

College 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.

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Candidate Info

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City College of San Francisco, Board of Trustees

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

Li Po - a bar in Chinatown

Tell us about yourself.

Why are you running for this office?

I am running for City College Board of Trustees because I understand the value of a public education and access to education. My entire education has been through the public system and education changed my life! My mom grew up poor in central China, in a city called Lanzhou in Gansu province. She was the first person in her family to go to college, where she studied Public Health. She applied to the PhD program at Yale on a whim and was accepted. It was through her perseverance and fearlessness that my dad and I were able to join her and come to the United States on her J1 Visa. She's now a professor herself and teaches courses on early childhood development. As a trustee I want to bring my experience working with immigrant families to make sure that post-pandemic, the immigrant and minority families who've been most affected by the shut down, can use City College as an opportunity to help change careers and learn new skills in the new economy.

There's no question that COVID-19 will define the city and I will also bring to the board a fearlessness to challenge the status quo and independence from the school's Administration. There are going to be massive calls for austerity as we try to recover from a concerted effort to pit communities against each other to fight over slices of the pie while huge corporations and millionaires in the City continue to get richer.

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

As someone who has handed out hundreds of The League of Pissed Off Voters' Guides every election cycle, I know how important and how effective the League's endorsement is, and the trust San Francisco voters have in your recommendations. But most importantly, as the most progressive candidate in this race, I believe my values align very closely with the League of Pissed Off Voters' values in protecting low-income and immigrant communities in San Francisco and fighting for equal policies to address the unacceptable wealth gap in the City.

What are your values and how did you get them?

My mom was the first person in her family to go to college. On a whim she applied to the graduate program for public health at Yale, and she was shocked when she got in. And that changed my whole family's lives. We were able to come to the United States on her J1 visa, and my dad who barely spoke English supported her as she got her education. She will forever be who has shaped me the most. Politically, I'm proud to have been mentored by strong progressive leaders in San Francisco like David Campos, Supervisors Matt Haney and Hillary Ronen. This experience shaped my values of perseverance and fearlessness, and wanting to pave the way for others. I have an unflinching willingness to speak truth to power and challenge what I see as wrong; that's the spirit I want to bring to the Board of Trustees.

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

I am an active member of the API and political community in San Francisco. Individuals and organisations who have endorsed me in this race continue to expect me to uphold the Progressive values I live by. They hold me accountable by asking me to show up when it counts, participate in political meetings, donate to organisations that share my values and support other young and upcoming Progressives.

What three endorsements are you most proud of?

Supervisor Matt Haney
Tenants Union
AFT2121

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

San Francisco Young Democrats

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

Aide on the Board of Supervisors, City and County of San Francisco

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?

SB50 does not do enough to create low income housing nor does it address the need for infrastructural and service improvements that would result from increased housing density. As it stands, the bill would be a giveaway to developers and lead directly to further displacement of Black and Brown communities.

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?

Vilaska Nguyen

Who are you supporting for District 9 Supervisor?

Hillary Ronen

Who are you supporting for District 11 Supervisor?

John Avalos

Who are you supporting for Board of Education?

Kevine Boggess, Alida Fische,r Mark Sanchez, Jenny Lam

Who are you supporting for Community College Board?

Alan Wong, Shanell Williams, Tom Temprano

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?

Michelle Tong, Carolyn Gold, Maria Evangelista

Who did you support for DCCC?

Keith Baraka, Queena Chen, Kelly Akemi Groth, Leah LaCroix, Janice Li, Li Miao Lovett, Gordon Mar, Faauga Moliga, Mano Raju, AJ Thomas, John Avalos, David Campos, Bevan Dufty, Peter Gallotta, Matt Haney, Frances Hsieh, Anabel Ibañez, Jane Kim, Honey Mahogany, Rafael Mandelman, Sophie Maxwell, Hillary Ronen, Shamann Walton, Shanell Williams, Gloria Berry

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

Community College Board

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

The top three issues facing CCSF are funding, management, and student enrollment and achievement. The Board of Trustees needs to be laser focused on ensuring that City College can survive this pandemic and be a central part of the City's recovery efforts. I will fight for any revenue measures to support CCSF and ensure it's financial solvency.

From talking to students and faculty that there are serious concerns about the management of CCSF. There needs to be more transparency in how decisions are made within the Administration and the process needs to be accessible to the people it serves. As Trustee, I will bring more scrutiny to those in the decision making seats and create a budget process that students and faculty can participate in without needing an economics degree to understand what's happening.

Finally, we can't have a school if we don't have students. CCSF enrollment has dropped dramatically from it's heyday and with the new funding formula from the state, there is an even greater need to increase enrollment and keep students on track in the classroom. This means CCSF needs to do more to support our immigrants and minority students outside the classroom with greater wrap-around services, students and teacher housing, and a more diverse staff that represents a student population that's over 30% API, and nearly 30% Latino.

Describe your current engagement with the Community College Board. Do you attend meetings (online or in person)? What are the most important items that have been on agendas recently?

I have been attending meetings regularly and the most important issues are the reorganisation of the leadership and the ongoing Balboa Park Reservoir Project.

With a structural budget deficit, how do you envision balancing the budget and keeping vocational and continuing education classes not supported by state funding?

There will be calls for austerity and budget cuts in the next year and City College will be asked to “do its part and take one for the team.” Cuts to education during economic downturns are never the answer. CCSF needs reliable and consistent funding so that it can focus on enrolling more students and bettering the quality of its classes without worrying about whether classes need to be cut or staff needs to be let go. I support the WERF legislation proposed by Supervisor Mar.

I believe that in a recession we should be investing in education and ensuring that City College is continuing to provide adult education, arts, and tech classes. San Francisco loves to talk about how much it values education but we need to back that talk with real investment and I will be a champion for that fight.

The educators, staff, and students of City College are leaning on the school even more now to provide stability and support during these times. Like Assemblyman Ammiano’s Rainy Day Fund for the school district, WERF can be a safety net for City College that will support the school in the long term.

The City alone cannot get us out of the financial situation COVID-19 has put us in. We need more investment in education from the state government which is why I fully support the Schools and Communities First ballot initiative to reform Prop 13. Corporations cannot continue to make billions of dollars through loopholes while our education institutions are left fighting for scraps.

What work have you done to support additional funding from the City or State for City College?

I believe during times of economic crisis we should be growing the pie - ensuring that huge corporations that are continuing to generate billions of dollars of revenue during a pandemic are paying their fair share and we are investing that money into education and public services. I’m proud to have been working on Supervisor Haney’s Overpaid Executive Tax and to be supporting Supervisor Mar’s Workforce Education & Recovery Fund legislation to bring more stable funding to City College. I have long supported the closing of the Prop 13 loophole and am happy to see Prop 15 appearing on the ballot this election cycle. We need to channel those dollars into our education system.

There is a proposed housing project on City-owned land along Balboa Reservoir, adjacent to campus. How do you envision working with the City, the SFPUC who owns the land, the developers, and your colleagues on the Community College Board to support the development of maximum affordable housing for staff and faculty?

The Community Advisory Committee on this project has met monthly since 2015, but even then, as at last week - a Memorandum of Understanding has yet to be signed between CCSF, the developer and the City of San Francisco. This is concerning. As Trustee, I believe it's imperative that a Memorandum of Understanding be drawn up as soon as possible in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts once the project is approved. I would hope to work hand in hand with the Board of Supervisors, the developer and the Public Utilities Commission to reach a compromise that satisfies the needs of the local community, the faculty and staff of City College while maintaining affordability and an Average Median Income that actually reflects what students and faculty can afford.

What qualities and experience would you look for in a new permanent chancellor?

We need a new Chancellor that is not just transparent, ethical and has personal and institutional integrity, but someone who can lead in partnership with the faculty and students. CCSF has undergone major challenges over the last few years and right now, at a time in which the city is seeing a major economic downturn, CCSF needs to rise to the occasion and be the beacon of hope that the community needs. There has been a lot of cynicism within the faculty and students over the past few years with the lack of communication and relationship building by the Chancellor and that's going to be even more crucial as we head into the fiscal challenges post-pandemic. I also believe it's more important now than ever to have a Chancellor who has experience prioritizing diversity, equity and inclusion and who understands the value that non-credit courses have for communities of color.

What is your opinion of the City College Campus Police, and would you propose any reforms to them?

One of the first things I plan to fight for as Trustee, is the defunding of CCSF Campus Police. There should not be any police officers on school campuses and having Campus Police respond to complaints on school premises only serves to criminalize our students.

Do you support maintaining a campus in the Tenderloin? Please explain your answer.

Yes. Tenderloin residents are amongst our most impoverished and the temporary loss of the Civic Center campus has already had a negative effect. Tenderloin residents are having to travel farther for educational opportunities and often have a tough time affording public transportation. A lot of the students in the Tenderloin are immigrants who work multiple jobs and need ESL classes literacy so it's imperative that we maintain a campus in this neighborhood.

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

The current global protests against hundreds of years of police murders of Black people are calling attention to systemic racism built into our economic and social system. The pandemic has clearly highlighted that both Black and Latinx communities are economically marginalized and vulnerable to public health disasters. Every branch of local government needs to be urgently working to use this time of heightened awareness to push through progressive policies and programs that address racial disparities.

Solutions to disparities in our education system always have to start with making sure that students have housing and food security. That's more important than ever post pandemic. City college needs to be a portal to provide immediate financial relief for Black and Latinx students who have lost their jobs, are unable to pay rent, and are going into massive debt to landlords during the pandemic. The Board of Trustees should be speaking loudly on behalf of their students to support Supervisor Preston's expanded eviction moratorium and should go even further and fight for rent forgiveness, mortgage freezes, and student loan forgiveness. Lastly, we need faculty that reflects the students the College serves. The Board of Trustees should set clear directives on how to recruit and retain Black and Brown, and API faculty. Faculty should reflect the students they service and be connected with these communities. Without higher wages, more affordable housing, and more equitable distribution of resources, it will be incredibly difficult.

Last Question

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

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