

School Board | League of Pissed Off Voters

November 2020 Questionnaire

Hello candidates! Thank you for filling out the League's questionnaire. Please use THIS FORM rather than formatting it into a Word document or PDF. If you have any questions, you can contact us at TheLeagueSF@gmail.com.

Candidate Info

Name

Mark Sanchez

Campaign Contact Person

Jeremiah Jeffries

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Office Sought

SF Board of Education

Website

Where is one place in San Francisco you'll want to go celebrate when the pandemic is over?

Esperanto w/ friends--I've been going there for tapas since the early 1990's

Tell us about yourself.

Why are you running for this office?

I began teaching in 1992. While a teacher, I co-founded Teachers 4 Social Justice in 1999, and became the sole teacher on the San Francisco Board of Education in 2000. After serving for 8 years, I became Principal at Horace Mann Middle School and then at Cleveland Elementary School for the next 8 years, only leaving it in 2016 to return to being both a classroom teacher and a Commissioner on the Board of Education--again as the lone educator voice on the school board. I have since served these last four years and have worked to bring other educators to the Board of Education (Yay Gabriela López & Alison Collins). Throughout my tenure as an educator, I have continuously worked to create quality schools for all of our children and amplify the voices of parents and caregivers, educators and all others working for our students.

Why do you want the League of Pissed Off Voters' endorsement?

I am very proud and honored to have received the League's endorsement in the past. I seek your endorsement again because I think our values align, that we have very similar goals and strive for progressive solutions to ingrained and seemingly intractable problems in our city, state, and nation.

What are your values and how did you get them?

My values are grounded in living kindly. I have dedicated most of my life to public education. I value learning and the potential of people. I think it's important to be honest and compassionate. Enjoying life and being of service to others. I believe our government and school district should play a role in helping people achieve their goals and have a positive impact on society.

My values come from my family, my education, my activism and the multitude of things my students and their families have taught me over the years. Through them I have learned what's important and what has been barriers for them. My life's work and activism has really been guided by that. I have worked to have our government and institutions for years reflect those values and do a better job of serving young people, their families, the working class and the poor. In my time on the board and as a teacher I have worked to get youth, family and educators what they need to thrive. Sometimes that has been fighting for basics of voice and representation, other times that has been more complex things like more money for students who are homeless, foster youth or who have parents who are incarcerated; removing high stakes testing or building affordable housing for educators.

What communities do you represent and how do they hold you accountable?

I feel that I represent many of the communities that our public school students come from, as well as those who provide for them in our school settings. I am a queer Latinx public school teacher with years of experience working with students of all backgrounds. I've been a principal and union activist and a long time elected official (though I don't really represent them). I think my communities hold me accountable by accepting my invitation to stay in dialogue with me. I am always in contact with families, students, teachers/paraeducators, our site leaders, as well as with the organizations which represent them. Accountability only happens if you listen and are actually moved by the communities you say you are accountable to. I have been and will continue to translate the voice of the communities I serve into policy and work to remove the barriers they have to their success even if I'm not always successful.

What three endorsements are you most proud of?

United Educators of San Francisco, Coleman Action Fund, San Francisco Latino Democratic Club

What for-profit or non-profit boards do you serve on, including political organizations?

Advisory Board: Teachers 4 Social Justice

What local and state commissions and policy bodies have you served on -- currently or in the past?

1999-2000 SF Building Inspection Commission

2000-2008 SF Board of Education

2016-Present SF Board of Education

Local Issues

Do you support San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS) fully divesting from fossil fuels within three years and holding SFERS accountable at the ballot if they do not divest?

Yes

No

Do you support San Francisco purchasing PG&E assets to create public power in San Francisco?

Yes

No

Do you support the closure of 850 Bryant, jails #3 and #4?

Yes

No

Did you support SB 50 (Senator Wiener's Zoning Bill) as written?

Yes

No

If not, are there amendments that would make you support it?

It was not a good bill. I would start from scratch and work with the community based housing and land use organizations to draft a bill that would support the growth of majority affordable housing across the city in a way that doesn't ruin the character of the city or neighborhoods. SF doesn't need to build market rate or massive buildings to address the housing needs. Time would have been better spent expanding rent control and vacancy control.

Do you support congestion pricing for the downtown core?

Yes

No

Do you support creating a Public Bank in San Francisco?

Yes

No

If Costa Hawkins was repealed at the state level, would you actively support legislation enacting vacancy control in San Francisco?

Yes

No

Do you support a baseline percentage of 40% of affordable housing in developments when negotiating the number of housing units?

Yes

No

Do you support requiring 100% affordable housing on public land?

Yes

No

If not, under what circumstances would you support allowing a percentage or all market-rate housing?

Have you previously and/or will you in the future accepted donations from any law enforcement officers or associations?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain why.

What percentage of the SFPD budget do you think should be reallocated towards housing, homeless services, social workers, health, and education?

50

Would you support legislation to implement the Budget Analyst's recommendation to adopt a more efficient weekly staffing schedule for the SFPD? (Recommendation 2.2 here: https://sfbos.org/sites/default/files/BA_Report_PA_of_San_Francisco_Police_Department_061218.pdf)

Yes

No

November 2020 Election

Who are you supporting for US Representative, District 12?

Nancy Pelosi

Who are you supporting for State Senate, District 11?

Jackie Fielder

Who are you supporting for District 1 Supervisor?

Connie Chan

Who are you supporting for District 3 Supervisor?

Aaron Peskin

Who are you supporting for District 5 Supervisor?

Dean Preston

Who are you supporting for District 7 Supervisor?

Myrna Melgar

Who are you supporting for District 9 Supervisor?

Hilary Ronen

Who are you supporting for District 11 Supervisor?

None

Who are you supporting for Board of Education?

Matt Alexander, Kevine Boggess, Jenny Lam

Who are you supporting for Community College Board?

Alan Wong, Tom Temprano, Shanell Williams, Aliya Chisti

Who are you supporting for BART Board, District 9?

Bevan Dufty

Do you support the charter amendment to create a Workforce Education and Recovery Fund for City College (WERF)?

Yes

No

Do you support "Vote 16" the SF charter amendment that authorizes youths aged 16 and 17 to vote in municipal elections?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment to allow non-citizens to serve on boards, commissions, and advisory bodies?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment creating the Office of the Public Advocate?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment creating a Public Works Commission, Sanitation and Streets Commission, and Sanitation and Streets Department?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment establishing term limits for City boards, commissions and bodies?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment creating the Sheriff's Department Oversight Board and Inspector General?

Yes

No

Do you support the charter amendment to remove the minimum police staffing requirement and require the Police Department to submit a report and recommendation regarding police staffing levels?

Yes

No

Do you support the ballot measure to increase the gross receipts tax on businesses with a greater than 100:1 ratio of the pay of their highest-paid employee to the median pay of their SF employees?

Yes

No

Do you support the gross receipts ballot measure proposed by the Board of Supervisors (Yee, Haney, Peskin, Fewer) [File No. 200648]?

Yes

No

Do you support the gross receipts ballot measure proposed by Mayor London Breed [File No. 200645]?

Yes

No

Do you support the ballot measure authorizing development of up to 10,000 affordable rental units in the City?

Yes

No

Do you support California Proposition 15, Tax on Commercial and Industrial Properties for Education and Local Government Funding Initiative?

Yes

No

Do you support California Proposition 21, Local Rent Control Initiative (Costa-Hawkins changes)?

Yes

No

Do you support California Proposition 22, App-Based Drivers as Contractors and Labor Policies Initiative (AB5 Referendum)?

Yes

No

Do you Support California Proposition 25, Replace Cash Bail with Risk Assessments Referendum (Cash Bail Referendum)?

Yes

No

March 2020 Election

Who did you support for Superior Court Judge?

None

Who did you support for DCCC?

Jane Kim, Tami Bryant, Frances Hsieh, Vallie Brown, Gloria Berry, Peter Galotta, Shamann Walton, Shanell Williams, Kevin Ortiz, Bevan Dufty, Sophie Maxwell, Anabel Ibanez, Assembly District 19 Queena Chen, Leah LaCroix, Mano Raju, Janice Li, Gordon Mar, Faauga Moliga, Kelly Groth

Did you support March 2020's Prop D, a tax on vacant storefronts?

Yes

No

Did you support March 2020's Prop E, limits on office development?

Yes

No

November 2019 Election

Who did you support for District Attorney?

Chesa Boudin

Who did you support for District 5 Supervisor?

Dean Preston

November 2018 Election

Did you support November 2018's Prop C "Our City Our Home" tax on gross receipts of businesses to fund homeless services?

Yes

No

June 2018 Election

Did you support June 2018's Prop F "Tenant's Right to Counsel"?

Yes

No

Did you support June 2018's Prop H "Arm Police With Tasers"?

Yes

No

Past Elections

Did you support 2016's Prop D "Let's Elect Our Elected Officials" to have special elections to fill vacancies on the Board of Supervisors?

Yes

No

Did you support 2014's Prop G, the anti-speculation tax?

Yes

No

Board of Education

What are the top three issues you will work on and how will you implement solutions in a timely manner?

Preserve School-Based Staff. Educators and other school staff are essential for the experience and academic and social emotional success of our students. Given the change in safety requirements for appropriate health checks, given the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing and long-known need for reduced class size, we should be preserving and adding staff support at school sites and reprioritizing funds we spend centrally and elsewhere.

Keep cuts as far away from students and classrooms as possible. This means making cuts in the central office and district departments, with no cuts at schools. School budgets are already lean and will need even more supports in these difficult times as across the city vital resources are being cut back. It is critical we increase our support for schools.

Continue to advocate for additional resources from the City, State and National levels as well as from the private sector. Without federal, state, and San Francisco's municipal leadership providing adequate funding for SFUSD, it will be an extremely difficult challenge to provide an adequate, much less quality education moving forward, and asking too much of our staff. I will continue to fight to see all Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund dollars go to support students and those who work with them in our schools.

Do you support painting over the Victor Arnautoff mural, The Life of George Washington, at George Washington High School?

Yes

No

Do you support changing the names of schools that are rooted in colonization, genocide, slavery, or oppression of any marginalized group?

Yes

No

Do you support Resolution 206-23A3 In Support of Black Lives and the Abolition of Armed Law Enforcement in Schools?

Yes

No

Do you support a moratorium on charter school co-location in our public schools?

Yes

No

Do you think that all SF charter schools should join SFUSD?

Yes

No

Have you ever had a role at a charter school in SF (including parent, staff, volunteer or paid organizer)?

Yes

No

Have you received support from San Francisco Parent PAC?

Yes

No

How would you approach the question of reopening schools in the Fall if you were on the Board of Education? (If you are on the Board, how are you approaching it?)

We are doing distance learning, this time including PK-2 with more support for families, food, technology and learning material distribution to students and their families. We are doing all we can to have this be a better experience than in the spring for students, families, educators and all school workers. We plan to continue in this mode until the science and relevant health officials say it's safe to do otherwise. Then we will likely proceed with caution to a phase in hybrid approach before a full return. I will continue to advocate for this to be a process where we prioritize wellness and maximize the learning for students in a way that is as humanizing as possible with a commitment to be responsive, anti-racist and culturally competent.

What are your thoughts on the effectiveness of remote education / distance learning?

It is not effective, but it is what we can offer. Covid-19 has really highlighted the inequities in our society and we need to move all the power of our institutions to support the working class people or our city during this time. We are working to make the most out of distance learning but in person learning is the best for most people.

How do you propose tackling SFUSD's budget crisis? What bold solutions and new funding sources are you willing to consider?

I agree with those who have been calling for the city's exceedingly wealthy class to step up and support public education. If each of the 75 billionaires who reside in SF were to contribute just \$2M, we would be looking at an entirely different budget scenario going forward. I wholeheartedly support November's Schools and Communities First ballot measure, which we estimate would bring a "windfall" of between \$30-\$50M annually with voter approval, while the city is anticipating upwards of \$460M. I'm also working on a ballot measure that would mandate that the City set aside money from the Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund, which to date has brought about \$700M to the City, with less than \$90M going to its intended beneficiaries: San Francisco's public school children. SFUSD needs \$200 million more annually just to get to the national average in per pupil spending, adjusted for the cost of living in SF.

Describe your current engagement with SFUSD. How often do you participate in BOE meetings (in person or online)? Which school sites are you familiar with?

As the President of the Board of Education, I'm fortunate to be very engaged with SFUSD - from chairing BOE meetings to visiting school sites on a regular basis (pre-COVID, of course). I am deeply involved in the workings of the school district. I've been a teacher, a principal and a member of the Board of Education. I serve on the following committees:

Curriculum and Program
Rules, Legislation & Policy
Ad-Hoc Committee on Student Assignment

I also appoint people to various committees including:
Public Enrichment Education Fund (PEEF)
Quality Teaching and Education Act (QTEA) Oversight Committee
Charter School Oversight Committee

How would you modify SFUSD's school assignment policy?

The current assignment system is opaque, unpredictable, causes massive frustration and skepticism--but even more disappointing is that it hasn't brought about any meaningful and sustained classroom/school integration. Not that that hasn't been the intent all along with the district's myriad desegregation policies over the years--so it's not for lack of trying. I serve on the board's Ad Hoc Committee on Student Assignment and most likely will be voting by year's end on a new system (for K-5) that will allow for more predictability and most likely reduce the type of choice we have currently, which allows parents to be free agents; meaning those with the most social capital and time are able to visit and rank many, many schools, which then advantages those families, leading to more and more racially isolated schools.

Now that SFUSD will not renew its MOU with the SFPD, how would you revise SFUSD's District School Safety Plan?

As President of the Board, I recently co-authored with Commissioners Collins and Lam the board's resolution that effectively severed the district's ties to the SFPD. The resolution gives direction to staff, centrally and at school sites, to move away from calling the police. Under no circumstances should ICE ever be called to schools. We will be putting in place very strict guidelines for staff about engaging with law enforcement only when it's unavoidable. It also puts the district on record regarding our commitment to alternative methods for de-escalation as well as a recommitment to our existing restorative practices policies. We are committed to keep all our students and families safe and that means no police in schools and give schools the tools, resources and training necessary to address students and families in crisis. Involving law enforcement is not safe for most of our children.

We are committed to:

Having better trained staff

Adopting Community Schools Models at more schools to provide wrap around services for students and families

Expanded wellness centers

Assessment and screening of teachers and all staff who act in ways that are discriminatory toward students.

If you're elected, what racial justice policies will you push for?

The district is in the midst of overhauling the weighted student funding formula program--and it's long overdue. While on the Board, we have worked to expand the weighted student formula to increase funding for different indicators that will mostly benefit African American students essentially by proxy, utilizing extreme poverty (like residing in public housing, foster youth, students whose parents are incarcerated). Having committed to defunding the police, I advocate for those resources to be directed to serve our schools and African American students in particular. With those resources we will work to improve the outcomes for students, meaning more opportunities to access the arts that are of interest and most relevant to Black students, college tours, and career/internship opportunities for students. We have to do more for our African American students. I also support the expansion of ethnic studies for PreK to 12th Grade, including African American studies. I also voted and supported Commissioner Alison Collins and Jenny Lam's Equity Studies resolution to examine racism and dehumanizing content across curricular areas and in the books students read. We will do all we can to better serve our Black students and reduce the opportunity gap, from making sure Black history is celebrated in every school across the district to supporting the organization of BSU's (black student unions) and AAPAC's (African American Parent Advisory Councils) in the schools that serve African American students.

Last Question

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

For some reason, the field to enter our website rejected it, so here it is:

marksanchezsf.org

We should always try to do better, and we must. Having been in service to the families, children and educators of SFUSD for the last 27 years as a teacher, Principal and Commissioner, I show my values through my work--they are not only aspirational, they have a track record of being attainable.

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