

SF DCCC Candidate Questionnaire Board of Education

Name _____ Lenette Thompson _____
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Are you a registered member of the Democratic Party? Yes

Have you read the California Democratic Party Platform? Yes

Will you fight for its implementation in policies? Yes No

What office are you running for? _____ Board of Education _____

Are you running for re-election? No

What other elected positions have you held previously?
_____ None _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Please complete this questionnaire and bring 5 copies (for the 31 Committee members and for Democratic Clubs) with you to be distributed just prior to your interview appointment on August 18, 2018
- ****IMPORTANT**** Please send electronic copies to info@SFDemocrats.org by 5:00 PM on August 13, 2018
- With the possible exception of a Democratic candidate filing to run after the questionnaire due date, only candidates who return a completed questionnaire electronically by the due date will be allowed to present before the committee.

3

- At the time of the interview, you may also provide 45 copies of up to 4 pages of supplemental information attached to your questionnaire for distribution to SFDCCC members (materials are not to be passed out during the meeting).
- We may distribute the questionnaires in preparation for event and post them on the SFDCCC website for the public to view.
- If you have not heard from the committee by Thursday, August 16, please contact Executive Director, Adam Mehis at 415-626-1161 or info@sfdemocrats.org to schedule a time slot during the Endorsement Interview Meeting.

PART I: GENERAL QUESTIONS (200 words or less)

Why are you committed to serving on the School Board?

What stake do you have in decisions made at the School Board (e.g. parent, student, educator, etc.)?

I am currently a parent of 4 school age children.

Please describe your contributions to the Democratic Party and/or increasing civic engagement in the democratic process at the local, state and or/national level in the most recent years.

*I have not participated in any political processes other than voting over the years.
I did campaign for the mayors race - handed out door hangers and did some cold calling.*

Are there any other civic causes or organizations that you are involved with? Please describe. Please summarize your qualifications and experience for the office you are seeking.

I was the PTA president for four years at West Portal Elementary school. This was an eye opener for me with regards to how the school functions via the parents, the teachers, the administration and the school district. I found that there were things that worked and things that didn't. Teachers and parents were constructive with their questions and concerns. I felt that the best way to address them and help with the tough job the Board has was to join in. To be a part of rather than sitting around wondering and essentially complaining.

Please list any organizations or elected officials who have endorsed you. (You may attach a list and exceed the word count limit).

*San Francisco Firefighters Local 798
Keith Baraka , 2nd Vice Chair, SF DCCC
Other endorsements - Mayor, and other local officials are pending.*

If you are elected, what are your top concerns? How would you address these concerns?

I think everyone's top concern is diversity in our school. For the past five decades we have made some improvements but we still today find ourselves still trying to solve diversity and achievement gap issues. What is the Board missing? They are talking and trying - I agree with the board that diversity promotes good test scores and good human relations as these young children grow.

My vision is to fix educational inequities and target resources to students most in need. Each student should have the same opportunity that their fellow students have across the city. One example is Transcendental Quiet Time. This was a program run in 2007 at Visitation Valley Middle School. The principal at the time incorporated two blocks of time into the bell schedule and 15 mins in the morning and 15 mins in the afternoon.

Every student participated and adults. The results after three yrs were that attendance was up 98%, suspensions down 78%. GPA's grew every year. If this was such a huge success why didn't the Board have all schools partake? I want to make this apart of the social-emotional curriculum for starters.

We should be offering teachers adequate pay, so they stay motivated and passionate to teach our kids, and not leave for another school district. Allow them the opportunity to afford to live in town and be a part of the community they are building. The teachers that teach in the underachieving schools historically make less.

At the high school level, we need to bring back the auto shop, wood shop, home economics and how to balance a checkbook. At the end of this journey (K-12) my hope is they will understand, besides academics, it's about people—social skills, respect, self-worth, empathy, and realizing their potential. My vision is that our teachers and our educators have the resources they need to

teach and support our children. For the past five decades we have fallen along the lines of race and class, it has been one of our most significant and most urgent challenges we have faced and continue to meet. Public education can and must break down these barriers to give all our kids of all socio-economic backgrounds the same opportunity. We have to take steps to ensure our white children population don't continue to choose private over public.

The California Democratic Party Platform mentions building health, livable, and sustainable communities, what does this mean to you?

It means that we work together to help those less fortunate. That we together can build a community with a larger base that helps and promotes one another. So we teach love, tolerance, and self worth and lead by example with one another. Housing, community gardens, taking pride in the area we live in and encouraging others to do the same.

Would you support the idea of school districts using local accountability plans to grant funds to reach students with the greatest needs for whom they are most needed? Why or why not?

Yes! I think that the district has been trying to implement and do the right thing when it comes to the students who are in more need of services in their school and community. There are some schools where the parents club is able to raise money to support the school and provide more staff and resources. This is not the case across the city. So if we can support our high-need students and help provide them with some of the same services that is a win.

PART II: YES/NO QUESTIONS

While it may seem that some of these questions do not apply to the office you are seeking, they represent California Democratic Party Platform principles and since many people run for higher office where they will be called upon to answer these questions, we would like them addressed.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Do you support the divestment of public funds from Wells Fargo and other financial institutions involved in speculative and questionable banking practices?

Yes

Do you believe that the government should provide foreclosure relief for borrowers who were victims of unethical financial service practices?

Yes

Do you support the creation of a local municipal bank in San Francisco? **I don't know**

CRIMINAL JUSTICE/POLICE REFORM

Do you support overhauling the bail system? **Yes**

Do you believe in ending mass incarceration and supporting the abolishment of capital punishment?

Yes

Do you support using jails as mental health facilities and substance abuse treatment programs?

No

Will you commit to encouraging “ban the box” to ensure that those formerly incarcerated are given an equal opportunity for housing and employment? **Yes**

Do you support the San Francisco Police Department being equipped with Tasers?

Yes

CHILDCARE

Do you support expanding affordable childcare to low- and middle-income families?

Yes

Do you support expanding child care to include children aged 0-3 years old?

Yes

EDUCATION

Do you believe in a “debt-free college” and free community college (i.e. Education financed entirely without student loans)?

Yes

Would you support the idea of school districts using local accountability plans to grant funds to reach students with the greatest needs for whom they are most needed? (9)

Yes

Do you support that teachers and professional staff deserve commensurate wages? **Yes**

ENVIRONMENT

Do you oppose new fossil fuel infrastructure projects and supporting the divestment of fossil fuels? **I don't know**

Do you believe in Free MUNI for youth?

Yes

Do you support the Safe Routes to Schools program? **Yes**

HEALTHCARE

Do you support a publicly funded single payer health care system for all people? **Yes**

Should SFUSD expand Healthcare Centers to all high schools? **Yes**

Do you support that all students have access to safe and reliable reproductive services and information without their spouse, judicial, parental, or guardian consent?

Yes

CIVIL RIGHTS AND IMMIGRATION JUSTICE ISSUES

Will you work to implement full Ethnic Studies courses and language immersion? **Yes**

Will you support Sanctuary policies and Due Process for All -- limiting the ability for local authorities to collaborate with Federal government on immigration enforcement which incites fear in immigrant communities?

Yes

Do you support speaking out in public against all forms of racism, discrimination, hatred and violence and support standing in solidarity with movements that promote equity, including Black Lives Matter?

Yes

Will you protect the right of all people to use facilities and participate in all aspects of society regardless of their gender identity and the gender assigned at birth?

Yes

LABOR

Will you support the push for a statewide minimum wage for at least \$15 per hour and living wages for areas that have high cost of living?

Yes

Do you support that teachers and professional staff deserve commensurate wages? **Yes**

Do you support paid parental leave for school educators?

Yes

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Do you support full disclosure of funding sources for political advertisements? **Yes**

HOUSING, TENANT, & LAND USE ISSUES

Do you believe that housing is a human right? **Yes**

Do you believe the split roll for Proposition 13 that treats taxes for commercial and residential property differently?

Yes

Would you support repealing Costa Hawkins and the Ellis Act? **Yes**

Do you support use of SFUSD property to build affordable housing? **Yes**

Have you read the California Democratic Party Platform?

Yes

Will you fight for its implementation in policies?

Yes

PART III: SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS ON ISSUES (250 words or less)

What programs or initiatives would you undertake to address the educational disparities for SFUSD students?

I believe the achievement gap exists because we are not addressing the needs of the African American, latino and pacific islander students. I also think the achievement gap is not about poverty alone - there's more to it than that. Keep in mind the difference is also vast between non-low income African American families and non-low income White and Asian families. In reading test scores, 48% of African American kids were reading at grade level vs. 72% for Whites and 84% for Asians.

These young children face challenges every day big and small;

Transportation

Hunger

Trauma

Stability

Constant fear

Little or no parent support

We need to change the way we educate and support our children. The question is how do we surround them with a support structure that includes all of the above. If we could weave an elaborate system of relationships with these kids, a cohesive village, a supportive inner circle. A safety net that won't go away no matter how much they push it away. Have the help of a non profit bring in volunteers that are trained and committed to showing up for one kid they put in a relationship with .Then I think one kid at a time we can make a difference in these kids lives. Give them hope. Show them we believe in them. That they are capable of great things and we have high expectations of them! As a result, along the way, we can make a significant dent in this gap!

2) What would be your budget priorities for the School District?

I would start with computer labs in k-5 schools. Make room for them and then outfit them with desk top computers. Then hire a tech teacher. We are asking our kids to test on laptops starting in the 3rd grade. Some kids have never even been on a computer before. Some don't have laptops or wifi at home. The teachers are asked to take a cart of computers and alone test with their 30 kids. If there is a problem the teacher is expected to fix it.

I would also budget for trauma centers at school as well as wellness centers. We need to address the entire student. Some teachers do, but lets give them the resources after they

identify the student that needs trauma support or wellness support to have these resources in place to support these children most in need.

3) Do you believe that SFUSD's school assignment system needs reform? If not, why? If so, how would you change it?

That is such a tough question! I believe it does but to what? That is the question.

*The board has not sat idle on this issue but has yet to solve it. The problem is we can't make everyone happy. That is the bottom line. We do want diversity in our schools and we don't want the white parents to continue pulling their kids out and sending them to private school. "Whites are 42 percent of the city's overall population, 33 percent of the children but only 12 percent of public school students." Recent studies from Stanford and the University of California, Berkeley, show that many students do much better on tests when placed in integrated classrooms, and that all kids are much less likely to grow up with racial stereotypes and prejudices. Far from being opposed to each other, excellence and diversity go hand in hand. J. Smith 2015
This has been our goal since the 60's. I would like to have a seat at the table to be a part of this solution. There is also a*

4) What is your belief on Common Core Standards? In recent years, there has been controversy that the new methodology is placing some students at a disadvantage for high achievement and college preparation. How would you address this concern?

5) What do you think are the factors attributing to the teacher shortage in SFUSD? How would you address this?

The cost of living in the city is incredibly high. Also that the teachers do not make enough money. They start at a salary of about 50K and after 23 yrs on avg they top out at 82K. This is not enough. Many of them have to get 2nd jobs after they have had our kids for 7hours! We need to increase their pay more than we already have and have the city set up more programs to help these teachers stay in the city.

6) What is your perspective about charter schools and their role in San Francisco? How would you advocate differently than SFUSD's current policies?

7) Do you support the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy at SFUSD? How would you further these goals as a School Board member?

I do support it. I agree with the policy the board has in place. The one way I would further support it is by adding mindfulness practice. Beside restorative justice would like the student to have the opportunity to spend some time in the wellness center of his/her school. To be still, to be calm to center themselves. Reflect on their behavior and the impact it had on those around them. Do some quiet time or some writing about it. Either way it would have a significant impact on the student. They are worthy. They made a mistake. How to learn from that mistake. How to do it differently next time.

8) What role do you feel the Board of Education should play in sexual harassment and assault cases involving students? If elected, how will you address this concern?

Well for starters and I'm sure they do they need to condemn such actions each and every time. Sexual harassment is in violation of San Francisco Unified School District Board and Administrative policies. These policies extend to the San Francisco County Office of Education, including community school programs and activities. All forms of sexual harassment, whether student to student, staff to student, or student to staff, are unlawful at SFUSD schools. We should encourage any student or staff member to report the incident immediately.

I would address this concern through education. Bring in human beings that the students can relate to. Have them share their personal stories. Build trust and respect between the educator and the student so that the student can hear the message that Sexual Harassment in any form will be dealt with severely.

9) There is a perception that parent-led fundraising has widened the educational inequality gap among schools. What are your thoughts on this issue and how would you address distribution of school funds districtwide?

I hate to say it but that may be true. After reading and learning more about this topic, I found that the budgets of parent-teacher associations at elementary schools can be rather lucrative. It's not every school but a few have been successful. Much of the money went to teachers, classroom aides and essential programs like librarians, tech teachers and support staff for kids with special needs. At a time when many schools were laying off staff, the top fundraising schools were hiring, and thus (without necessarily realizing it) widening the economically and racially defined differences among the schools. It is important to note that each school is focused on their school only. The parents had and probably still have no idea as they advocate and show up for their child and their school physically and financially that it does have an impact on the educational inequality gap.

I think the law Gov. Brown ushered in Local Control Funding Formula that is designed to give school districts serving high-needs students more funds. It would be important for the board to maintain the Local Control and Accountability Plan. So we can see if the funds are going where they need to go, what are they providing, and if it is working.

10) What role do you believe SFUSD should play in the City's housing crisis? How would you address the needs of homeless or under-housed students and their families?

11) Beyond reforming school assignment program, what do you see as the greatest barriers or major issues for families and youth getting to school safely while reducing traffic congestion?

That is a tall order! Getting to school safely while reducing traffic congestion? Is that possible? We have always relied on school buses to get kids to school safely across town. I would like to see muni free for kids under the age of 18. This way it relieves one stress from families for the cost of the fare. I want to find a way to continue to support families who want to go to the school near them. This way they can walk to school which is the best case scenario for safety and less traffic congestion.

Dear Candidate:

The San Francisco Democratic Party (SFDCCC) is eager to learn more about your candidacy and invites you to participate in our endorsement process.

If you would like to be considered for an endorsement by SFDCCC, please complete the attached Endorsement Questionnaire and return to info@sfdemocrats.org by Monday, August 13 at 5:00pm. Our Endorsement Committee will meet candidates for interviews on August 18, 2018. The exact time of your interview and location will be provided to you after we review your completed Candidate Endorsement Questionnaire and have determined that you meet our bottom line requirements to be considered for an endorsement. At the time of the interview, you may also provide additional information to supplement your questionnaire. You are limited to four (4) total pages, and you must provide 5 copies.

SFDCCC seeks to encourage the election of qualified local candidates who will help to advance our shared Democratic values. We are only able to endorse registered Democrats, except in the case of a nonpartisan race in which no registered Democrat has qualified for the ballot. We also seek to support those candidates who express agreement and have demonstrated support for our core issues and priorities, which are included in the California Democratic Party Platform, our Bylaws, and Policies and Procedures Manual (which can all be found at www.cadems.org and www.sfdemocrats.org).

To qualify for an endorsement interview, all candidates must indicate that they support the Democratic principles in our party platform, complete the Candidate Endorsement Questionnaire, and return it by the deadline of August 13, 2018 at 5:00pm.

Candidate interviews will be brief and will be open to both SFDCCC members and members of San Francisco's chartered democratic clubs. Following the Endorsement Committee interview, the full body will deliberate and vote on a final endorsement at our

1

meeting scheduled for August 22, 2018, at 6:30pm, at the Tenderloin Community Elementary School. Meetings are open to the general public and are live streamed on our Facebook page. You are welcome to attend or follow our progress online.

The following rules also apply to the SFDCCC endorsement process and any violation may be subject to further actions, including a revocation of the endorsement:

1. Candidates may only use the "SF Democratic Party" name and image after the full membership endorsement;
2. Once endorsed, the SFDCCC will provide a high-resolution copy of our logo which may be used in your materials only for the race for which you were endorsed;
3. In the case of elections in which Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) is employed, listing of the SFDCCC endorsement must accurately reflect the ranked endorsement as detailed in our Policies and Procedures Manual;
4. Third parties wishing to utilize the SFDCCC name or logo in their campaign materials must submit a request to our Executive Director.

Thank you very much for your interest in the SFDCCC endorsement. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions. We look forward to learning more about your candidacy and your campaign.

Respectfully,

The San Francisco Democratic Party

By signing below, you acknowledge that you will comply with the SFDCCC's Bylaws and Policies and Procedures and you will not utilize the SFDCCC name, the San Francisco Democratic Party, or its logo without written permission.

_____ Lenette Thompson _____ (name)

_____ Lenette Thompson _____ (signature)
_____ Board of Education _____ (position you are seeking)
_____ August 13, 2028 _____ (date)