



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)
Qualify 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 .	2
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	4

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.	
I support the articulated vision of our current superintendent, Kyla Johnson-Tramell.	4
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.	4
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.

I am concerned that at this point, all our previous notions about evaluating schools have been tainted and dominated by the “No Child Left Behind” standardized testing régimes, which have minimized learning to rudimentary steps, and mechanistic routines as opposed to tailoring and personalizing teaching and learning to the needs of the student, and not the political objectives of Sacramento and Washington bureaucrats.

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?

The #SchoolAfterCOVID findings are the most complete and thorough presentation on the topic that has been presented. It is local, it is diverse and inclusive. I totally support and commend the findings and the quality of the content. I would base any decision and action on the findings of the report which can be used to build and create many programs and activates to serve the most vulnerable and furthest from benefit of the mainstream in OUSD. It is an exemplary document that took an intentional and determined approach to be inclusive of all marginalized people regardless of social status and respectful of communities of color, immigrants, newcomers and English learners.

My top priorities will be to expand and include the voice and presence of historically ignored, overlooked or marginalized communities. **Secondly**, I will commit to constant monitoring and advocacy to improve the hiring of female, male, non- binary teachers of color to achieve proportional representation by ethnicity, gender and cultures present in OUSD. **Thirdly**, I believe we must launch a complete review of the curriculum and assessment practices in the district that are failing our students and improve the participation and presence of teachers of color in the production of content, curriculum and pedagogy to reflect the students’ experiences, cultural and historical connections in the topic matter.

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 these criteria? What would you change and/or prioritize?

The vision and goals are worthy and universal. Beautifully stated and are inspirational, but as usual, the issue is how to best implement, and operationalize the vision, and the mission. How do we translate words into action, and eliminate the historical frustration in OUSD of failing to achieve the stated goals? To correct this constant and deep practice of over promising and always under achieving is to demand transparency and implementation of the best academic practices. Not the best

institutionalized, teacher-proof, one size fits all practices, but the highest quality standards based on proven practices of human, and child development.

I will demand accountability to see the implementation of full spectrum curriculum and holistic teaching practices. I will expect a report on citizen, or resident participation, of ethnic, cultural and language diverse people with a cross section of community interest groups, community-based organizations, local business and ethnic chambers of commerce. Finally I will pursue with a vengeance to have the budget and the financial business of the District reflect our true financial status and projections for the future in regards to our obligations, assets and liabilities.

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 view the cause and beginning of the whole financial crisis was revealed by the Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) when they reported after a lengthy investigation that "The inability of the governing board to hold accountable administrators that have been allowed to overspend budgets and override board Policy." A totally damning and indefensible verdict. When elected I and others, guided by vision and mission, not personal agendas, will take control over every aspect of the budget to confront poor financial management and behaviors in central office and on the board.

I look forward to altering the method of budget building and management to one of long term financial planning and investment. I would connect our school district mission and vision to a strategic vision plan that is guided and informed by objective data and results. For too long we have perpetuated obsolete procedures, inferior programs, and ineffective upper management personnel and theories that have resulted in poor academic opportunities and inexcusable academic failure for too many poor, ethnic and racial students of color, and language different minorities. No amount of new technology and personnel changes will compensate for a lack of oversight and accountability which I will commit to provide on the first day on the job. Taking control of the budget and the Districts treasury is our first priority.

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)

My familiarity with budgeting and financial planning has come from years of practical and hands-on experience of having been a school administrator, principal and manager in charge of the budget management and budget planning in high schools, elementary schools and children centers. Building a

budget and financial planning has never been a one person act. It has taken the inclusion and cooperation with all stakeholders in the school and in the community. The difficulty of the budget is not the size or the amount of the numbers, or grade level. The challenge is how to best make investments and expenditures that support academic achievement, teacher professional development, and school site equity.

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 School Board member and children's advocate I don't recognize barriers, or ultimatums until they are tested. Cut backs for me are the final consequence of a prolonged study and investigation of all possible alternatives and actions that can be taken. Schools are the corner stones and center of life in every neighborhood in Oakland and the nation. It is the responsibility of every board member to seek alternatives and consider creative and perhaps novel options to avoid reductions and cutbacks. If conditions are such that cutbacks cannot be avoided then the Board must cut from the furthest reaches of students, classroom and school personnel, in the presence of the public and with the participation of families, community leaders and employee groups. The ultimate decision, yes, falls on the individual elected policy makers, but it is not a decision to be made alone.

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)

- #1. The OUSD school board passed a resolution to support and honor equity and opportunity as a guiding principle to make decisions and policy. It is important to operationalize that pledge, that promise, as stated in the equity resolution to measure and gauge the topics and issues that have the greatest impact and importance to our diverse racial, ethnic and language groups.
- #2. The School board must direct the Human Development office to seek, create and implement an OUSD "Teacher Corp" program that creates and produces our own community based, locally sourced teachers. The Board must by decree, resolution or executive order empower HR to build an OUSD credentialing program with the support of our local community colleges and universities to ensure a diverse representative and proportional teaching force that looks like and represents our students is essential to affirming equity in our teacher workforce and administrative structures.

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)

My life's experience as an educator has taught me to put children first and cultivate the parent, family and community voice to accomplish all school-related objectives and resolve challenges. Parent involvement must include recognition of diverse identity, aspirations and home languages present at every school site and neighborhood in D5. Building trust comes from any factor but the strongest is by providing and creating conditions for academic achievement and opportunity for learning. I am in constant contact with my supporters and the public through social media, online debates, conferences and meetings. I meet daily with my constituency in small groups and one-on-one and weekly in large group community meetings with neighbors, associates and the campaign team to promote the campaign and our platform.

My years of experience representing D5 at the Community Police Advisory Board (CPAB) and as a member of CDBG for D5 have allowed me to continue to nurture my relationship with my community and maintain that trust. These experiences have encouraged me to run for elected office to better represent the people and needs of D5 and as their School Board Director, I will continue to transparently advocate for them. D5 OUSD families will know where I stand at all times, especially regarding difficult decisions because I will maintain open communication with them. My door will always be open and I strongly encourage the community to let me know their concerns. I want to hear from them – together is how we will come to the best solutions.

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)

The foundation for my candidacy began when I was approached by parents and members of the community who asked me to consider a run for school board. They felt that it was time for a strong and natural leader to hold this position – a veteran teacher, experienced administrator and lifelong educator who has worked with children and students even when I was a student myself. My campaign staff is made up of two consultants and together we have developed a strong framework that has allowed for fundraising and is actively conducting voter outreach via virtual meetings and phone calls. While we most likely will not be knocking on doors, we are diligently working to find alternatives that will result in the opportunity to connect with all D5 voters, including mailers and literature drops delivered by campaign volunteers who have been provided PPE.

I have been endorsed by District 5 City Councilmember Noel Gallo, current D5 School Board Director, Roseanne Torres, my friend and ally Mayor Libby Schaaf as well as many parents and former students who I taught throughout the city as well as various other leaders within the community.

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

Former Educator/Administrator. I am a lifelong advocate for equity and educational justice and am running for School Board Director to assure quality academic achievement for all students. I have been

a progressive, bilingual, multicultural classroom teacher; an early childhood supervisor; and Principal in elementary, middle and high schools throughout Oakland.