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Questions for November 2026 SFUSD School Board Candidates
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1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree

<i>Excellent and Equitable Public Schools</i>	<i>Level of Agreement</i>
<p>1. I SUPPORT the SF Parents Parent Priorities: A focus on equity and excellence going hand-in-hand, improving student outcomes in our district, building 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 2026-27.</p>	4
<p>2. DISTRICT TRANSPARENCY: I support increased transparency of school performance that enables San Francisco to evaluate and improve the quality of our public schools. This should include a public dashboard that shares math and reading assessment data at the school level, updated at least twice a year.</p>	4
<p>3. LITERACY AND MATH: I believe in the urgency of improving student outcomes in literacy and math at SFUSD. I commit to ensuring that SFUSD continues to implement and fully support a comprehensive plan, and makes the necessary adjustments to curricula, tools, and instructional methods that follow an evidence- and standards-based approach.</p>	4
<p>4. EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE: An effective School Board centers on 1) supporting the superintendent and cabinet to ensure student-focused leadership, 2) setting a clear, shared vision, and 3) defining goals rather than managing day-to-day operations or unnecessary interference in implementation or policy execution.</p>	4
<p>5. BUDGET HEALTH: I commit to governing in accordance with nationally-established best financial practice. I will hold District leadership accountable for presenting the budget clearly. When fixing our budget deficit, I support SF Parents' call for minimizing negative impacts to our most vulnerable students while ensuring a baseline of excellence across all schools.</p>	4

1. Optional: Expand on any of your responses to the statements above, in 250 words or fewer.

I want to expand briefly on Statements 4 and 5. The SOFG governance frame and the GFOA budget framework are tightly connected in practice.

The SOFG manual is right that the Board should not run day-to-day operations. The Board represents community values through goals, guardrails, and accessible tracking. The Superintendent runs the work. But oversight of the work is still governance. When the Board commissions an audit, requires public milestones, and acts on findings through budget and policy, it is not crossing into staff work. It is doing the part of SOFG that prevents goals from becoming paper.

The same logic applies to GFOA. Smarter School Spending says budget choices should follow instructional priorities — literacy, math, special education, retention. That requires the Board to know, in public, what each major budget category is producing for students and measure those outcomes. A peer-district audit of central administration is not the Board running the audit from the dais. It is the Board commissioning a governance instrument: defining the question, requesting the supporting facts, and deciding what to do with them.

What I will not do: Pretend SOFG forbids this kind of oversight. The current Board has built useful progress-monitoring habits around literacy and math. The next step is the same discipline applied to operations: implementation plans, deadlines, public dashboards, and variance reports when things slip. Families deserve to know whether Board decisions actually became real.

2. *Why are you running for the Board of Education, and why now? Within your response, please describe:*

- ***Your connection to SFUSD students and families***
- ***The leadership experience that prepares you to govern a public education system***
- ***Your views on both academic excellence and equity in education***

I am running because my two children enter SFUSD this fall. I want them — and every child — in the strongest schools we can build.

A) Connection. My family has lived in the Mission since 2007; SF since 2000. I was born in Hayward to two immigrant parents from Poland. Our kids start SFUSD this fall. I will be a public-school parent through 2040. I am not a longtime SFUSD organizer. I am a parent whose stake here is just starting. I adopted the UESF picket line at César Chávez Elementary; I visited the educators there on two of the four

strike days. My family supported the educators there.

B) Leadership. I hold a Cambridge Physics PhD. Twenty years leading analytics, operations, and finance teams. As acting CFO at HelloFresh, I led the turnaround. Profit went from negative \$33M to positive \$9M in one year. At Royal Caribbean, I led a vendor cleanup that saved roughly \$72M across two programs. That is the work I do. I find where systems leak money and time. I build the plan. I track the fix.

C) Excellence and equity. These are not opposites. They are the same promise. Students farthest from grade level need clear paths and strong supports. Students ready for advanced work need access without barriers. A district that delivers both has a baseline of excellence everywhere.

3. Why do you want the SF Parents endorsement? How will you uplift the voices of parents across SFUSD as a Board of Education decisionmaker?

I want SFPA's backing because SFPA built the most parent-led process in this race. Blind scoring. Parent-written questions. Open talks to reach the same view. That is how endorsements should work. It is also how the Board should treat parent input. Not as decor. As real signal.

On lifting parent voices: the Statement 2 dashboard is part of it. The bigger part is the build. I would push for a public outreach plan tied to Board votes. In many languages for accessibility. Notice times families can plan around. I would push for a "you said, district did" loop so parents see what their input changed.

One more thing. SFPA does not have to pick one strength on the November ballot - but the collection of strengths for a stronger Board. Phil Kim has given the Board a steady hand. SFPA backed him for June 2026. Alida Fisher has kept special education and family voice on the Board's agenda. She pushed back in public on cuts to teacher-pipeline programs. She sits on the Ad Hoc Committee on Public Engagement.

What I add is operator skill. The skill to turn a budget problem into a clear plan and tracked outcome. Phil's steady hand, Alida's focus, and my operator skills are three tools. I am running to add to the existing Board, not work against it.

4. What's your perspective on the teacher strike that happened in February, including what could have been handled differently by 1) SFUSD leadership, 2) Board of Education, and 3) the Teacher's Union? What can the School Board do to promote a more collaborative relationship between the teacher's union and the district going forward?

Four school days mattered. They hit working families with no childcare options the hardest. They hit kids whose meals and care come from school.

The strike was the event seen by the public. The deeper fault: families were left to wing it.

SFUSD lead. I will not make this personal. Wayne stepped down in October 2024. Maria Su stepped in days later. She became permanent in November 2025. A district in repair needs systems, not heroics. Families got bargaining and budget news too late.

The Board. The Board should have treated the strike as the latest sign of a system that had failed families. EmpowerSF grew from \$9.5M to over \$40M and still failed to pay teachers. The October 2024 thirteen-school closure list was another warning — shelved when the public pushed back. The Student Success Fund lag was a third — \$26M set aside for 2024-25, only \$1M spent by September 2024. Real oversight would have called for plans long before a strike.

The Union. I focus on missing build, not blame. There was no joint district-union-family info loop. Families had no clear timelines.

Going forward. Adopt a Board rule: a joint district-union-family comms protocol. It kicks in 30 days before any strike vote. Staff runs it. The Board sets and tracks.

5. What does effective Board governance look like in practice? In your response, describe how you would:

- ***Work with the Superintendent while maintaining appropriate oversight***
- ***Ensure Board decisions are followed through on, without overstepping into staff work***

Good Board work is not passive. The Board sets goals and guardrails (and kill-switches). It tracks progress and holds staff to account before a guardrail is hit. It adopts the budget. It rates the Superintendent. It asks for public proof that votes become real. Staff runs the work. Both halves of that line need to hold for SOFG to work.

Working with the Superintendent while keeping oversight. Start with what works. The Board's monthly Goal 1 and Goal 2 reviews on math and reading are the right SOFG habit. Goals set. Data reviewed. Adult moves tied to student outcomes. I would lean into that pace. I would add the same for ops: regular public review of major rollout marks, with reports when timelines slip.

What I would avoid: public ambush of the Superintendent, surprise votes that skip the public, and Board-by-press-release moves. Splits belong in committee, not soundbites.

Follow-through without overreach. The central-office audit fits here. The Board calls for the audit and acts on what it finds. Staff does the work. That is just what SOFG calls Board oversight.

Two recent cases. The Strong Schools vote from November 2025 set clearer rules on closure than the October 2024 try. The zone-based plan, now pushed to 2028-29, shows what happens when the Board lets staff slip.

6. Board decisions often face strong public criticism. How would you respond if a decision you supported was met with significant pushback from: 1) families? 2) teachers? What would you say, and what would you do next?

Public criticism is not a fail of Board work. Ignoring it is. The job is to hear the pushback. Test if it shows missing facts or unequal hit. Then revise the vote or explain it more clearly.

Pushback from families. I would thank them and address what they see at their school. I would put the data behind the vote into plain words. Make it ready in many tongues. Many SFUSD families do not have English as a first tongue. To explain a Board vote only in dense English is itself a snub. We have the tools.

Next: meet fast. Share the data. Name the trade-offs. Show what can still shift. If pushback shows facts the Board did not weigh, I would call for a revisit. If the proof still backs the vote, I would track how it lands in public.

Pushback from teachers. Teachers know first when a rule fails in class. I would want to hear if the vote is doable with the staff, time, and support we promised. If conditions do not match the rule, fix the conditions or fix the rule.

Work through the Superintendent and the union — not around them.

What I will not do: brush off families as emotional or teachers as resistant. Or drop a needed vote because it is hard. The rule is the same: hear, test, decide, track, adjust, land.

7. Does the district need to close schools, and if so, why? To what extent should community input, equity, and enrollment demand shape these processes and final decisions?

Maybe. Enrollment is dropping. Some mergers may be needed. Schools are core to

a block. A closure cannot be top-down. The Board sets the rules — then holds staff to them.

I pledge a three-rule closure test.

First: public data, 90 days. No closure vote until data has been public for 90 days. Data must include enrollment, space, dollar impact, equity impact, and student outcomes. The reason for each named site must be in plain words.

Second: a real shift plan, 180 days. Schools taking in students must show staff, special-ed space, transport, language-program flow, and after-school care. In writing. With named owners.

Third: School Site Council consent. The community closest to the vote needs a real say. If the SSC says no, the Board goes back to the data.

Public voice is the process check. Equity is the impact check. The October 2024 thirteen-school closure list hit Asian American, Chinese American, Black, Pacific Islander, Latino, and immigrant families hardest. Shift planning was thin. Enrollment trend is the base — closures should track long patterns, not one bad year.

What I will not do: Surprise lists. Data-light votes. Balancing the budget on families least able to absorb the hit. Closures are not the first lever. The audit, enrollment work, and state LCFF push come first.

Closure rigor is not a closure veto. It is what makes the call last.

8. What are the biggest challenges and opportunities you see with the district's current student assignment ("lottery") system?

The current system fails on both sides. Not stable for families. Not fair for students. Travel times, late notices, waitlist churn make planning hard.

Challenges.

First, delay. Policy 5101.2, the zone-based plan, was adopted in December 2020 on a 6-1 vote. Rollout has been pushed back over and over. The latest push, in May 2026, sets April 2027 as the goal for 2028-29. Almost a decade between vote and reality. Each pushed-back year is one more class of kids in a plan the Board voted to swap out.

Second, the CTIP1 tiebreaker. It was a fair equity proxy in its day. Tied to street address, it is easy to game.

Opportunities.

First: launch the plan the Board already passed. Public timeline. Marks to hit. Stop the slips. Fund the modeling if it is not done.

Second: swap CTIP1 for a household-level LCFF tiebreaker. Low income. English learner. Foster youth. Unhoused. IEP. Same factors LCFF uses, tied to the household. Equity stays. Gaming gets harder.

Third: keep language-immersion across the city. Mandarin. Spanish. Cantonese. Korean. Filipino at Bessie Carmichael and Longfellow.

Fourth: one round of choice. Plain guides in Chinese, Spanish, Filipino. Public charts on top-choice rates and equity by group.

On charters: default no, burden of proof on each ask. SFUSD has to fix choice and access first.

What I will not do: Accept one more delay.

9. SFUSD is facing structural budget challenges, including declining enrollment, rising costs, and pressure on reserves. What do you see as the root causes of this situation, and how should the Board respond within its governance role?

The root causes are layered. One-time COVID dollars — over \$330M for SFUSD — have run out. LCFF tracks enrollment (and absentee rates), enrollment has dropped. Costs have risen with Bay Area life costs. Ops faults let cash leak before classrooms. EmpowerSF grew from \$9.5M to over \$40M (with no kill switch) and still failed to pay teachers. The Board adopted \$113M in cuts for 2025-26. Another \$59M is planned for 2026-27 — including 85 teaching jobs. Total gap: about \$172M.

The Board's role has three levers.

The audit. A 90-day peer-district audit is the core. The BLA found in January 2023 that SFUSD spends 83% more on central-office work than twelve California peers. UESF's Restructure It Right named the same gap. Done well, the audit could free \$40-60M each year.

More students back. Each student kept is about \$13K in LCFF. Better choice. Faster Prop G rollout. Real SpEd care. These drive the win.

State LCFF push. The formula does not match Bay Area costs. Push with CFT for a regional add-on is years of work.

Reserves, three rules in order. Hold the state floor — drop below and the state takes over. Hold the payroll safety net. Reserves for one-time costs only.

What I will not do: Fund top-tier pay from the audit alone. The audit anchors a four-year pay plan. The audit is the funding source. Not the kids.

10. The Board's 2014 decision to change 8th grade algebra policy did not produce the intended results, and the current Board's recent revisions have drawn mixed reactions from teachers and families. What does this case reveal about how the San Francisco Board of Education should handle decisions around academic policy? If elected, what specific, measurable actions would you take to: 1) expand access to advanced coursework, and 2) improve outcomes for historically underserved students?

The lesson. The 2014 call had a fair equity reason. Fear that early tracking widened gaps. Kids with private tutors pulled ahead. Kids without were left behind. The outcome did not match the goal. The right move: stick to the proof base. Watch group results. Adjust when the data does not back the theory.

Recent moves are the right path. The February 2024 vote to bring it back. The pilot in roughly ten schools across 2024-25 and 2025-26. The March 2026 rollout. The Board now must hold to the same proof bar.

(1) Expanding advanced coursework access.

Share enrollment and pass rates for Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra II. By school. By group: race, ethnicity, EL, IEP, FRL. Twice a year.

Set placement three ways: test, teacher input, family choice. Cuts the chance gatekeeping replaces tracking.

Track sixth-to-eighth grade math readiness. Help reaches kids before Algebra 1.

(2) Improving outcomes for historically underserved students.

Tutoring and summer bridge at schools where pilot data shows the biggest gaps.

Counselor input on course choice. Eighth-grade Algebra leads to AP-level math.

A by-group support report each year. The Board reviews whether results close or widen.

What I will not do: Claim a win the day a vote passes. Lower the bar for underserved kids. Ignore data that shows a rule is not working.