

**GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY, FALL 2014  
PERALTA BOARD CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Please complete this questionnaire as an electronic document and email it to [GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoo.com](mailto:GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoo.com) In the subject line, please include "Peralta Board". We need to receive your response no later than **Saturday, August 23, 2014****

**If you are not able to e-mail the questionnaire you may send it by snail mail to:**

Peralta Board Questionnaire  
c/o Green Party of Alameda County ,  
2022A Blake Street ~ Berkeley , CA 94704

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Name: Richard Fuentes

Phone: 510.423.3325

Email: [richard@richarfuentes.com](mailto:richard@richarfuentes.com)

Website: [www.richardfuentes.com](http://www.richardfuentes.com)

1. Why did you decide to run for this office? What skills/strengths would you bring to the Board? I'm running for Peralta Community College Board of Trustees to continue my passion for public education. I didn't learn to read or write in English until I was in the 5th grade. I struggled with that challenge in elementary school, middle school and high school. But I turned those challenges into opportunities and got accepted to San Diego State University after my senior year of high school. However, I was unable to continue my studies because I was unable to pass remedial English and had to leave college.

I turned to my local neighborhood community college for a second chance. There I learned first hand what a community college can do for our community. I had the opportunity to witness the amazing programs that my friends took like nursing, culinary arts and carpentry. As for me I had the opportunity to complete my college courses and transfer to 4 year university.

I continue that passion for public education because I believe it can transform lives. I'm honored to serve my 6 consecutive year as President of the Hoover School Site Council as the most improved school in the District I'm running to represent on the Peralta Colleges Board of Trustee

**2. Describe your relevant employment experience, particularly in community colleges. If employed in community colleges, what length of service?** I have been constructively involved in education for many years. When Hoover Elementary School parents needed help to address the concerns of Hoover's Spanish-speaking parents, community advocates called on me. My effectiveness led to service on the Hoover School Site Council. My ideas on collaborations and initiatives for improvements that truly helped students, teachers, and parents subsequently led to my election as President of the Hoover School Site Council. As President, I continue to spearhead programs that have transformed Hoover Elementary into the most improved elementary school in West Oakland.

As an active member of my union, AFSCME, I know that improvements to our Peralta Colleges must be done in ways that provide fair wages and just work for all.

**3. What are three major issues in Peralta that need to be addressed? How would you address those issues?**

**Outreach-** I learned about the options community colleges offered because they came to my church to do outreach. We need to do this here in our communities of color. We all know about the situation in Minnesota this week. We need to diversify our police force and so when we do outreach, I want to make sure our black and brown youth know they can get into Laney's Cadet program. I want our students to know that our community college offer a Pathway to College and a Pathway to Careers.

**Funding.** Peralta needs to invest in a comprehensive grants program which has a grantwriter seeking \$5-\$10 million opportunities to enhance and expand the programs at Peralta. We also need to combine this effort with a lobbyist that champions Peralta

in DC and Sacramento. We did this at the City of Oakland when I was legislative director. But what I also offer with both my experience in fund development, legislation and my endorsements from Assemblymember Bonta and Assemblymember Rich Gordon is the ability to work with them and others to advocate and obtain the funds we need to better serve our students.

**Leadership.** Next Spring, Peralta will undergo its accreditation process. We need to show we have improved from the past but we also need to ensure that our trustees are not micromanagers. This happened in our neighboring city of San Francisco. I've spoken with trustees there about what went wrong and it's those learning's that I will bring to the board and use wisely when reviewing the contract of our chancellor.

4. What would you do as Trustee to ensure that Peralta is accountable to the community in use of public funds, including bond money, and the parcel tax passed in June 2012?

As a Peralta Community College Trustee, I would advocate to have a community watchdog oversight committee to oversee and provide feedback on the budget, expenditures and bond monies allocated by taxpayers to Peralta. This committee would be in addition to the oversight bond committee. The community watchdog committee would be composed of community members, students and other Peralta Colleges stakeholders.

5. What are you prepared to do to advocate for increased state funding?

Peralta needs to invest in a comprehensive grants program which has a grantwriter seeking \$5-\$10 million opportunities to enhance and expand the programs at Peralta. We also need to combine this effort with a lobbyist that champions Peralta in DC and Sacramento. We did this at the City of Oakland when I was legislative director. But what I also offer with both my experience in fund development, legislation and my endorsements from Assemblymember Bonta and Assemblymember Rich Gordon is the ability to work with them and others to advocate and obtain the funds we need to better serve our students.

6. What creative ideas do you have to develop alternative funding sources?

A creative solution I mentioned earlier is to have a comprehensive and robust grant

planning department to seek private, state and federal funding. In addition, I believe that Peralta Colleges has the opportunity to provide educational training services to local government agencies such as BART, EBMUD and local municipalities as a way to increase funding to educate existing workforce without impacting student services or academic programs for our existing students. This will provide the opportunity for the college to increase outside funding for services rendered and increase funding with new grants.

## 7. How would you define the role of trustee in relation to the chancellor and administration?

We need to show we have improved from the past but we also need to ensure that our trustees are not micromanagers. That said I will be an advocate for Transparency and a participatory budgeting process so that these are not roles just reserved for the board or the chancellor.

## 8. Describe your understanding of shared governance. What is the role of faculty, classified staff, and students in shared governance?

I support shared governance. I believe that we need to turn to those experts who are in the classrooms such as our faculty, classified staff and students to provide advice and feedback on the needs of the college so that together we can fund resources to meet those needs. It is important to have faculty and staff participation in the planning and decision making process.

## 9. What is your opinion about selling/leasing college land for commercial development?

I am not aware of this issue.

## 10. What is your view on parity for part-time faculty?

I believe part-time faculty need to be compensated by hours worked and hours paid. Many times part-time faculty are working at various community colleges and working over 40 hours a week and not compensated at the rate of a full-time faculty. As an elected Trustee I will advocate for State legislation similar to the State of Arizona for a Community College Pay and Benefits Equity Act that compensates our part-time faculty and provides compensation for office hours.

## 11. What is your experience with collective bargaining? What is your approach to conflict resolution?

As the only union member candidate in my election I understand the collective bargaining process well and would never support efforts to undermine collective bargaining. My approach to conflict resolution is collaboration. Collaboration plays a major role within conflict resolution and requires great courage and much consideration. Collaborating with the other party involves listening to their side, discussing areas of agreement and goals, and ensuring that all parties understand each other. Collaboration requires thinking creatively to resolve the problem without concessions.

## 12. If you are an *incumbent*, what are the three most important accomplishments that you achieved during your time on the Peralta Board? If you are a *challenger*, what are the three most important accomplishments that you have achieved in the last four years that improved the quality of life in your community?

This is an open seat. To the spirit of the question, though, I am proud that you can look around Area 7 and find multiple representations of my work. I am not just lounging around on the weekends. That time off is time to better my community. I have led tree plantings, throughout West Oakland BART Station, to Historic Hoover Corridor to my own neighborhood of Dogtown. I've led efforts to green and clean those areas.

But I am most proud of the work I have done at Hoover Elementary. I have served as president of the Hoover School Site for the last 6 years. I was asked by community leaders to address the concerns of Hoover's Spanish speaking parents. I learned from that advocacy that Hoover was failing our children. I said enough. I partnered with parents, teacher and the principal to turn Hoover around and I am proud that we have become the most improved elementary school in the area I am running to represent. API scores continue to climb every year but that's not all. I recruited Recology to bring in 100 staff and spend \$10,000 to improve our STEM garden to ensure that our kids growing up in low-income communities of color had access to and knowledge to grow their own fresh fruits and vegetables.

## 13. Who has endorsed you so far? What labor support do you have?

Name: **Richard Fuentes**

Office you are seeking: **Peralta Community College Trustee, Area 7**

Sheila Jordan, Alameda County Superintendent of Education

Betty Yee, California Board of Equalization

Kriss Worthington, Berkeley Councilmember

Jessie Arreguin, Berkeley Councilmember

Peralta Federation of Teachers

AFSCME, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club

East Bay Young Democrats

14. How much money do you currently have for this race? How much money do you plan to raise? Where will the money come from?

I have raised \$20,000 from over 100 donors who know of my work championing educational equity and improving communities on Oakland and the East Bay.

I plan to raise \$35,000.

15. Anything Else? -- Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

I want the Green Party's endorsement. I value the work of the party and the message that Green Party candidates carry forward in elections. I believe the Green Party helps challenge the Democratic Party and its candidates in this liberal Bay Area to stay true to the values of equity, equality, justice and fairness that we all hold dear.

It would be an honor to have the party's endorsement. I would outreach to the party throughout my term and on critical issues to ensure your perspective is heard. I am a proud and active union brother yet some in union leadership are upset with my candidacy because I will not be a yes person to leadership. I believe that first and foremost my concern is the students and workers at Peralta not those in power or special interests with their agendas. I ask you to stand with me and that we stand together for working families. Si Se Puede!

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Name: **Richard Fuentes**      Office you are seeking: **Peralta Community College Trustee, Area 7**

Greg Jan  
Green Party of Alameda County

(Please reply to: [GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com](mailto:GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com) by  
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