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San Francisco Parent Action
www.sfparentaction.org

Questions for SFUSD School Board Candidates 2024

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

<i>Excellent and Equitable Public Schools</i>	<i>Level of Agreement</i>
1. I SUPPORT the SF Parent Coalition Parent Priorities Platform . 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 2024-25.	4
3. 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.	4
4. LITERACY AND MATH: I believe in the urgency of improving student outcomes in literacy and math at SFUSD. I commit to ensuring that SFUSD adopts a comprehensive and fully funded plan , and makes the necessary changes to our curricula, tools, and instruction methods that will follow an evidence- and standards-based instructional approach.	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.	3
6. BUDGET HEALTH: I commit to governing in accordance with nationally-established best financial practices . 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.	4

OPEN-ENDED: (all responses should be 250 words or fewer)

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

For #2, 3 and 4, I would like to add some additional thoughts. In terms of Transparency through measurements, it is important to establish a balanced scorecard for the school district at the consolidated level and then cascade it

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down to each individual school. The balanced scorecard should have metrics that are customer-focused, financial, process-oriented, and people-focused – a comprehensive set of metrics that are set with tangible and intangible targets for the fiscal year. In terms of the curriculum, it is important to emphasize literacy and math, but what about the other core subjects of science, history, civics, etc.? It would be good to assess the entire curriculum for elementary, middle, and high school to better understand the gaps and where to improve. Finally, in terms of governance, it is critical that all stakeholders are involved in improving our schools: families/students, communities, teachers, schools, the superintendent/staff, and the Board. The customers of the school system are the families/students, communities/taxpayers, and the teachers/school staff/principals. It needs to be a collaborative approach built from a bottoms-up perspective first.

2) Why are you running for the Board of Education? Within this response, please describe a) your connection to SFUSD students and families, and b) a description of your leadership style, experience, and/or training.

I want to do for public schools, what public schools have done for me. I feel incredibly lucky and fortunate that I had a great experience in public schools early in my life. It allowed me the opportunity to attend some of the best universities and to subsequently earn two bachelors, two masters and a doctorate degree. It allowed me to work for Fortune 100 companies and lead organizations as CEO. None of this would have been possible without the encouragement and support of public-school teachers. It is this critical foundation in those early years that allowed me to excel in my career and life. I feel so lucky that I had these positive experiences, but I do not want our children to depend on luck. Our children should have what I had, supportive schools and teachers, which can expose them to all the possibilities and give them the confidence to grow into their best selves. I know what a good public-school experience should be, and we can bring that to our school system here in SF.

I am not a politician. I am a mom, and a parent and a taxpayer in SF. I have over 35 years of experience in solving problems collaboratively and I know how to get things done. This is what I do every day at work. I am not running to build a political career; I am a CEO and lead a successful health care company here in SF. I am doing this because I want to give back to our community and use all the things that I have learned in my 35 years of work experience. I believe that we can be effective together and that the SFUSD Board needs someone like me. Because I am not from the educational system, I can bring an outside voice, best practices from the business world like fiscal responsibility and operational excellence as well as different perspectives to challenge the norm and find unique solutions to our problems. I will bring a collaborative approach to problem-solving that starts with working with our customers; our families/students, teachers, and schools.

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3) Do you support the superintendent's [plan](#) to fix SFUSD's budget deficit, including but not limited to classroom consolidations and school closures?

I have attended the cycle two resource allocation meetings, the SFUSD Board meetings and I have also visited several schools to hear about their needs/challenges. Based on the information from these meetings and discussions, The budget deficit is a very serious situation and in the business world, this would be a crisis in need of a turnaround ASAP. The problem and solution are complex and closing schools may be a short-term fix that can have longer-term detrimental impacts. School closures can lead to more families leaving the public school system and larger class sizes may hinder learning. Teachers I have spoken to and classes that I have sat in on, are large. We will need to look at all options to optimize the class size and the number of schools. I think the approach that we can take is to examine both the top-line, revenue growth component of the budget and figure out how to increase enrollment or to increase the rate/allocation from the state/city or both. Then, we can examine the expenses and determine what is controllable versus non-controllable. By looking at the financials and understanding the drivers and levers of revenues and costs, we can determine the operational changes that are necessary to bring the budget back in line.

4) How can SFUSD increase academic [outcomes](#) for the most underserved students and close the racially predictable achievement gap?

I believe that excellence and equity can co-exist together in our public school system; it should not be a trade-off. We should raise the bar on all schools and for every student. This can be done by taking the time to better understand the needs of each of our 126 schools in the district and to spend time with the parents and families and schools to learn about their needs. Students learn differently and our communities are diverse and have diverse needs. We should understand them and incorporate as much of these learnings into our curriculum as well as teaching methods and approaches. We do not need to compromise excellence or equity; both can be achieved if we collaborate with our communities and schools to deliver on both.

5) How can SFUSD challenge and create learning opportunities for higher achieving students?

We need to ensure that all students, including higher achieving ones, receive tailored educational experiences that meet their unique needs. SFUSD can accomplish this by implementing a multifaceted approach, which includes differentiated instruction, acceleration programs like AP and IB, enrichment opportunities such as competitions and clubs, specialized tracks like Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), and ongoing professional development for teachers. Additionally, integrating STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) programs into these strategies can further enhance the educational experience for higher achieving students, providing them with opportunities to delve deeper into their interests and prepare for success in STEM fields. By offering

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flexible learning paths and fostering a culture of academic excellence across all disciplines, SFUSD can empower higher achieving students to thrive and reach their full potential, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and dynamic educational environment for all.

6) What should SFUSD do to increase enrollment and to attract more students and families to the San Francisco Unified School District, at elementary, middle, and/or high school entry points?

We would need to better understand what parents/students need and are looking for from schools whether it be strong curriculum, proximity to their home, special focus areas like the arts or sports, cultural affinity, etc. We would also need to better understand the market or competition for schools, i.e., what other options do parents/students have aside from SF public schools? By knowing these factors, we can develop a strategy on how to increase enrollment by either attracting families/students away from the competition or by bringing families back to SF and SF public schools. We will also need to analyze the “customer journey” or student journey from elementary to middle to high school and understand where they enter and exit through the process. By understanding this customer journey, we can determine how to “interrupt” them at the key decision points with the right content so that they choose SF public schools.

7) What do you think of SFUSD's lottery system of enrollment?

I understand the reasons behind the lottery system to try and provide better access and equity to all families/students in our district. However, the system is complicated and cumbersome and may not be achieving its intended outcomes. Given that some time has passed since its implementation, I believe that we can do an assessment to determine if there are improvements to be made with this approach.

8) How did you vote on Prop G (8th Grade Algebra) and why? What are the top three areas to focus on in math currently to improve math outcomes for kids at SFUSD?

I support Prop G and bringing Algebra to eighth grade. Bringing back core subjects of math, science, history, civics, languages etc. is important. We need to have these foundational core subjects back in our curriculum as early as possible. Having lived and worked in six of the seven continents, I have seen other schools in other countries and their curriculums and proficiency standards are oftentimes stronger than ours. It would be good to look at these examples outside of the U.S. to better understand their pros/cons. We can also look within the U.S. for best practices. Eighth grade algebra is just the start; we can look comprehensively to ensure that our students are armed with the best education to compete in the global job market.

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

I understand the circumstances around the recall. As a CEO and board member

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for many companies, I understand the responsibilities of each and the accountability of each to their customers/stakeholders. The school board is responsible for hiring and giving oversight to the superintendent (or CEO of the school district) and his/her staff. The school board is also responsible and accountable for the oversight of the strategic and operational performance of the school district (the company). Boards are responsible for approving business plans and budgets for the fiscal year. If the CEO or board is ineffective at the above, then action needs to be taken.

10) Who will you look to as your trusted sources of feedback, information, and advice as you make decisions as a BOE Commissioner? In what ways will you engage with and solicit feedback from community members?

I am willing to work with anyone or any group that is committed to progress for our school district. We have several key stakeholders in our school district and all of them are important. As a BOE Commissioner and as a Board, we should partner with families/students, the community, teachers/educators, the school superintendent and staff, the government agencies at the city and state level as well as our community partners and organizations. It is important to engage all stakeholders early in the process to understand their needs and to hear about the opportunities that they see so that they can be incorporated in our solutions moving forward.