security Fund administers the pension and medical benefits for the electrical manufacturing and wholesaling industries in the New York metropolitan area. I have been an active trustee for nine years.

## Committed to Academic Excellence

- **One of the most important functions of a school district is preparing our students for college...and life** - Metuchen currently lags its peers in SAT scores, AP class enrollment, and four-year college enrollment. The success of our children in applying to colleges, as well as Metuchen’s reputation as a quality school district, relies on the improvement of these metrics.
- **Refocusing of District Goals on Excellence**- All levels of Administration should encourage students to take the most challenging coursework of which they are capable. All students should be challenged and no student should feel “warehoused” in an unstimulating class.
- **Robust HS Principal Search** – The principal of the high school is one of the most important educators in the district. We must have a nationwide, exhaustive search with active School Board participation throughout the process.
- **Improve our Kindergarten Program** – An expanded half-day program should be implemented. Full-day kindergarten should be a goal of the district, contingent on financial realities.

## Committed to Financial Responsibility

- **I am a strong advocate of voting “yes” on the school budget.** Our rising taxes are primarily a function of state mandates and employee contracts. These issues are unaffected by any vote on the school budget. A vote against the budget would be disastrous for the wellbeing of our students and would yield negligible savings for the taxpayer.
- **In these difficult economic times, the Metuchen School Board needs an experienced voice when dealing with collective bargaining.** Due to large state aid cuts and the poor economic climate, the school budget is under tremendous pressure. Over 80% of the school budget is used to pay employee salaries and benefits. The financial health of our schools and taxpayers requires more responsible collective bargaining agreements. The current teachers’ contract is expiring and negotiations are underway. I hope to bring my 19 years of collective bargaining experience to the process.