



**Candidate questionnaire for  
San Francisco Board of Education  
General Election, November 4, 2014**

Please return this questionnaire electronically to [contact\\_us@phdemclub.org](mailto:contact_us@phdemclub.org) **no later than Saturday, August 30**. Candidates who do not return the questionnaire by the due date will not be invited to participate in the September 9th forum. Questionnaires will be made available to our members online.

Candidate name: Hydra Mendoza, Incumbent

Contact person: Enrique Pearce/Ramneek Saini, Campaign managers

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Please write a brief response ( $\leq 200$  words) to each question.

**1. Please describe your qualifications for this office.** I have been a tireless advocate for our public schools as a parent, former Director of Parents for Public Schools, volunteer Co-Chair of our School Site Council and PTA executive team and as an education advisor to two mayors. Having both my husband and I graduated from SFUSD and raising two children educated through our public schools I have personally benefited from the expertise and experience our teachers, staff and administrators bring to our schools and therefore have a different appreciation and perspective for the important role each plays in the greater narrative of our district. I have

spent the last eight years working to make improvements not only in the classroom, but also in the boardroom. I feel my balanced nature and ability to listen and learn has helped bring people together and work toward common goals so we can focus on good policy instead of politics and personal attacks. I have successfully served on the school board for the last eight years and was elected by my peers to serve as both President and Vice-President of the board. I have chaired key policy committees including Budget, Curriculum, Rules and Buildings and Grounds.

**2. What are the top three issues facing SFUSD, and what will you do about those issues?**

1. Inadequate funding. I will continue to advocate for additional funds locally, statewide and at the federal level as well as raise private dollars to free up general fund dollars. I am the only board member who has actively raised significant outside dollars. 2. Preparing our students for career and college. I think we need to invest in the entire PreK-12 system and invest early to see better outcomes later. I will continue to increase PreK and TK classrooms, invest in our middle schools and create better opportunities for our youth including internships and jobs. Over the last three years, I have helped create, implement and grow the Summer Jobs+ Initiative with SFUSD, public partners, private investors and community based organizations to impact over 18,000 young people 3. Negative perceptions of our schools. I will continue to build stronger relationships with parents, business, higher education, residents and community. I have built strong public-private partnerships over the years that have resulted in greater investments, pride and trust in our district. I have personally sent my kids to less desirable schools and helped to make great improvements in the schools, which resulted in increased investments and higher achievement for those schools.

**3. Please tell us about one teacher who had a significant influence on your life.**

The one teacher who had a significant influence on my life came much later than expected. After having my first child, I decided to take classes at City College mostly to help me as a new parent. The most challenging and first class I took was a Child's Brain Development class taught by Nina Mogar. Nina was one of the most passionate, brilliant and enthusiastic teachers I have ever had in my life. She made learning about young children exciting and engaging while deeply engaging you in understanding the nurture and nature concepts of teaching. She also taught me about the obligation we have to our young people and the expectation they had of us to create a safe and engaging learning environment for them to grow and thrive. I ended up taking many more classes with Nina and earned more than enough early education credits to teach preschool. My intention was to take a couple of classes to help me as a parent and it lead to a teaching career and ultimately a deep interest and commitment to public service as an elected to the San Francisco Board of Education and as an advisor on education to two mayors.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to public service. We look forward to seeing you at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House on September 9<sup>th</sup>.