



Questionnaire for candidates for the office of
Member, San Francisco Board of Education
General Election, November 6, 2012

*Please return this questionnaire electronically to contact_us@phdemclub.org no later than **Tuesday, September 4**, to confirm your speaking slot at the September 11 endorsement meeting.*

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Please write a brief response (≤150 words) to each question. We will make these questionnaires available to the public before the endorsement meeting.

1. Why are you running for office?

- **I am running for the San Francisco Board of Education because I want all children in San Francisco to be successful and I believe the main vehicle for that success is through SFUSD. We owe it to our children to provide the best learning experience possible and I know that I can build the rapport, consensus and garner the resources needed to do that more effectively. As a parent who has raised two children in the public school system, I know and understand that it takes hard work and dedication to ensure that our children receive a quality learning experience. Being a public school graduate myself and raising two children in the public school system, I have a personal connection and insight to what it takes to provide our students with the things they need in order to be successful within the public school system.**

2. What are your qualifications for this position? If you are an incumbent, describe your major accomplishments while in office.

- **I have had the opportunity to work with SFUSD in several capacities. As the School Readiness Coordinator and Director of the Potrero Hill Family Resource Center, I have created and implemented kindergarten transition programs at in elementary schools, I coordinated parent workshops (around SFUSD Enrollment, nutrition and parents rights and advocacy). I started the School Readiness Health Fair at Starr King (along with Principal Chris Rosenberg) and started the Peace Walk in the Potrero Hill Community with both Daniel Webster and Starr King Elementary schools. More recently I have coordinated, planned and managed tutorial, job and life skills training programs in high schools. I have a Masters in Public Administration and I have managed millions of dollars for the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, as well as for several nonprofit organizations.**

3. What are the top three challenges facing public education in San Francisco? If elected, what will you do to meet these challenges?

- **One of the biggest challenges facing the district is the continuing atrocious budget cuts at the state level. I would focus on garnering more resources from the federal government to educate our students. The federal government spends millions of dollars on workforce programs through the Department of Labor, Department of Transportation and the Environmental protection agency.**
- **Another challenge facing San Francisco schools is the achievement gap that affects so many of our Latino, Pacific Islander, English Language Learners, Children w/ Special Needs and African American children. In order to shrink/decrease the achievement gap, you have to increase hope and innovation. I would promote more college awareness and college connection programs in the schools—not just at the middle and high school level, but also at the preschool and elementary school level—so that students who do not receive this exposure at home, get it the moment they step into an SFUSD school.**
- **Another big challenge facing San Francisco schools is ensuring equity across schools so that all families feel comfortable with the choices they have in terms of where to send their schools. I would promote more immersion programs across the City, more bilingual programs across the City, more internships and vocational programs in schools across the City and more college connection and career exploration opportunities in schools across the City.**

4. What are your ideas for lessening the achievement gap between students of different backgrounds?

- **We need to provide students and teachers with the resources they need to make learning relevant to the environment around students so that they see the connection between how learning relate to their success. I would make sure that we brought in more vocational and construction training programs into the schools (these programs help students become interested in careers in engineering and architecture) and with the billions of dollars in development (Sewer System Improvement Project, CPMC, Lennar Shipyard Project), coming into San Francisco, students who go to college would also have an opportunity to obtain a living wage while going to school. Students who are not ready for college would also immediately have an opportunity at a living wage due to school work experience and vocation programs. I would also make sure that we instituted more tutorial programs in schools (morning and afternoon tutorials) along with accelerated English programs for English Learners at all levels.**

continued

5. What are your views on charter schools?

- **When Charter Schools take away resources from traditional schools (as they often do) they actually undermine our school system and SFUSD suffers due to the fact that resources are given to Charter Schools and due to the fact that students and families are forced to choose between the two; that puts Charter Schools in direct competition with SFUSD's traditional school system. Rather than provide the space for Charter Schools and the funding that goes along with it, we should be using these resources to increase the opportunities for our traditional public school system. We could hire more teachers and paras so that we could make inclusion practices more successful, we could be putting more resources towards physical education and arts programs. Charter Schools can help, when all opportunities for a student is exhausted and the resources for Charter Schools are obtained by private funding and dollars that are not used to fund SFUSD schools.**

6. What further improvements would you make to the current school assignment system, in particular with regards to access to neighborhood schools?

- **I think the SFUSD Student Assignment System could be better. It is hard to have the perfect combination of school choice by neighborhood and academic offerings so that parents feel comfortable about their neighborhood schools. As someone raised by a single mother in the public school system, I believe in neighborhood and community schools. However, I also believe that schools in each neighborhood need to provide the same level of quality education so that families have equitable options in all communities. We need more**

Immersion programs, arts programs, physical ed. programs (at all levels) and incredible after school programs in all communities. Once we provide quality options in all communities, the Student Assignment System will be more efficient and accepted. My focus will be on garnering the resources to provide this equity across the district so that families will have several choices.

7. How would you address the problem of truancy?

- In order to address truancy I would work on strategies that provide an opportunity for families and students to learn about the affects of truancy at an early age. I would work to incorporate a system where assistance is provided to families and students that address any issues at home or that may be a root cause of truancy. I would work to increase the number of buses (school and Muni) that run to various school communities during morning and after school hours, so that transportation is not a barrier to school attendance. Addressing the root causes of truancy would be a focus on mine. I would work with City departments and community based organizations to provide wrap around services that address the root causes of truancy. Once we decrease the reasons behind truancy, we can effectively provide solutions and create an atmosphere that motivates students and families about learning and decrease truancy.**

8. Do you support or oppose the following Propositions on the November ballot? Please give your reason (≤50 words) for each position.

Proposition 30 support oppose

Reason: I support Prop 30 because I think that we truly need a tax measure on the November 6 ballot to ensure that more resources go towards funding public education and to ensure that schools do not have to endure anymore budget cuts for the future. Prop 30 will direct more resources towards the funding of public education and only requests higher taxes for individuals and families with means.

Proposition 31 support oppose

Reason: I support Prop 31 mainly because it establishes a two-year budget cycle, which I think allows for more consistency and provides for a better sense of organizational security for organizations that provided services for the state and it caps spending without equal matching revenues or reductions.

Proposition 32 support oppose

Reason: I oppose Prop 32 because it unfairly targets unions and hampers the ability for workers to be able to have a true voice in the political process. It also unfairly allows corporate entities an advantage as through “Corporate Personhood”, Super PACs and

other policies corporations will still have the opportunity to dump tons of cash into campaigns.

Thank you for your time, and your commitment to the children of San Francisco. We look forward to seeing you on September 11th.