

Oakland Unified School District Board of Education
 Candidate Questionnaire, Policies and Issues

Section 1: For each of the following statements, please rank your level of agreement on the following scale:

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

At the conclusion of this section, you will have a total of 250 words to expand upon any of your responses. This exercise will help our network better understand your positions on a wide range of issues.

Statement	Level of Agreement (Rank from 1-4)
Quality Public Schools	
I support the #SchoolAfterCOVID Family Demands . Family voices, especially those historically marginalized, should be centered and part of the decision-making process as they have become experts on what it takes to get distance learning right and they have the most at stake. We must follow their lead.	4
District and charter schools can both be part of a successful community of schools in Oakland , but there needs to be equity between systems and fairness in how we hold schools accountable to serving students. The Board of Education has responsibility for the success of all students attending Oakland public schools.	4
I support a system for evaluating the quality of our public schools, both district and charter, that is primarily based on their results for students based on qualitative and quantitative measures such as the School Performance Analysis (SPA) , and the School Quality Review Rubric .	3
Research shows that four key resources have a dramatic impact on student achievement (grade-appropriate assignments, strong instruction, deep engagement in what they're learning, and teachers who hold high expectations). As a board member, it would be my primary focus to expand access to these four resources to students who have been historically denied access.	4

I support the articulated vision of our current superintendent, Kyla Johnson-Tramell.	3
Statement	Level of Agreement (Rank from 1-4)
Financial Sustainability	
I commit to governing and voting in accordance with nationally established best financial practices, including those in the Smarter School Spending Framework put forward by the Government Finance Officers Association, and adopted in Board Resolution 18-0127 .	4
I would give more funding to support students most likely to have suffered significant learning loss due to COVID school closures, in excess of Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) supplemental and concentration grants.	3
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 use GO's Sunshine budget Presentation Rubric . You can find a sample rating here .	4
To increase state education funding, I support Proposition 15 on the November 2020 ballot, also known as Schools and Communities First, and believe that Proposition 13 should be modified to tax commercial and industrial property owners at their properties' current market rates.	4

Section 1 Response (OPTIONAL): In 250 words or fewer (in total, not 250 per statement), expand on any of your responses to the statements above. You might use this section to add nuance to one of your positions or to provide additional context on your opinions. You may address as many statements from the above section as you would like, so long as your response falls within the 250-word limit.

Section 2: Please answer each of the following questions in 250 words or fewer.

Quality of Public Schools

Review the [#SchoolAfterCOVID findings](#) about family and student experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and extended school closures. As a board member overseeing the district's recovery, what would your top 2-3 priorities in this area be?

As a district leader, my top three priorities will include:

- Ensuring policies that prioritize student/family access and safety during COVID. I will continue to develop strategies for families to drive decision making, so that the Board is in service to our children.
- Establish policies that mandate effective and consistent distance learning, including more instructional time and small group instruction for every child.
- Mandate student-centered solutions that accelerate student learning, including effective formal & weekly assessments, social emotional support and on-going technical support for both teachers and families.
- As a school board member, I am committed to supporting the superintendent to move the district forward, ensuring the district is financially sound and maintain stability during the impending fiscal crisis' ahead.

Review the [vision and goals](#) the district is currently using to determine the future of Oakland public schools in order to increase quality and be fiscally solvent. To what extent do you support this criteria? What would you change and/or prioritize?

I agree that OUSD must reconsider how funding is allocated. OUSD must alter the way, it spends finances for Oakland's students. As a result, the solution is properly implemented within the OUSD Blueprint for Quality Schools Plan. As challenging as school closure decisions are, our district can't afford to operate school sites where low enrollment is not fiscally sound, nor the community schools our children need. I believe we must prioritize improving school quality, by expanding quality school options for all students. Student achievement is my main priority. As a board member, I will ensure our board produces an effective pathway towards student achievement, by eliminating all financial constraints that oppress student-centered solutions. Ultimately, my long-term vision is to attract families back to district 3 and help stabilize OUSD finances.

Financial Sustainability

In your view, what are the most significant drivers of OUSD's current financial crisis? As a board member, what would you do to mitigate these issues? (250-word limit)

In my opinion, OUSD's financial reality derives from rising cost, fiscal mismanagement and flat revenues that cause various budget cuts towards program, schools and existing staff members.

Mitigation ideas

- 1. As a board member, I will focus my efforts on identifying strategic ways to receive additional state funding and changes to the state funding formula as well. Ensuring OUSD downsizes its facilities, supports the creation of quality schools*
2. Work across district and charter lines, so students and families will combat rising costs faced by our district.
3. Help redesign the SELPA to create more revenue for both OUSD and charters lines
4. Better services for all Special Education students in Oakland
5. Partner the community, utilize data to improve and employ innovation and communication.

What in your experience and background prepares you for overseeing the OUSD budget of over \$500M per year? What steps are you willing to take, if elected, to build your own capacity (and the Board's collective capacity) to provide good stewardship and oversight for OUSD's budget? (250-word limit)

As an Executive Director of a non-profit organization, I have financially sustained a community organization that served Oakland and surrounding Bay Area students with very creative and diverse streams of funding. Oakland tends to be over-saturated with non-profit organizations, making grant-writing and funding opportunities extremely competitive. I have first-hand knowledge on how to distribute, create and delegate finances. For three years and six months, I have established and mastered how to create timely and accurate financial reporting, while operating a local youth agency. As a board member, I will develop a coherent strategy that will build charter partnerships, community support and state advocacy to make all the pieces interconnect. Also, I will embrace financial reform, by building a credible case that money is being spent on students and teachers as much as possible.

We know that millions in cuts need to be made in the coming school years to prevent OUSD from being taken over by the state of California. What criteria will you use to determine whether staff is recommending the right cuts, and how do you see the

difference between the responsibility of district staff and the Board of Education? (250-word limit)

As a board leader, I will utilize several criteria, including enrollment trends, staff-assigned performance ratings, and length of service. Also, we should utilize measures of education effectiveness, among other criteria, to maximize resources and decision-making in schools. The Board of Education establishes rules and policies for the governance of the school district. Also, the school board approves a planning process to include stakeholders in developing a comprehensive plan for student achievement. The responsibility of district staff is to interpret the needs of the school system and to operate the schools under the board's policies.

Leadership and Candidacy

What are 1-2 barriers for positive impact of the current board and how would you plan to address those as a board member? (150-word limit)

The current board is facing the barrier of the community expressing trust issues, the vision of an unstable financial future for the school district based on economic and political climate and unbalanced representation that reflects the entire community due to gentrification.

As a new board member, I would create more opportunity for open forums that involve the voices of students and parents. Where meetings and informational sessions could be brought directly to families by Board members attending and having a stronger presence at community events not just to discuss policies that are being established by the Board but to actually discuss the ideas of parents and students and what they envision for their educational needs.

As a school board member, how do you plan to engage your community and rebuild trust, especially when making high-stake decisions? (250-word limit)

As a former West Oakland field community organizer, I have built strong connections with community and grassroots leaders. I am firm believer in the "power of maintaining and create relationships." Honestly, relationship building has always been my lifeline, especially when it comes to cultivating successful partnerships. As a director, I have a strong network of colleagues and community leaders, who will actively support my board efforts; to build unity and transparently between charter and district lines. As a board member, I will establish a strong model of collaboration that builds confidence across the community that everyone is working to do what's best for our students and families. Also, I will continue to leverage my leadership, by ensuring residents that our district will honor our historic legacy and excellence. As a board member, I will restore District 3's academic excellence and bring resources back to our underserved schools.

What have you done to lay a foundation for a successful candidacy? Speak specifically to fundraising, campaign staff, field preparation, campaign infrastructure, and key endorsements. (150-word limit, do not count key endorsements against your word limit)

I have a field consultant and a communication consultant, and a strong fundraising campaign underway that is assisting with outreach to voters and school partnerships as well. In terms of endorsements, I am awaiting to become endorsed by Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA) and Families in Action for Quality Education. Also, I have been endorsed by former Oakland School Board Director, Jumoke Hinton.

What will your ballot designation be, and why? (50-word limit)

Oakland School Board Director, District 3 - because I am proud to be an authentic, 3rd generation West Oakland voice for the school board. As a result, I have invested the majority of educational career towards District 3 schools and various community organizations.