

Required Information

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Office Sought: Board of Education

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Are you a member of the Harvey Milk Club?

If so, when did you first join?

Yes, 2008 I think.

Are you lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ)?

No.

PART 1: Short-Answer Questionnaire

- 1) Please describe your qualifications for the position you seek (include your key issues/priorities if elected and what distinguishes you from other candidates seeking the same job), plus anything else that you'd like our members to know about you and your candidacy.**

I grew up in a middle-class single parent family, attending local Bay Area public schools, and over the past ten years, I've fought for public education as an advocate, educator, organizer and policy analyst. As the Executive Director of the UC Student Association, I work directly for all UC students statewide to ensure public education is protected for current and future generations. As Co-founder and Chair of Citizen Hope, I've spearheaded over 50 events and initiatives that directly benefitted students and families in San Francisco, bringing in hundreds of new volunteers and thousands of dollars to our school district.

As a Commissioner, I hope to bring my experience as a student advocate, policy analyst, organizer and advocate to help bring new partnerships and resources to our schools, provide the leadership and oversight on many of the important initiatives SFUSD is engaged with (A-G grad requirements, Prop H reauthorization and oversight, Restorative Practices, transition to Common Core Standards, and assessment of the School Improvement Grant), develop a strategic long-term innovative approach to bringing real world learning into all of our schools and classrooms, create strong connections and pathways to our local higher education institutions, and increase student, parent and community input into decision-making.

I am a progressive and the only candidate to have the support of both the San Francisco Democratic Party and the United Educators of San Francisco, and I also am supported by SEIU 1021, the Coleman Advocates Action Fund, Assemblymember Tom Ammiano (the only one to receive his support at the DCCC), Supervisor David Campos, Supervisor Eric Mar, Senator Mark Leno, Senator Leland Yee, Assemblymember Fiona Ma, Board of Education Commissioner Kim-Shree Maufas and many more. My Aunts are an LGBT married couple here in San Francisco and are raising my cousins in SFUSD schools, and I have learned a great deal about the experience of parents in SFUSD from them.

2) How have you been an advocate for the LGBTQ community? Please provide specific examples.

I was active in opposing Prop 8, raising money and volunteering, and also through my work as Chair of Citizen Hope have spearheaded a number of events raising money for organizations that work directly with the LGBT community, including Maine Equality, API Equality, and And Marriage for All (For a few years in a row, I hosted a "Holiday Love for All" party around the holidays that benefited LGBT organizations). In my role as the Executive Director of the UC Student Association, I have worked closely on campus climate issues, including on those that impact LGBT students, and fought for systemwide committees that work to assess whether adequate services and support are available to LGBT students. I served on the SFUSD Restorative Justice Taskforce and on the Public Education Enrichment Fund Community Advisory Committee, where we supported programs and new policies in our schools that would directly support LGBT students. I worked in the Office of the White House Counsel in 2009, where I spent a great time on a legal issue that ultimately resulted in President Obama mandating that nearly all hospitals extend visitation rights to LGBT partners and respect patients choices about who can make health care decisions for them.

3) What is your relationship to SFUSD? Parent, teacher, alum, neighbor, e.g.? If you have kids do they or have they attended SFUSD schools?

I am a community member and student advocate that cares deeply about our students, and I've spent a great deal of time working directly with young people both inside and outside of schools. I have deep roots here in San Francisco; I grew up here in the Bay Area, have cousins that currently attend SFUSD, and my Grandparents have been here for decades raising my Aunts and Uncles in SFUSD schools.

I have been a tutor and mentor at the elementary, middle and high school levels, taught in summer and afterschool programs, and helped bring in hundreds of new volunteers and thousands of dollars to our schools through an organization "Citizen Hope" that I founded (including helping lead the "Great African American Read-In" and "Tools for Schools"). I served on the Public Education Enrichment Fund Community Advisory Committee for two years where I advised the district on how to spend critical funds on libraries, sports, music, preschool and the arts. I also served on the Restorative Justice Taskforce, where I worked with community

members to advise the school district on how to implement a paradigm shift in school climate and school discipline policy.

4) What do you propose to address the challenges faced by LGBTQ students in SFUSD, especially those who are transgender/genderqueer/gender variant?

My biggest priority would be to ensure that every LGBT child, especially those who are transgender/genderqueer/gender variant, feels safe, respected and nurtured at SFUSD schools and devote the necessary resources and staff at the site-level and in the district office to ensure this (including full time staff), and hold ourselves accountable with adequate data for our progress. All of our educators, and especially our counselors and student support staff, should receive training on how to support our LGBT students, create safe environments, and stop bullying. SFUSD currently has an anti-slur policy that asks all of its educators to intervene immediately if they hear an anti-gay slur (or any other kind) being used, and since we know that intervention is actually rare, we should work with educators to ensure that intervention is prioritized. We should emphasize peer-led programs, such as Peer Resources, that provide peer education on LGBT awareness, and support students in creating cultural/art/awareness programs that focus on respecting/valuing every human being. We should support curriculum with positive LGBT role models from a young age, and ensure that SFUSD leads the way in integrating education about the LGBT community into our curriculum.

5) Do you feel the "superintendent's zone" is a productive structure? Do you have any ideas for how to shift or support this structure better?

I support the "Superintendent Zone" structure and believe that the structure has helped to account for a lot of the progress that we have made in those schools. I believe we should continue to give additional support, resources, and professional development to our most struggling schools that have been systematically failed for decades. With that said, I would support a process to begin to expand many of the effective programs and approaches in our Superintendent Zone schools to other schools as well, and even look at how we might expand the Superintendent Zone itself (For example, I volunteered extensively at El Dorado, Junipero Serra, and James Lick, all schools outside of the Zone and all schools that could use extra assistance). Many of our schools outside the Superintendent Zone also have huge achievement gaps and many students in need of further support and assistance, and we can take much of what we have learned in the Superintendent Zone schools and bring them to these schools as well.

6) Given the view of many middle schools as failing and unworkable, what do you propose the school board do to revamp and rebuild the middle schools in the district?

I spent a lot of time at James Lick Middle School as a tutor and mentor—from that experience, I learned a lot about the challenges facing our middle schools. In some cases, we should look to

move towards a K-8 model, which is one that tends to be preferred by parents and students, and we've seen a lot of success with that model in SFUSD schools. In other cases, we should ensure that we keep our middle schools small (big middle schools are especially problematic), and that we spend a lot of time focusing on a more engaging curriculum as well as adequate support services for our students who begin to fall behind. We lose many students in middle school because the curriculum does not engage them—it is not project based, creative, or experiential—and they also may get intimidated by the new emphasis on grades as well as “tracking.” With that, I'd also put a focus on ensuring adequate funding for counselors in our middle schools—in my experience, it was often the counselors that were indispensable in the middle school environment but completely overwhelmed by the number of students they were responsible for.

7) What can the district do to better support teachers and other staff, especially given current budget constraints?

In every case, we should make any cuts as far from the classroom as possible and prioritize increasing the salaries and wages of our educators and site staff, rather than increasing pay for our administrators or central office staff. We can also reduce our use of outside consultants, and instead prioritize training and developing capacity for our staff, and keep our limited resources inside our district. During the current strained budget times, it is also critically important that we treat our educators and staff as partners, and we keep them informed and involved in all budget or policy changes. Though I do believe that we should stay committed to increasing salaries over time so that our educators can actually live in San Francisco, we can also ensure that teachers and staff are supported in ways other than salary, including teacher leadership opportunities, adequate classroom support staff and volunteers, and the respect that they deserve from our district and city. We should also work closely with our teachers and staff to address our budget constraints directly, by putting forward new proposals to tax the 1% in San Francisco and beyond to fully fund education.

8) How can SFUSD more effectively disrupt the school to prison pipeline, which results in many young boys and men of color ending up with criminal records? What can or should be the role of SFUSD in ensuring that young people do not get funnelled into the correctional system?

There should not be SFPD on our school campuses and we should involve the police only in the most extreme cases, and I would strongly advocate for alternative approaches and alternative intervention rather than suspension, expulsion or involvement of the police. I am a fervent believer in restorative justice and restorative practices (including extensive training that I have received in facilitating restorative justice “circles” and conflict resolution), and I would advocate for all of our educators and staff to go through training on restorative practices as well as other professional development and training that emphasizes alternatives to punishment. We should also ensure that all our schools have adequate support and intervention services—including mental health, mentoring, credit recovery, tutoring, and access to other city services—if we are not able to keep our students in school and address all of their needs, they are much more likely to end up in the criminal justice system. We should also make sure that our curriculum is

relevant and engaging for all of our students—many of the students who might be in danger of ending up in the criminal justice system might need to be engaged with alternative curriculum that potentially prepares them for a career directly.

PART 2: Yes/No Questionnaire

Please check **Yes** or **No** for each question.

GENERAL	YES	NO
1. Are you registered to vote as Democrat?	X	
2. Have you ever run for elected office before?		X
3. Do you have a campaign consultant? If so, who: Nicole Derse	X	
4. Have you ever sought the Milk Club endorsement in the past?		X

LGBTQ ISSUES		
5. Do you fully support same-sex marriage equality?	X	
6. Do you support anti-discrimination laws for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people?	X	
7. Do you support including full transgender health benefits in Healthy San Francisco and other San Francisco health programs?	X	
8. Do you support city funding for employment development for transgender individuals?	X	

ELECTIONS		
9. Do you support ranked choice voting?	X	
10. Did you support public financing in mayoral and supervisor races?	X	
11. Do you support public financing for other citywide races?	X	

TENANT, HOUSING, AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES		
12. Do you support rent control?	X	
13. Do you support repealing the Ellis Act?	X	
14. Have you ever been involved as homeowner, buyer, or agent in the eviction of a tenant?		X
15. Do you support the 8 Washington development project?		X
16. Should San Francisco develop LGBTQ-specific senior housing?	X	
17. Should the current low-income housing set-aside in new housing development be increased?	X	

RACIAL AND IMMIGRATION JUSTICE ISSUES		
18. Do you support driver's licenses for undocumented persons?	X	
19. Did you support voting rights for noncitizen residents in school board races (most recently Prop D in 2010)?	X	
20. Do you support the sanctuary city ordinance and 2009 amendments?	X	
21. Do you support initiating a "stop and frisk" policy in San Francisco,		X

similar to the one in effect in New York?		
22. Do you support the protection of due process for immigrant youth accused of crime?	X	
23. Do you support the DREAM Act?	X	

SOCIAL JUSTICE, HEALTH, AND LABOR ISSUES	YES	NO
24. Do you support the change to a city gross receipts tax?	X	
25. Do you support capital punishment (death penalty)?		X
26. Do you support the decriminalization of sex work?	X	
27. Did you support Sit/Lie (Prop L in 2011)?		X
28. Do you support reducing simple drug possession from a felony to a misdemeanor?	X	
29. Do you support creating supervised injection programs in San Francisco?	X	
30. Should San Francisco oppose the US Attorney General's closure of licensed medical cannabis dispensaries?	X	
31. Do you support the legalization, taxation, and regulation of adult recreational use of marijuana?	X	
32. Should San Francisco fully fund substance use treatment on demand?	X	
33. Should San Francisco use General Funds to pay for HIV services, in light of federal funding cuts?	X	
34. Do you support a woman's right to choose and access a safe and legal abortion under all circumstances?	X	
35. Have you ever crossed a union picket line or violated a union boycott?		X
36. Do you support the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights?	X	

EDUCATION AND YOUTH ISSUES		
37. Do you support parental notification for birth control?		X
38. Did you support JROTC in SFUSD Schools (Prop V in 2008)?		X (I did not support Prop V, I'm open to alternatives for JROTC, but would not vote to eliminate the program without an adequate alternative.
39. Do you support raising local revenue to support City College (parcel tax)?	X	
40. Do you support free Muni for youth in San Francisco?	X	

ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

41. Do you support draining and restoring the Hetch Hetchy?		X
42. Did you support the Clean Energy Act in 2008 (Prop H)?	X	
43. Do you support the SFMTA Central Subway plan?		
44. Do you support changing lower Market Street into a public transit/bike-only street?	X	