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1. Motivation -- Why did you choose to run for School Board?

As a former teacher and Oakland native, I care deeply about our kids’ future. Every child in OUSD deserves a quality education – one that prepares them for college and careers.

As a middle school teacher and Peace Corps volunteer, I saw just how much we need the community – parents, teachers, and students – to work together. Too few of our youth are set up to have good options later in life. That’s why I founded a nonprofit called Greenside Development Foundation that empowers low-income young adults to create small businesses through entrepreneurship education, interest-free microloans and mentorship. To date, we’ve helped over 75 young adults in Morocco and Oakland start their own business.

Since I was a child at Crocker Highlands Elementary, Oakland schools have given me so much. As your Board Member, I want to bring my experiences as a teacher and an education nonprofit leader to ensure all Oakland kids receive a quality education.

Oakland is my home and the city that I love. I was not just raised here, I chose to make my life here as an adult as well. Moreover, providing opportunities for children and young adults is my life’s work. As such, I believe I am uniquely equipped to help ensure that all of Oakland’s children get the educational opportunities that they deserve. We are falling short of that bar presently, and I am running for school board so that we never fall short again.

2. Program and Priorities -- Elected office provides the opportunity to proactively lead by placing new ideas on the agenda for consideration and development. What are some specific ideas you intend to pursue if elected? What do you believe are the main priorities for the School Board?

I believe the most pressing issues facing our teachers to be massive and rapid teacher turnover, and its root causes, as well as the lack of direct classroom funding.

First, too many of our Oakland teachers are leaving the classroom because they don’t have enough administrative support, professional development, or clear career ladders towards leadership roles. As a board member, I would partner with teachers directly to hear what tools and training they need to be their best for our students. I will then work with school site

administrators to determine a system by which our schools' leadership teams can be held accountable to provide that training. By providing professional development and advancement opportunities designed by and for teachers, we can create a cultural shift and keep our teachers working together with our community over the long term.

Second, it is unacceptable that budgets consistently fail to maintain the state-mandated direct classroom spending threshold. As a teacher, I saw that each school and classroom has unique needs and cookie-cutter solutions will not provide the quality of education our students deserve at scale. The school board must meet the direct classroom expenditure mandate, ensure that teachers are equipped with the budgets they need to build great classrooms, and empowered to make the decisions toward that end.

3. Qualifications -- Please give a brief summary of your background and qualifications for the office of School Board member. If you are a current School Board member, what issues can you point to in your time as Board member that have had a positive impact? As a Board member what can you tell us about your service on the Board, and share with us the decisions you have made in this capacity that you believe made a difference in the functioning of the School Board?

As a former teacher, I have a unique understanding of how to listen to and advocate for the needs of students, families, and teachers. As a leader with executive and fundraising experience, I can effectively manage a campaign organization and work with a vast network to build support. Finally, my approach is one of collaboration, for which I believe the community is hungry. By listening to the community and leveraging my experience and network, I believe I can be a successful candidate.

I'm not a politician. I'm running for school board because of what I've seen and experienced as a teacher and in my education non-profit. As the only classroom teacher in this race, I understand the challenges teachers face, and have seen what's possible for students when parents and teachers work together towards high expectations.

As an Education Non-Profit CEO (my ballot designation), I have a proven history of demanding and delivering results.

Finally, as a social entrepreneur, I've listened to a diverse community and driven towards shared vision. I firmly believe the Oakland school board needs leaders who will listen FIRST and together drive to the best results for all our students. How can we leap to solutions without fully understanding the issue from the perspective of those closest to it?

4. School Ratings and Evaluations -- How do you rate the Oakland schools? Name the success and shortcomings?

5. Budget -- What changes to the OUSD budget would you suggest? (include changes to revenue).

6. LCFF & LCAP -- How do you see the impact of the new Local Control Funding Formula and the role of staff and parents/community in LCAP?

I believe that the LCAP process is an excellent medium to give voice to the different constituents who have an impact on a student's education. Anyone, from a student's parents to their coaches to local business leaders to the Central Office, who can play a role in improving student outcomes should be brought the table. I believe we can continue to grow the voices at that table, engaging community organizing groups to educational philanthropy to educational technology firms. Community banks and major corporations could become financial supporters of public education and provide our teachers with another resource in making education career-relevant.

After speaking with numerous stakeholders engaged in the LCAP process, I heard that the LCAP process reached out to as many different groups as possible and tried to give each a voice in the creation of the LCAP.

I especially believe in teachers' and students' ability to inform the LCAP - to tell the board, staff, the community what they need and what we could be doing to better serve them. I think that teachers and students should have had a bigger voice in the process.

7. School Closures -- What is your position on the schools which have been closed over the past several years, and the eviction of the "People's School for Public Education" at Lakeview School? What is your position on future school closures?

8. Other OUSD Properties -- What are your views on the use of the District property at 1025 2nd Ave. and the future location of Dewey HS?

9. Truants and Drop-outs -- What do you suggest we do about the truants and those who have dropped out?

As a student in Oakland, I was privileged to receive excellent education, one that opened the door to opportunities for me. However, across Oakland, not all kids are getting that same fair shot. During my time in the classroom, I saw firsthand how underserved my students of color were and continue to be. To address this same issue here in OUSD, I would work together with other board members to create an Equity Task Force with the mandate and the resources to develop, test, evaluate and recommend various strategies for addressing the dropout crisis among African-American and Latino males. This task force would lift up the diverse voices of parents, teachers, administrators, community stakeholders, and students themselves to ensure that our solutions are truly responsive to the community. We have discussed this crisis for years, and our students deserve strong, decisive, and creative solutions now.

Finally, we need to make sure our budget reflects the level of priority this crisis deserves. The policies this task force proposes should be fully supported in our budget, whether that means investing heavily in Linked Learning to make curriculum more relevant to students, or strengthening restorative justice programs to address the school to prison pipeline. By ensuring that teachers and school site administrators have the budgets to reach all students, we can begin to support all students.

10. Charter Schools -- What should Oakland's policy be around charter schools? What would you propose, if anything, in lieu of Charter schools? Do you distinguish between the different types? Would you support putting charter schools under the union contract?

I see several advantages in our charter schools. Charters provide choice for students and families. When a current school is not working for their students, families can find an environment that offers an appropriate solution. Charters also foster innovation by allowing schools to make decisions on a local level rather than relying on a centralized decision-making model. Across our district, we see that charters are leading the way in terms of integrating technology, employing creative approaches to learning, and building cultures of ambition and success among students. Finally, charters have the freedom to create highly specialized classrooms to address the highly specialized needs and challenges that children in Oakland face. While OUSD has often looked for overarching solutions to district challenges, charters have flipped the paradigm and started problem-solving on a student-by-student basis. We, too, need to flip our paradigm.

Charters also raise interesting challenges. Real tensions exist between district and charter schools when it comes to funding, facilities and student population. All too often, our dialogue is focused on a false dichotomy of district versus charter, instead of on what we can learn and achieve for all Oakland students. We must facilitate dialogue that is student-focused and solutions-oriented. Next, charters require a significant shift in the way we budget our district, and the board has yet to find ways to effectively navigate that shift. Finally, while charters have created highly specialized environments for some students, they, like OUSD schools, have not found ways to ensure that every student has the access they need and deserve. While charters present some substantial challenges

for our community, they also add enormous value and should be regarded as positive additions to our educational ecosystem.

11. Testing and Teacher Evaluations -- What should our policy be around Student Testing and Teacher Evaluation? Do you see alternatives to the use of mandated standardized tests in meeting local, state and national education goals? How much are we teaching to the test now, and what should we be doing different if you feel it should be different?

12. Common Core -- What are your views on the use of the proposed Common Core curriculum?

13. Small Schools -- What do you think of the current Small Schools?

14. Central Resources -- How do you think the allocations of central resources should work and how should that relate to local school funding?

15. City/Government Relations -- How should the City of Oakland support the OUSD, and education in general?

16. Police -- What is your position on Campus police? How would you create an environment where police are not needed?

17. Unions -- What do you think of the relationship between the OUSD and the unions? What would you propose it should be and how would you act on that?

18. Adult Education -- What is your position on Adult Education?

19. Vocational Education -- What is your position Vocational Education?

As a former middle school teacher, I firmly believe that we must make our middle and high school experiences relevant to all students. By leveraging community partners, we can expose students to the wealth of opportunity that exists for them in our community. We can prepare them for college and careers by prioritizing building career and 21st Century skills: problem solving, critical thinking, etc.

Next, we need to shift the board focus to innovation. I would work to implement a designated program in which teachers with creative ideas have the flexibility and the funding to bring them to reality.

Finally, students must feel empowered to chart their own courses in school, so that they can confidently do so after graduation. In my role as the leader of a non-profit, I work with young adults in Oakland to build the skills and confidence to become business owners. I'd bring that experience to the board and bring students into school and district conversations about their educations.

Fundamentally, our students want to learn and be successful. We need to deliver on our promise to give them the skills and confidence they require, building lifelong learners who go on to be Oakland's next leaders.

As Linked Learning promotes 21st Century skills and career pathways, I promote the Linked Learning parcel tax in District 2.

20. 'Academics vs. Electives' -- What is the proper balance between academics and sports, arts and other electives? Do you support using organizations such as Play Works to provide sports, arts and other electives formally provided by staff before the series of cutbacks?

21. The School Day -- What is your opinion on the length of the school day and the role of before school and after school programs?

22. Accountability -- How do you propose making yourself accountable and accessible to the citizens of Oakland?

23. Endorsements -- Who has endorsed you so far? Who do you expect to endorse you?

24. Campaign Funding -- How much money do you currently have for this race? How much money do you plan to raise? Where will the money come from? Describe sources of financial contributions for your campaign that you would refuse to accept (if any).

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