

We pick Farney, Gonzales

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Early voting commences Monday morning in the runoffs that emerged from the March 2 primary. The runoff election is April 13. The *Sun* recommends two candidates for posts of special importance to Williamson County voters. We'll try to keep it short and sweet.

Vying to win the Republican Party nomination to run against freshman District 52 Representative Diana Maldonado, a Democrat, in the fall, John Gordon narrowly defeated Larry Gonzales in a four-way primary race, but not by enough to avoid a runoff. Texas State Representative Maldonado, Mr. Gordon and Mr. Gonzales all live in Round Rock, but District 52 also covers the southern portion of Georgetown, as well as much of Southeast Williamson County and parts of North Austin.

John Gordon, a 63-year-old Round Rock engineer, has been active in politics in Williamson County since 1978, when he chaired the emergent county Republican Party and did a great job convincing thousands to abandon their Democratic Party affiliation and vote for Republicans at the national and local level. The result: a Williamson County slam dunk for GOP candidate Ronald Reagan and the first county Republican officials in decades. Since then Mr. Gordon has worked assiduously as a community organizer and activist. However, Mr. Gordon's style is aggressive to the max. His political style is to bluster, insult, bludgeon or sue. This will not fly in the Texas House of Representatives. It is hard to imagine Mr. Gordon working effectively in an arena where a spirit of compromise and finesse is essential to success.

Like Gordon, Larry Gonzales, 40, has immersed himself in politics for decades. He worked as chief of staff for two House members and on the staff of then-Lieutenant Governor Rick Perry and then-Attorney General John Cornyn. He owns a communications business in Round Rock but he loves public policy. He is a policy wonk who truly enjoys tearing into big difficult issues like the expected \$15 billion shortfall in the state's budget. He has a smooth personality and works well with others.

Mr. Gonzales is well prepared to serve as an effective member of the Texas House of Representatives. His personality is well suited to a legislative body where building coalitions is



Marsha Farney
SBOE District 10
seat candidate



Larry Gonzales
SH District 52
seat candidate

an essential part of the process. For Republicans voting in the April 13 runoff elections, he is the best choice.

Georgetown educator Marsha Farney, 51, is making a bid for the District 10 seat on the Texas State Board of Education. She is a conservative Republican whose life has been devoted to teaching in public schools, counseling in public schools, working to train teachers in public schools while she was working on her master's degree, teaching reading to children who were experiencing difficulties in school,

and earning her doctorate in curriculum and instruction at the University of Texas at Austin. Her three children have been educated in public schools. She believes in the public school system and hopes to use her experience in education to make it better.

Her opponent, patent attorney Brian Russell, of Austin, home-schools his five children and opposes all state involvement in home schooling. The general tenor and tone of his approach to public education is to weaken or destroy it. His most important supporter is Dallas attorney Cynthia Dunbar, who is stepping down from the District 10 seat and wants to see Mr. Russell as her replacement. Ms. Dunbar has written of the "inappropriateness of a state-created, taxpayer-supported school system."

Dr. Farney should be elected as representative of District 10 on the State Board of Education. Her deep experience as an educator, her solid commitment to the public school system and to family — "to the kids on the bus," as she puts it — and her common-sense approach make her an ideal person to represent the hopes and dreams of families, students and educators in District 10, a 16-county region stretching from Fort Bend to Austin to Gonzales. She would make a stellar contribution to Texas education. The *Sun* strongly endorses her effort.