

To Fellow Residents of the Town of Haddam:

For those of you that don't know me, I'm Prem Aithal and I've been a resident of our town since 2010. I've been married to Becky (a kindergarten teacher @ Burr District Elementary) for 10 years and we have a seven-year-old daughter. I'd like to personally invite you to a public meeting on Monday, July 27th at Haddam-Killingworth High School where I will be among others nominated to fill the currently vacant position on our Board of Education.

Currently, I serve as the Vice Chair of our Economic Development Commission, and we (led by new market master and owner of Bittersweet Farm Kristy Benson) are bringing a vibrant Farmers Market back to the center of Higganum. The market runs weekly on Fridays at Haddam Elementary School from 3:30-6:30pm. In addition, I serve as an alternate on the Board of Finance. If I were fortunate enough to be voted to fill the vacant seat on the BOE, I will resign from my position on the Board of Finance to give the Board of Education the full attention it deserves, especially during this pandemic.

I have worked at Anthem, Inc. as a Finance Director for more than 15 years where I manage the Individual Segment (Affordable Care Act) in Financial Strategy. I do feel that my professional skills (and knowledge of a major cost driver in the budget) would translate well to this open position on the BOE, as my expertise is in long term strategic planning. While I'm a numbers guy, I'm adept at ensuring that both short term and long-term qualitative goals are met. This position would represent yet another new challenge for me, and as my father has always said to me, "personal growth never stops."

Given this pandemic, the safety of our kids, teachers, administrators, and parents is of the most importance. In addition, we will have to be extremely flexible as certain dynamics may cause educational strategies to shift on the drop of a dime. I believe my professional experience in the most constantly changing segment of the insurance industry and my strategic planning background will translate well in this role as things always change legislatively and regulatorily on moment's notice in my day job, causing us to have to pivot our strategy real-time. I'm not afraid of change and I enjoy proposing creative options, evaluating pros & cons, prioritizing, and helping make a firm decision based on the facts presented and some intuition.

Given the short-term concerns of the pandemic, it is quite easy to forget about the long-term strategic vision of our school district. Our district has had a great educational reputation for years and I not only want to maintain that reputation but also improve upon it. We must think creatively to meet and exceed the needs of our students to best set them up for success after they graduate and help give our educators the skills and resources to meet students' needs, all while being fiscally responsible.

I appreciate you reading my bio and if this sounds like someone you'd like to serve on the Board of Education, then please bring your mask, attend the Public Meeting on Monday, July 27th at Haddam-Killingworth High School and consider voting for me. Thank you!