

# Apparent tie reported in District 37 race



A friendly sign awaited voters who headed to Avoca School District 37's Marie Murphy School to cast ballots in Tuesday's local elections. Winnetka voters had two contested school district races to choose from; the Avoca contest or the Winnetka Public Schools District 36 board race. (Kathy Routliffe / Pioneer Press)

By **Kathy Routliffe**  
Pioneer Press

APRIL 4, 2017, 10:44 PM

**W**innetka voters who went to the polls Tuesday had two contested school board races from which to choose to cast their ballots. At least one of those races ended the night with a reported tie vote between two candidates.

Most village voters had to choose from a four-person field for three four-year seats on the Winnetka Public Schools District 36 board. Steve Cirulis, Scott Conine, and Nathaniel Roberts were endorsed by the Winnetka Caucus. John Griffin is running without caucus endorsement, but praised the group.

With all 12 precinct reporting, unofficial figures from the Cook County Clerk's office showed Roberts with 29.08 percent of the 1,442 votes reportedly cast; Cirulis tallied 28.46 percent of the vote and Conine had 22.49 percent

**Daywatch newsletter**  
Get top stories in your inbox

**SIGN UP >**

All four candidates said the board's plan to tackle student population imbalances at the district's elementary schools would be crucial in the future, as would a study of the physical condition of district schools. The candidates also all emphasized the importance of maintaining or increasing communication with parents and other district residents.

At the Winnetka Presbyterian Church on Willow Road, where three village precincts were set up, officials said the contested elections had not translated into heavy voter turnout.

"But we had a lot of write-ins and early voters," election judge Jim Harrington said.

Winnetka resident Brooke Wanzenberg said she was a regular voter, but was especially interested in the District 36 contest.

"I'm here based on that. I have four kids, and I'm a Crow Island parent," she said, referring to the District 36 elementary school with the highest student enrollment. "I think the whole district needs to be reevaluated."

Residents in District 37, which draws students from Wilmette as well as from Winnetka, Glenview and Northfield, were faced with at least one reported tie vote, casting the results into uncertainty.

With all seven precincts reporting, incumbent Rick Zelinsky of Northfield had 22.8 percent of the 801 votes cast; Gil Gibori, of Winnetka, had 21.68 percent, according to the Cook County Clerk's office.

Jamie Taylor of Winnetka and Dan Garbis of Wilmette both tallied 19.49 percent of the vote with the same number of votes, according to unofficial figures from the Cook County Clerk's office.

Wilmette resident Jun Yoshitani tallied 16.53 percent of the vote, according to the county's unofficial figures.

Garbis, Gibori, Taylor and Yoshitani were endorsed by the Avoca School District 37 caucus; Garbis, Gibori and Zelinsky ran a joint campaign.

All five candidates agreed that the district must decide the fate of Avoca Center, the former Avoca Central school, but divided on whether it should raze the building and keep the land, sell the land for residential development, or examine other options. They also concurred that the district and new board must better communicate with parents and other residents. The four shared concerns about maintaining or improving district education standards and about the district's recently completed strategic plan.

At Marie Murphy School in Wilmette, where election judges said turnout had been quiet, Wilmette resident Betty Moy said she was paying particular attention to the District 37 contest, in part because a neighbor was running for the board, she said, but also because she was concerned about Avoca Center.

"The ... .."

*Twitter: @pioneer\_kathy*

Copyright © 2017, Chicago Tribune

**Daywatch newsletter**  
Get top stories in your inbox

**SIGN UP >**