



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

Please return this questionnaire electronically to 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: Shamann Walton

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Please write a brief response (≤ 200 words) to each question.

1. Please describe your qualifications for this office.

I've spent my entire adult life working with students, families, teachers, and public school personnel on creating and supporting programs within public schools that ensure all students have the opportunity to learn and be successful. As a former educator, I understand the obstacles and challenges parents face ensuring their child gets a high-quality education. As a parent, I understand and identify with concerns and issues facing parents. As someone who has been providing quality programming in SFUSD for years, I understand what methods work best to address the issues facing SFUSD schools.

I've worked with elementary schools to provide universal access to screenings for children ages 3 months – 5 years to identify developmental delays pre-kindergarten. I've worked on kindergarten transition programs and secured funding for regular classroom teachers to provide instruction over the summer for incoming students. I've managed school truancy prevention programs and assisted in increasing student attendance.

Currently I am the Executive Director of Young Community Developers, a workforce development agency in Bayview Hunters Point, where I work to provide high quality tutoring and job training to SFUSD students. I have a Bachelors in Political Science from Morris Brown College and a Masters in Public Administration from SFSU.

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

- We must develop real solutions to close the achievement gap that are innovative strategies and implement evidence-based practices. We need to provide teachers with the support/resources they need to be inventive (e.g., provide more practical learning experiences, accelerated language programs, immersion programs, arts programs, and tools to assist in the learning process). We also need school-day (not just after-school) programming for students who have not shown increases in graduation rates over the past 10 years.
- Fight for quality schools in every San Francisco neighborhood and community. I'll work to ensure every area in San Francisco has quality schools with quality program offerings. I'll push for equitable options in AP course, immersion programs, credit recovery and career/college exposure in each community.
- Ensure increased funding opportunities (Prop 30 and LCFF) are utilized on strategies that get resources directly into the classroom. I'll focus on funding for more teachers/para-professionals in order to decrease classroom sizes and for programs that increase access to higher education/career opportunities. It's crucial we bring in professional development and establish school-to-career pipeline options, especially drawing on the technology and innovation growth in our city. We need to integrate real-world learning into each subject area, such as internship/vocational programs.

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

The teacher who had the most influence in my life is my 8th Grade History teacher Mr. Henley. He was dedicated to making sure that we all learned and he used innovative strategies to keep us striving and working hard. He allowed for group conversations and dialogue in class, in class debates, and he made sure we all felt comfortable with sharing. He also rewarded us for hard work and good grades, and would buy us pizza every quarter if we made the Honor Roll (even during my next school year when I wasn't in his class). He is still teaching to this day and he is part of the reason why I taught for a few years. He understood the struggles of young black males from similar backgrounds and he focused our learning on strategies that dealt with behavioral issues in order to keep us in the classroom. He would make us write lines (not just sentences, but paragraphs and they always included work that we were doing in class). He would build a relationship with all parents, even in Jr. High School, and they all knew that he cared about their children. Teachers like Mr. Henley work hard to support student success.

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 9th.