



**Candidate questionnaire for
San Francisco City College Board of Trustees
General Election, November 3, 2015**

Please return this questionnaire electronically to contact_us@phdemclub.org **no later than Thursday, July 30th**. Candidates who do not return the questionnaire by the due date will not be invited to participate in the August 4th forum. Questionnaires will be made available to our members online.

Candidate name: Wendy Aragon
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Please write a brief response (≤ 200 words) to each question.

1. Please describe your qualifications for this office.

I have broad leadership experience working with the diverse communities of San Francisco, elected officials, community leaders and city agencies. I currently serve as President of the Richmond District Democratic Club and Chair of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Citizens Advisory Committee. I have been in public service in the Bay Area for over 20 years and have been put in this position of leadership because of my ability to help move processes forward. In my profession as a Construction Consultant working with Department of Building Inspection and a number of other stakeholders, I help parties form consensus on a daily basis. My profession also helps me to thoughtfully understand infrastructure, work with complicated budgets, and manage projects to deliver above standard end-results.

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

- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Voters have time and time again put funds toward supporting City College. I want to ensure that voter approved bonds are used as intended for technology, campus and classroom maintenance, hiring adequate levels of faculty and classified staff and student support services. The Prop A parcel tax dollars passed in 2012 were meant to go towards these issues. Instead, the Special Trustee used that money to give administrators a 29% raise. That's not the way money should be spent.
- **Restore Accreditation, Morale and Integrity:** CCSF has served hundreds of thousands of

students for almost 80 years without sanction and with excellent academic quality. The institution touches 1 in 3 San Franciscans, accreditation has to be restored and protect students from being displaced by closure. But we must also work to overcome the divisiveness that has kept the college split into factions that refuse to come together.

- Clear Pathways to Jobs: I want to strengthen our capacity to sustain employment partners. This includes our nursing, fire science, culinary, fashion, construction management and trades programs. I also want to develop and strengthen new employment pathways such as taxi driver training and Tech SF. Business has to be a good neighbor, I want to help cultivate a win win for the business community and for students. We need to make sure that our community campuses are not only able to stay open, but are also reevaluated for how we can best keep classrooms filled, such as designating them as areas of study, for an example, a vocational campus, a professional development campus, and so on.

3. What specifically do you propose to enable City College to remain accredited?

I want to tackle more creative ways to boost enrollment like helping to recruit experts in vocational fields to develop curriculums that will bring in more students. I think that we also need to start looking at state-sanctioned “push out” policies and how they not only contribute to City College’s low enrollment, but it’s operations in general. We are currently in a vicious cycle where we enroll students, then mount them with immediate debt, put them on a payment cycle that they can’t possibly finish by the end of the semester, then drop them from classes because of past due status. This results in low enrollment which leads to the cancelling of classes, which then results in laying off faculty and staff. A college can’t function that way. Enrollment not only one of the requirements that we have not been able to sustain during the accreditation process, it is the lifeblood of City College and we are hemorrhaging, both in our numbers and our morale.

4. What will you bring to the table that's not already there?

All of the candidates have a community college experience story, but I feel mine is incredibly unique because it is a familiar story of so many CCSF students. I am also the only candidate who has the experience of working within a community college infrastructure prior to my time as a candidate. I was inspired to run for this office last year after spending the last three and a half years actively working with the Save City College Coalition. I joined the coalition because of my own experiences as a community college student at De Anza College in Cupertino, CA. I entered De Anza as a D to F student. My poor grades along with my status as a low income, first generation college student, qualified me for services such EOPS. I was diagnosed with three learning disabilities and given the assistance and tools that I needed to turn my grades into A’s and B’s. I served in student government which included holding a student seat on the faculty senate and working with my Assemblymember to advocated for community colleges. Having that experience would bring a unique perspective to the Board that benefits students and community alike.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to public service. We look forward to seeing you at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House on August 4th.

Executive Committee, Potrero Hill democratic Club