



#LAYouthVote

Candidate Questionnaire



The following questions come from students across LAUSD. They were collected using social media, during youth town halls and at on-campus voter registration drives. Your responses will be shared out through social media, the LAYouthVote.org site, and United Way platforms. Please keep answers to 500 words or less and submit responses no later than Monday, May 11th.

This questionnaire is part of a larger initiative in which students aim to engage 3,000 of their peers on high school campuses across LAUSD through voter registration. The youth leading the efforts at their schools are determined to get their friends, parents and families to vote for the candidate they believe will raise the graduation rate and promote college readiness for all students in Los Angeles.

1. What plans do you have to motivate kids to graduate and pursue their goals?—Jewel Laggay @jewelicious09

Since I was elected to the School Board, graduation rates and academic achievement have gone up. That's the work I will continue to do. During my time as a Board Member, and during the decades I have worked as a LAUSD teacher and administrator, I have learned effective strategies to motivate our students to succeed. I have also worked to create programs which push students to go above and beyond their expectations. I will continue to be involved in each and every one of our LAUSD schools – particularly our high schools – to ensure that students have access to the classes and the support that will enable them to graduate and pursue their dreams.

2. How do you plan to ensure that the voice and experiences of students is represented in your policies?—Cindy, LACES

The Board of Education has heard from student leaders many times over the past eight years, and it always gives me great pleasure and encouragement to hear them speak to the important issues that affect their daily lives, opportunities, and educational aspirations. I would like to hear more from LAUSD students across the District so that I know what is working and what isn't in our schools. One way to do this would be to form student task forces which would meet periodically with the Board. That way, when we draw up new policies, we can be sure that we are creating them with students in mind. This will also make the policies more likely to be successful since they will be tailored specifically to the student bodies of the various schools within LAUSD.

3. What would you do to better the school system so that it doesn't matter if we go to school in Boyle Heights or a "richer" community?—Guadalupe, 12th Grader, Roosevelt HS

This is an issue I care deeply about. My early years in LAUSD were at Locke High School in South Central Los Angeles and Angel's Gate Continuation High School. I saw firsthand the need for a fair allocation of resources and for working with the local community to address their needs. As a Board Member, I have been honored to oversee the new local control funding for our schools. This funding provides money necessary to repair schools, modernize classrooms, and pay for new equipment and computers. Part of the local control funding process also involves community input, which has greatly helped us determine the unique needs of different school sites. If re-elected, I will continue to ensure that local control funding is fairly divided, communities are heard from, and that all schools benefit.

4. Academic and college counselors at my school only spend time with the straight A students. What would you do to ensure that all students, especially the struggling ones, get the one-on-one time that they need?—@Garciaalexandra2

Students who are currently struggling with their academic careers are the ones who need more attention – not less – in order to succeed. It should be a priority for guidance counselors to work with these students and to check in with them on a regular basis to see how they are doing academically. Counselors shouldn't wait for students to come to them for help. It is their job to ensure that students don't slip through the cracks academically. I would advise students who are experiencing this disparity in their schools to contact me, or their local School Board Member, so that we can work with the LAUSD administration to correct it at the school in question.

5. How would you create and guarantee that all schools have a supportive atmosphere where parents are involved in student achievement to ensure English learners succeed?—Edna, 12th Grader, UCLA Community School

I would continue to reach out to parents and keep them informed about what is happening at their children's school. For parents and children who are English learners, they can feel isolated from the rest of the student body. We must take a proactive approach with these students and their parents to ensure that they are not only informed but also included in the student body and at-large community. There are a number of resources available to families who speak limited English through the Multilingual & Multicultural Education Department. I encourage students and their families to visit <http://lausd.schoolwires.net/mmed> to learn more.

6. How would you make sure that students felt safe on their campuses?—Cameron, 12th Grade, Fremont HS

My ultimate goal is for questions like these to never have to be asked. I will continue to ensure that our school staff and security are well informed as to the protocols for keeping our students safe. Bullying and cyberbullying are not tolerated in LAUSD, and we are working to create a safe atmosphere for everyone, especially minority and LGBT students. I will also work with guidance counselors and teachers to make sure that they know the signs of a potentially at-risk student and that they reach out to this student and provide support in the hopes that we can avoid more tragedies like the ones our nation has been struck with in recent years.

7. What is the best way to demonstrate that the surveys parents and students take every year are making a difference in the policies you create?—Jose, 12th Grade, Manual Arts HS

We need to have more communication between the Board and the students and parents. It's not enough to simply have students and parents fill out surveys, we must also distribute the results of these surveys and act on them. I will continue to provide updates to the students and parents in my District via letters, email, and on social media in order to keep them informed as to the results of surveys and the progress we are making.

8. Sophomores are going to have to get a C or better in their A-G courses to graduate. What will happen to the students who are currently at risk of not graduating?—Beatriz, 12th Grade, Maya Angelou Community HS

As Board Members, we will do everything we can to ensure that students who are at risk of not graduating have the tools and support they need to raise their grades and succeed. I also believe that we must reach out to these students before they begin to have serious problems with their grades. Having an early intervention rather than scrambling at the end will help more students to graduate.

9. How will you support the foster youth and kids with unstable personal lives?—Harley, Venice Adult School

Students from unstable families and foster youth, in particular, often need extra support to be as successful as their peers in more stable situations. Recently we created the Foster Youth Achievement Program to address this issue, in which special counselors meet directly with students and their families to develop individualized programs to help these students succeed. I encourage you to learn more about it at <http://achieve.lausd.net/Page/1497>. We will continue developing approaches like this to address students with other personal situations that could inhibit their learning.

10. What do you see as pivotal moments that affect a student's education in their personal lives and at school? How can make sure those moments do not have negative effects on a student's educational journey?—Maria, 10th Grade, SVAH@RFK

Bullying, instability at home, violence, or instances of abuse can all have negative effects on student's educational journeys. As Board Members, we must do our best to ensure that these effects are not lasting. Most successful adults who once experienced these effects can point to a common individual who helped them turn things around: a great teacher. We must encourage LAUSD teachers and administrators to serve students, and not the other way around. They must be sounding

boards for their student bodies, listening to their needs, supporting them as they grow, and inspiring them to be the best young adults they can be.