



# VOTER EDUCATION GUIDE - Lowell City Council

CANDIDATE	Youth Violence	Homelessness	Young Parents	Dropout Recovery	Jobs	Youth/Police Relations	Police Cams	Come Back?
	<i>Crime is decreasing in Lowell due to many factors. If elected, what does the city need to do to keep the violent crime rates on the decline?</i>	<i>If elected, what ideas do you have to help address youth homelessness in Lowell – particularly when many youth are afraid to utilize existing resources that are all age?*</i>	<i>If you're elected, what are your ideas for how the City can better support young parents?*</i>	<i>In 2014 Lowell's dropout rate increased from 2.9 to 3.7%. What ideas do you have to create a new system for Lowell to recover youth who have already dropped out of school?</i>	<i>If elected, what idea do you have for a NEW UTEC social enterprise that can employ youth in Lowell to fulfill needs for jobs?</i>	<i>If elected, what role does the City of Lowell play in systemically bridging the gap between youth and police?</i>	<i>Do you support Lowell Police piloting body cameras on police officers?</i>	<i>If elected, would you agree to coming back to UTEC over the course of the next year, and participate in a youth dialogue?</i>
<b>David Conway</b>	When I was at Lowell High, we had what they call a safety task force, and that safety task force was put into place because of gang activity that was rampant throughout the entire city. I was on that committee, and it became extremely effective.	You better bring all partners in from the city. We're talking about hospitals, we're talking about the non-profits and the school, all working together collectively to see if we can solve this problem. First of all, to even identify the individual, that's the real key right there.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Rodney Elliott</b>	It's really important to provide jobs so that youth can get educated and gain life skills. I think we're going to need your help. A major driver of violent crimes is the current opioid abuse problem. We're losing 4 people a week, average, and that needs to stop.	Homelessness is a major problem in the city. I think it requires a social network, not just a youth organization but to get job training and housing. I think to address homelessness, it requires a long period of time with the right resources.	People make mistakes but that doesn't mean that they can't get back on track. I know that's one of the biggest [challenges] with other high school students or young adults – day care – how can I find someone to watch my child? I can't go back to school to get my GED and get a job, so this is a great idea.	We have to find how can we get them back in or back in with their GED – you can't go anywhere without a school education. I don't think we need to reinvent the wheel here. I think we just need to ramp up the efforts to make sure that number goes down	Café UTEC is a perfect opportunity of something that's sustainable which offers young people the chance to develop a skill and to take it to the next level.	We need to make sure our police force is being fair and reasonable and doing outreach to teens. Not every teen is a bad teen. If there's any profiling or any unfair treating of individuals, it's not right.	Yes	Yes
<b>Jordan Gys</b>	UTECH has developed a system of trust with some of the gang members which is something the city police department hasn't been able to do.	We need to focus on the youth-orientated shelter here in Lowell. Experience with homelessness may vary, especially with age, so most of the guys down at the LTLC are seasoned vets being homeless. A lot of young kids are going in; it's a shock.	I think you look at ways the city can partner with youth programs such as UTECH and YouthBuild, or colleges, community colleges - Middlesex, or UMass Lowell.	A solution to a lot of the city's problems, especially amongst our youth, is to increase partnerships and increase money flowing around youth programs like UTECH and YouthBuild.	College isn't for everyone although I can't stress how important education is. We need to equip young people with job skills and trades if they're not pursuing education.	Need to see top-down changes on how we approach. The criminal justice system is broken. There's a lack of resources. There should be a police liaison at every community event.	No	Yes
<b>Ed Kennedy</b>	In this city, what we've done over the past few years, is to add more police and just try to take a more vigilant approach towards crime. And crime is down in Lowell by 12% since last year, and hopefully we can keep it that way.	N/A	When my daughter was in school, there was a kid who sat in back of her that had a kid. That young girl was too young to have a kid. So I guess I think that sex education is a real good thing, and we should try to do that stuff to make sure that we're not having kids having kids before they're ready to do that.	I think that LHS should look at what its real mission is. Its mission is not that we have a few amount of people go onto Ivy league school or that 500 kids end up in college. What about everyone else?	Where you should really be looking are jobs that give you a skill and that allow you to get a license. Maybe start your own business, like construction.	In order for the police to get along better with young people they have to know you. They can't just know they can trust them, or that there's no concern about what they're doing.	No	Yes
<b>Jim Leary</b>	I think it's about the ability to be vigilant, but it's also giving people a sense of opportunity.	A lot of the actions from a council standpoint need to align with what the local nonprofits are doing as well as what the state's doing. But I think the bottom line comes down to, when a young person is finding work, we need jobs for people, because jobs are income.	The facts are the same: education. Without education you go nowhere. Daycare is essential. My child went to Little Sprouts. Parents had vouchers and we could do better there.	Not everyone fits into the 4 year high school. We could also think about a 5 year plan. It's not about how long it takes you to graduate or get your GED. The point is the resources to find out what people's needs are and to meet those needs.	If people are interested in plumbing or electricity, partnering with Greater Tech School or Adult Ed is a good idea. I'd look at the trades and build from there.	The police are trying, they just need the resources to do it. We need to give them the resources.	Yes (with terms)	Yes
<b>Rita Mercier</b>	Let's make sure that our youth are loved and we care about them. This is one place where UTECH is doing that. We need more UTECHs, I believe, but that is my opinion.	We have clinicians and they are working very hard with CTI, with different organizations to try to get homeless people a place to stay. I know firsthand how tough that is, and it's an issue that we do hear highly about.	It's not the city's responsibility but there's organizations like CTI who can help. Enough money should be coming in to help everybody, but that's tough.	We have alternative schools but we also have a program at the Sheriff's Department where we pay them to go in and take the test, we train them at their own pace.	Call people in the city who are elderly who don't have the where with all to hire a guy with a plow. They could call you and you could help shovel.	Police should return to play basketball in the parks with the youth so youth can know they're not the bad guys.	Yes	Yes

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THIS VOTER GUIDE WAS CREATED USING THE ANSWERS FROM CANDIDATES AT THE 2015 YOUTH-LED CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE FORUM HOSTED BY UTECH ON OCTOBER 29, 2015

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<b>Robert Merrill Jr.</b>	N/A	N/A	If I'm elected, what I'd like to do is work with these young parents and get them some kind of income. Since they had a kid at a young age, they should be able to raise it.	If they can't be in a formal class setting, I feel that [UTEC] would be the best alternative along with the workforce program leading them towards some kind of career and with more job training.	We should work with out of town companies and bring jobs here. Working with construction.	I would actually talk to the gang unit and get them to work closer with UTEC.	Yes	Yes
<b>Jim Millinazzo</b>	Part of the success, is UTEC and their open communication with Lowell Police and the Courts. It's about open lines of communication.	10% is staggering I would propose that we work with nonprofits on housing. I know Lowell House is in process to provide new beds in Merrimack St. area.	Again I think it's important to support young people and in city council we can support lots of social service type programs, but I would definitely support a program that has counseling and day care services.	We need to be able to develop alternative programs that reach out and give those students support and that might be from jobs that they need, financial support, and family support	I think you can work with any other nonprofit like CTI, Lowell Plan, and Youth Build as partners to build a strong employee field. UTEC in my opinion has a heck of a reputation getting results.	There has to be communication. We need to develop a policy that the police are available to youth. Have the youth and police come to public safety sub committee meeting.	Yes	Yes
<b>Vesna Nuon</b>	The reason the crime rate is going down is because of a program like UTEC, a streetworker program, Big Brother Big Sister - they have those programs for children to go to.	I would say that education in the community, education and partnerships with organizations such as UTEC, CBA, CTI, those programs provide you with shelter. I would support that.	We need to find partners with the city or CTI, CBA. A program that is like the UTEC program or day care program so they help these young parents that struggle.	What I'll do is support a program alternative to high school because the setting in the high school is not helping them study. It's about the environment that needs to help a student succeed.	I'm a customer of the mattress program. We need to expand that. In order to expand that we need to partner with the City.	Give training to all officers on the force in the academy. We have to have trust between police officers and youth.	Yes	Yes
<b>Bill Samaras</b>	We're going in the right direction thanks to organizations like this. We need to know why people go into gangs. They do it to get support they didn't have.	Especially in urban settings, we need to make sure we have beds for high school students, so we can also help get supports for their family. Or if they don't have a family, at least get them a square meal and so they can be safe.	What has to happen is two things. One, you have to help by giving their babies day care so they can go to school. But two, they also get training college.	We need to create a tracking system, find out why these kids are dropping out and then where are they going. We need to reach out to high school dropouts to get their GED and get into community college.	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes
<b>Pan So</b>	What I'm going to do is to fight and protect this from happening because crime starts with students from a young age. I think around grades 5-6, so we start something.	One thing I like to do is reach children at an early age, and we need to build strong partnerships with everyone.	The city needs to come up with a committee that looks at the issue that needs to be supported. The young parent becomes the answer. They need help and [we] need to assist them right away	Start from the early age of school. If I'm elected, I'll change the way they do it. We need to build a strong partnership with parents and the community. We need to find the root cause of why people drop out.	We need to connect UTEC youth with private companies and connect everybody together.	Set up a partnership between police and the community. Get together and figure out how to come up with a program where at an early age, students can have a relationship with police.	No	Yes
<b>Paul Ratha Yem</b>	Let's create a youth commission. You can work with the Youth Commission, and the Commission can make recommendations to change. Youth can help push for funding to increase reduction of youth violence.	We can provide matching - homeless families with another with a similar background. If you can imagine what they go through, and to get a place they call home and a warm meal.	We can work with the Youth Commission to make recommendations to change. You need to use your power to vote. I don't want to tell you what to do, I want you to tell us.	It should be a requirement that you attend a certain amount of hours back in high school. Education will allow us to work with students at-risk and allow them to compete in schools without risk of getting kicked out of high school – there needs to be a program like that.	I would like to see UTEC start their own company that does construction work. You have to be your own employer and CEO.	On certain patrols, youth could join to patrol the streets with police and the youth can see it from the police side and vice versa, the police went out on the streets with the youth.	Yes	Yes
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