



Name: **Tony Thurmond**

Registered Party Affiliation: **Democratic**

City of Residence: **Richmond, CA**

1. I am running for office because -

I am passionate about improving public schools because it was my public school education that prepared me for my 20-year career as a social worker, and inspired me to serve on the West Contra Costa Unified School District Board, the Richmond City Council, and now in the CA State Assembly, where I've made education policy my top priority. I believe that it's time to make our public education system in California among the greatest in the nation, and I have a plan to take us there. Read more about my plan here:

[tonythurmond.com/tonys-plan](http://tonythurmond.com/tonys-plan).

2. Previous experience that led to my decision to run -

I have more than 12 years of education experience. I have run after-school programs and taught life skills and career training. I have served as an elected local school board member. Improving our education system and keeping kids in school and out of the criminal justice system was one of my top priorities as an Assemblymember. In the Assembly, I fought for money to ensure all California youth in foster care can receive grants to go to college. I increased funding for early education programs. I've coauthored and voted for laws to increase accountability for charter schools and ban for-profit charter schools. I passed legislation to provide \$35 million to school districts across California to reduce chronic absenteeism, expand community school, and facilitate restorative justice programs, and I'm fighting to provide even more money for preschool and afterschool programs by taxing private prisons. I'm working to reduce our statewide teacher shortage by providing teacher housing and other incentives to attract and retain more teachers. As Chair of the Assembly Select Committee on STEM Education, I'm advocating to expedite efforts in California to expand computer science training, including my bill to invest \$200 million in STEM programs. No other candidate is better equipped to lead our public education system.

3. I consider myself: **A. Pro-Choice**      B. Pro Life



# THE RESISTANCE

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4. I consider myself: **A. Pro-Union** B. Right to Work

5. I plan to do the following to promote gender equality in Sacramento -

Advancing gender equity and reproductive justice is crucial to ensuring all students in California receive a quality education. As Superintendent of Public Instruction, I will advocate for the services and policies that expand reproductive freedom and related health services for students, parents, and teachers. Students need comprehensive sex-education curriculum, better access to school-based health services, and stronger Title IX protections. Serving students also means supporting their parents and teachers through paid parental leave, access to childcare, and reproductive health benefits for public school employees. When you support working mothers, you support working families.

6. My first priority upon taking office will be to:

As Superintendent of Public Instruction, my top priorities will be:

1) Opposing Donald Trump and Betsy DeVos's anti-public education policies and increasing funding for California's public school system.

2) Attracting and retaining qualified teachers by providing them with affordable housing, recruitment bonuses, scholarships, and higher wages.

3) Preparing California students for the jobs of the 21st-century economy by increasing access to STEM and computer science education in our school districts.

7. I would take a pledge to reject all money from the NRA: **Yes** or No

8. I would take a pledge to reject all money from the Charter School Industry: **Yes** or No

9. The biggest current challenge facing education in California is:

We have a crisis in our public schools from a lack of qualified teachers. In many districts, class sizes are ballooning because of a perpetual [teacher shortage](#). In almost every district there is a lack of continuity because of the high turnover. The problem is clear – we aren't paying teachers enough to recruit new ones or even to retain the ones we have.

10. I would address this by:



My plan will reduce our statewide teacher shortage by paying teachers a competitive salary, investing in professional development and mentorship programs for our educators, and offering scholarships to aspiring teachers to make education a more accessible career path. I've authored legislation that would provide affordable [teacher housing](#) so teachers can live in the communities where they teach. Teachers are among the most important influences to a student's academic success. We need to invest in our teachers, not disparage and attack them.

11. Should public schools be a sanctuary space with ICE denied any entry

I am committed to preventing immigration authorities from seizing children and parents on school property. No student should fear for their safety based on immigration status. In addition, I will also work to expand english language learner classes and services that support parents without English proficiency. We welcome immigrants in California, and all young people in our schools deserve a safe and comfortable learning environment.

12. I support/do not support the Black Lives Matter movement because

I support the Black Lives Matter Movement. As a black man, I plan to be a Superintendent of Public Instruction who is a champion for black students. Public education saved my life. I often say that given my upbringing, I could have easily ended up in California state prison. Instead, I ended up in the California State Assembly. I'm running so that every black student in California can have that same opportunity for a great life, one in which black people are treated with respect and dignity and have all the opportunities that exist for other communities. I plan to lead an effort to increase the amount of men of color who teach in elementary schools.

13. Is there any part of Trump's agenda that you will not oppose:

Fighting for education starts with opposing President Donald Trump and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos's agenda, which threatens to defund our public schools. In his first proposed budget, Donald Trump proposed to cut \$1.2 billion in funding for before- and after-school programs. He and Betsy DeVos are determined to undermine our public schools by creating vouchers and other ways to divert money away from public education, including diverting taxpayer dollars to for-profit charter schools. California needs to be ready to face this attack head



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NORTHRIDGE ★ INDIVISIBLE

on, oppose school voucher laws, and ban for-profit charter schools. I am prepared to fight the Trump Agenda to gut our public schools at every step, and I am the only candidate in this race who has a demonstrated commitment to fighting that battle on behalf of our students and teachers.

There are some aspects of Trump's proposed agenda that I do not take issue with, including building sustainable infrastructure, creating more jobs for working families, and addressing the opioid crisis. That being said, I do not believe that the Trump administration has taken sufficient steps towards accomplishing this agenda.

14. I plan to interface with my constituents through

I plan to keep my door open. Constituents can hold me accountable just the same as they have in my 10 years in elected office – by calling me, emailing me, and telling me directly when they need me to step up and lead for our community. I won't stop until we have an education system in California that helps all students reach their highest potential.

15. I believe California should spend more money on

California must spend more money on public education, and less money on prisons.