

## **Kim Trutane for Albany Board of Education**

Green Party of Alameda County Endorsement Questionnaire

**Candidate name: Kim Trutane**

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**Website:**

**Occupation: Homemaker/School Volunteer**

**Campaign Chair: Self**

**Treasurer: Kathleen Bliss**

1. Please briefly summarize your background, qualifications, and reasons for wanting to serve on the Albany Unified School District Board of Education.

**I am an 18-year Albany homeowner and would bring the perspective of a knowledgeable and involved parent to the School Board. My public service includes PTA President at Marin, Marin Site Council President, AMS Writer Coach, community-wide committees such as the Community Advisory Council, Fundraising Advisory Committee and Facilities Master Planning Configuration Committee. I initiated regular meetings between the elementary PTA Presidents and district staff, and strengthened cooperation between the PTAs through joint efforts such as Enrichment Funding. I organized the 2014/15 School Board Reporters, district-wide parent volunteers who summarized School Board meetings for busy parents.**

**I support continued Albany school excellence and pledge to improve communication between the Board and community. My extensive volunteerism and passionate commitment to Albany schools has earned the endorsement of every current school board member. As the district launches four major school construction projects, effective, inclusive discussions within our diverse community are essential. My support of safe, appropriately sized schools began with co-chairing the Yes On Measures B & E Committee; the goal now shifts to getting the greatest possible value from our tax dollars and ensuring effective use of funds.**

2. What ideas do you have for addressing overcrowding in Albany schools? How can we protect class size reduction for all levels? What are your views on inter-district transfers and what priority do you feel should be given to children of teachers and other district employees who live outside of Albany?

**Albany schools are overcrowded, and we can thank our community for passing school construction Bond Measures B & E in the June 2016 election to relieve overcrowding and improve seismic safety. Moving forward thoughtfully but promptly on the construction projects is the most direct, efficacious way to address the overcrowding problem. Having an adequate number of classrooms for our growing school-aged population is fundamental to keeping class sizes small. I think that the Albany community supports educating our teacher's children and the children of our public servants in our schools. We may need to review carefully at the transfer policy for students that have moved out of the district. When those students are required to relocate to a school in their new district deserves thought.**

3. How can the district best serve the needs of our diverse range of students, some of whom are ready for AP or honors classes, some of whom are not college bound, and some of whom have disabilities or other difficulties that can make learning a challenge?

**Albany Unified School District should and does provide a quality education for all students. Math and English skills are the foundation for either college or career. As well as a broad selection of AP classes at Albany High, there are several small learning community programs. One is the award-winning Venture Program for building business, design, and retail knowledge; another is the Environmental Design, Science, Engineering, and Technology (EDSET) program. EDSET includes an integrated internship program. AUSD's LCAP Plan states that over 50% of Albany High students take one or more Career Technical Education courses during their tenure. These include culinary skills courses, Broadcast Journalism, and accessible (meaning these course are not reserved for a small subset of students) technology and laboratory classes. AUSD received an 880 Career Pathways Trust grant, and staff is working on developing career-focused pathways in the areas of Information Communication Technology/Digital Media, Engineering, and Biomedical.**

4. How should the district balance the need to attract and retain high quality teachers by offering competitive salary, security and health benefits with the need for enhanced programming for students?

**I am in favor of above average compensation for Albany teachers, although it is the prerogative of district staff and the teacher's union to work out the specific balance of benefits and pay scale that comprise the compensation package. One highly prized benefit is putting the children of teachers at the top of our interdistrict transfer list. Teachers become even more a part of our community by having their children educated in Albany schools and are invested long-term in the district. Especially in the Bay Area, where housing costs are extremely high and the quality of schools uneven, this unpaid benefit is valued.**

**In addition, Albany has been able to attract and retain excellent teachers because of the kind of district we are. Albany folks care about education. We have very involved, supportive parents, who tend to remain supportive of the schools even after their children graduate. Teachers are a part of our community, and I see teachers staying here for their entire teaching careers because they are esteemed. Lastly, AUSD emphasizes professional development, so that our teachers can stay at the forefront of their profession. We have principals that value and support teachers as they master changing curriculum and new teaching methods. As a district, Albany moves forward, striving to do an even better job educating all of our students. Together, these factors make Albany a great district for teachers.**

5. Four-part question on Measures B&E, both passed by Albany voters in June:

a. How do you intend to improve the quality of the design and sustainability features of the new school construction projects, now that voters have approved this funding?

**The Board passed a resolution at the August 9, 2016 meeting stating that every new school, new building, or major modernization project would meet the Collaborative of High**

**Performance Schools (CHPS) minimum qualifying point within the budget of the project. I support this resolution and think it will lead to improved quality of design, improved educational opportunities for students, and will benefit the entire Albany community.**

b. What is your position regarding the school district pursuing solar power, and what other measures do you propose to cut the District's power bill (which was reported at a recent Sustainability Committee meeting to be highest in the summer when school is not in session)?

**I think that the school district should pursue the CHPS approach, with a goal of being Net-Zero Energy Ready. I support taking a broad look at AUSD energy consumption. We need to think about reduced use, efficient use, and the sourcing of the energy. All aspects need to be considered, and I believe that following the CHPS approach is a very important part of that.**

c. What opportunities do you see to turn the school buildings and campuses themselves into teaching tools and laboratories?

**Myriad opportunities! Even now, Albany teachers and volunteers frequently use outdoor spaces for learning. Currently I know there are vegetable gardens at Marin, Cornell, and AMS. Since my kids went to Marin, and I worked there both as an aide and a volunteer, I have seen how Marin's outdoor resources are used. At the Snake Wall Garden, students sketch the apple blossoms, then the developing fruit at several timepoints. The mulberry tree provides leaves to feed the silkworm caterpillars. When a hummingbird nested in a bush outside the library, it was carefully watched and given a zone of safety. With architects directed to providing more useable outdoor spaces, based on working examples of built schools, these opportunities will increase. Right now, construction of a bioswale at Albany Middle School is underway, and now students will have the opportunity to study the concept and function of a swale on campus.**

d. Would you propose that new construction and modernization projects within AUSD participate in the Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) program or seek Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Living Building Challenge or other green building certification?

**As stated above, the Board of Education passed a resolution at the August 9, 2016 meeting stating that every new school, new building, or major modernization project would meet the Collaborative of High Performance Schools (CHPS) minimum qualifying point within the budget of the project. I support this resolution and think it will lead to improved quality of design, improved educational opportunities for students, and will benefit the entire Albany community.**

6. What is your vision for Albany's 21st-century schools and how would you as a Board of Education member assist the transition of AUSD towards a 21st-century model?

**I think that we are already moving into a 21st-century school model. Albany teachers have changed their pedagogical methods, moving toward less lecture teaching and more learning activities----from theater to robotics. Our students are being asked to creatively problem solve on their own and in groups. They are being asked to explain their thinking, and to identify and use multiple problem-solving strategies that are named and described. Common Core teaching has been implemented, and a new writing program is in place for**

**this school year. I have heard Next Generation Science Standards discussed at board members, and look forward to seeing the implementation of those proceed. A "maker space" is included in the design for the classroom wing addition at Albany High, and that 21st-century feature will further broaden opportunities for hands-on learning, entrepreneurship, and tech trade careers.**

7. Three-part question on alternative instructional approaches:

a. What alternative instructional programs do you support (e.g., "blended" curriculums, flexible and open learning environments, technology-based learning, and project-based learning? What is your understanding of these instructional methods?

**As a Writer Coach at AMS, I counseled 8th-grade students on their iSearch projects. Students chose their own topic, researched it intensively on the Web, and wrote about it in a series of different projects. The iSearch also requires the student to visit a site pertinent to their topic, or conduct an interview with an expert. It's a great example of project-based and technology-based learning, and lights a spark in many students. As a parent, I will always have fond memories (and many photos!) of the numerous plays my children performed in their elementary years. Local history, U.S. geography, fair play/sportmanship, and the biology of life cycles were all effectively taught through learning songs and acting out these plays.**

b. Are there other changes in the current schedule, such as a later start time, for which you would advocate, and, if so, what is your reasoning for supporting these changes?

**The high school and middle school took steps toward a later-morning start time a few years ago. This was a great achievement and raised awareness in our community about the importance of the biological shift in sleep cycles in teens. I think an assessment should be done to see the results of that small start-time shift in tardies and morning attendance, and to look further at the emerging research. I have noted that several Bay Area school districts, including our neighbor, Berkeley, have staff meetings in the morning, allowing students to arrive later that day, rather than having an early release day with staff meetings in the afternoon. I think the Board should discuss and consider making further progress in this area, although I am very aware of how complex the issue becomes when the school day ends later in the afternoon. I am definitely in favor of measures that both promote the health and well being of our students and lead to greater academic success. I also favor flexible scheduling that would allow students to intern and have concurrent enrollment in community college courses.**

c. Are you familiar with the Khan Academy (<<http://www.khanacademy.org/>><http://www.khanacademy.org/>) and what is your view regarding the role of this type of resource in Albany?

**Broadening the resources of our small community through technology could be a very good thing, but quality of programs and ensuring the fidelity of student work are issues that need to be discussed and resolved. I think that a concurrent-enrollment program with the Peralta Colleges is under development now.**

8. Who has endorsed you or is supporting your candidacy? Who are you endorsing, from President all the way down ballot to local races? Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

**I am very grateful to have the endorsement of all five current Board of Education Trustees. At this time, I have not asked others for their endorsement. I am supporting Clinton for President.**

9. Do you support amending the Constitution to end corporate Constitutional rights and getting money out of politics? Have you Taken the Pledge to Amend? ( <<https://movetoamend.org/take-pledge-amend>><https://movetoamend.org/take-pledge-amend> )

**Yes, I have taken the Pledge to Amend.**

10. The following are the 10 Key Values of the Green Party (more details available at <<http://www.cagreens.org/platform/10k.shtml>><http://www.cagreens.org/platform/10k.shtml>). In view of these values, why do you feel your candidacy merits Green Party endorsement?

Green Party 10 Key Values

- 1) Ecological wisdom
- 2) Social Justice
- 3) Non violence
- 4) Grassroots democracy
- 5) Decentralization
- 6) Community based economics
- 7) Feminism
- 8) Respect for diversity
- 9) Personal and global responsibility
- 10) Sustainability

I share these values and live by them. Thank you for your consideration.