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San Francisco Parent Action Questions for SFUSD School Board Candidates 2022

Ann Hsu (*Addendum/Revised*)

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree

Thriving and Equitable Public Schools	Level of Agreement
1. I support the <i>SF Parent Coalition Parent Priorities Platform</i>. A focus on equity and excellence going hand-in-hand, improving student outcomes in our district, regaining trust and rebuilding community morale, improving the fiscal health of SFUSD, and overall good governance should be the top priorities of the School Board going into 2022-23.	4
2. QUALITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS: San Francisco should not have two tiers of education quality. We need to hold all SFUSD schools accountable to high-quality instruction and related supports for students. The Board of Education has responsibility for the success of all students attending San Francisco public schools.	4
3. TRANSPARENCY: I support increased transparency of school performance that enables San Francisco to evaluate and improve the quality of our public schools, starting with a public dashboard that shares math and reading assessment data at the school level to be shared publicly, updated at least twice a year.	4
4. LITERACY: I believe in the urgency of improving literacy outcomes for all student demographic populations at SFUSD. I commit to supporting staff's literacy improvement plan and recommendations, and making the necessary changes to our literacy curricula, tools, and instruction methods that will follow an evidence- and standards-based core literacy curriculum.	4
5. GOVERNANCE: An effective School Board follows the lead of and supports the superintendent and staff, letting them be the experts and making recommendations for the direction of the district.	4
6. BUDGET HEALTH: I commit to governing in accordance with nationally-established best financial practices. District leadership should be held accountable for presenting their budget in a clear, student-centered way at public board meetings that allows parents, community members, and board members alike to understand and engage. As a board member I will demand this level of transparency from district staff and follow their lead, supporting their recommendations.	4

Open-Ended:

1. **Optional: Expand on any of your responses to the statements above.**

I wholeheartedly agree with ALL of the statements above because they are common sense asks of any school district and school board member. It is ridiculous that these statements even need to be made, which shows how far off track our past school board has strayed from common sense and service to our public school constituents. These statements should represent the default standard for anyone who seeks to be on the school board.

2. **What are your priorities in terms of fixing SFUSD's budget deficit, and how would those priorities impact students, families, and our schools?**

While most people look for more revenue sources to solve our budget deficit problem, I will ask for us to look at our costs and expenses FIRST. We must examine where we are spending our money, whether those expenses are getting the expected student outcome focused results, whether they are in line with other well-run school districts in the state or nation, and whether they are leveraging new technology, research and innovative ideas to make us more efficient and effective. We should not always look to the federal, state or city governments or philanthropic organizations to "bail us out." We need to be self sufficient and live within our means, like any company or family should do with their own budgets. I will not ask for more money until we know that we are spending the money we already have effectively and efficiently!

Making sure that we spend effectively and efficiently does not equate to cutting services that impact our students, families and schools. On the contrary, streamlining our operations will focus our efforts on our priorities which are students, families and schools. We need to cut wasteful spending and redirect those resources to the needed places.

3. **What should SFUSD do to increase enrollment and to attract more students and families to San Francisco Unified School District?**

In the business world where I come from, this question equates to how do we get more customers for our product. The answer is simple: improve our product, then market it better. Of course, that's easier said than done. I believe the first step we (SFUSD) need to do is to improve our product. That means we need to improve our schools in terms of better curriculum, higher academic standards, more and more stable teachers, and

SFPARENTS

better support for teachers so they can focus on teaching rather than doing social work.

Once we make these improvements to our “product,” word-of-mouth will spread naturally within the parent communities, helping us attract families. Then, we can do better marketing of our product by actively reaching out to three groups of parents in San Francisco: those with children in private or parochial schools, those with elementary school age students in SFUSD but are considering leaving the district for better middle and high schools, and those with kids not yet of school age and considering whether to enroll in SFUSD. The message should be specific improvements we have made and are making to improve schools along with tangible quantifiable results.

In addition to reaching out to current parents, we should also reach out to SFUSD alumni, their parents and those who don't have children but who care about public education because they believe in excellent public schools being a key component of a vibrant community.

4. What are your top three concerns on the current state of the district and what do you plan to do as a commissioner to address those concerns?

My first concern is the quality and breadth of programs in our high schools. Restoring and upholding academic excellence should happen at all high schools, not just at Lowell. AP, gifted and honors classes should be made available to all students who seek them in all high schools. Also, we need to expand our Career Tech Education (CTE) program in both quality and quantity so that more students can explore options in addition to college after high school. I can and have already started to leverage my experience, contacts and credibility in the business community to support our CTE program.

My second concern is our K-3 education. We MUST give our students a solid foundation in reading and math so that they can succeed later in life, not just in school. I don't personally have experience or expertise in this area but will support efforts that can make tangible improvements.

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My third concern is our spending habits and lack of accountability. It's NOT OK to just make ourselves feel good doing all these things to support students, especially those in underserved communities. We MUST *measure* the results of our efforts.

I will advocate for examining every one of our programs, first by making sure that they are supporting student outcomes rather than padding adults' pockets; then advocate for having metrics to measure their success, then for stopping programs that are not showing results after a reasonable period of time, and redirecting those resources to programs that *are* working.

5. How can SFUSD increase academic outcomes for the most marginalized students? How can SFUSD challenge and create learning opportunities for higher achieving students?

First and foremost, SFUSD must commit to providing high quality education to every single child. Due to historical inequities, many students in marginalized communities face extra challenges that create obstacles to their learning. We must recognize the inequities and work to mitigate the harms that stem from them. We must also broaden our resources, including enhancing core curriculum and supporting our teachers so that we can ensure all students succeed.

Additionally, SFUSD needs to work better with community organizations to take care of students' needs outside of school hours so that teachers can focus on teaching inside of school hours. We can do this through having more community schools. We can also learn from charter schools that are doing better than us in this aspect.

For higher achieving students, we need to create more challenging curriculum so that we don't kill their curiosity and thirst for learning by boring them to death. That means more AP and honors classes, not less. That also means more opportunities to connect with real world learning such as through our CTE programs. Academically advanced students should also be encouraged to do more extracurricular activities so that they can become well rounded members of society outside of school.

6. What was your position on the school board recall of February 2022, and why?

I fully and actively supported the school board recall in February 2022 because I saw during my involvement as Chair of SFUSD's Citizen's Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC) and as President of my sons' Galileo High School Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), that those three board members were

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ignoring all sorts of issues with our school district while spending time and energy on performative theatrics meant solely to serve their own political agenda and ambitions. I co-founded and led the Chinese/API Voter Outreach Taskforce that focused on registering Asian voters in San Francisco to recall the three school board members. We were successful in getting 11% more Asian voters to vote FOR recall than the average voter population.

7. What are some specific ways that you will work with the SFUSD parent community and invite their participation/feedback as a board member?

I have learned that the proper role of a school board member is not management one level up, but community one level down. That means we the board members should represent the values, needs, and desires of our communities. As a parent of children in SFUSD, I especially want to hear the values, needs and desires of our parent community. That means listening to parent groups like SF Parents Coalition, Families for San Francisco and Parents for Public Schools, as well as reaching out to parents who are not organized and who may be too busy or linguistically challenged to participate fully in their children's education.

Being an immigrant myself, I am keenly aware of the challenges facing immigrant parents, many of whom do not understand, agree with, or care about "politically correct" policies of the school district. They just want their children to get a good education so that their children's lives can be better than their own in this country. I want to hear from these parents and understand their wants and needs. I will try to reach these parents through community based organizations that support them.

I also want to reach out to private school parents to learn what it may take to attract them to or back to SFUSD.