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## **Green Party of Alameda**

### **QUESTIONS FOR BRIEF RESPONSES:**

1. Please provide a very brief summary of your background and qualifications for Hayward School Board. If you are a current elected official, what successes could you point to in your time as an elected official?

Throughout my seven years of graduate school, I served on several councils, committees, and task forces to help improve education, communication, and curriculum for students at the college level. Currently, I volunteer to read to children with the Kid's Breakfast Club, to set up the bi-monthly Comida food pantry at Eden United Church of Christ, to uplift democracy with the League of Women Voters, and to support our students and teachers in the classroom at Glassbrook Elementary. I've reached out to the teacher's union, the school district, the HUB, teachers, City Council, faith communities, and service organizations to see where I can best use my time and energy to support our schools. Through that effort, I've built relationships within our community based on our shared commitment to uplifting our kids. My experience serving in all these capacities has instilled in me the value of working together. Currently, I am not an elected official.

2. Why did you choose to run for Hayward School Board? What strengths/skills would you bring to the it?

My parents are both working class—my mom worked at the local grocery store as a baker, and my father was an undocumented immigrant working as a stone mason. Attending college wasn't in the cards for them, and I never thought it was in the cards for me, either. If it wasn't for my teachers, my basketball coach, and my church youth group leader, I'm not sure I would have made it to college. It wasn't easy to make it to graduation—I had to work several jobs and take care of my sisters while I took classes, but with support from the community, I did it. And that made all the difference for me. I've been teaching now for more than nine years in California State Universities, and I see the transformative power of education in my students' lives, too. And now I'm ready to serve in my community of Hayward to make sure all our students receive the education and have access to the opportunities they deserve and that they'll need in order to pursue their dreams. I also know what it takes to help our students become career-ready and college-ready.

3. Have you been affiliated with any local civic, citizen, or environmental advocacy groups?

I am currently a member of Sierra Club, but my most prominent advocacy role is being a member on the League of Women Voters of California's Climate Change Task Force, where I track legislation in California to recommend support or opposition to any bills related to climate change. Additionally, I lobby as a member of the League's advocacy branch and with Green CA on bills such as SB 100 and SB424.

4. What endorsements have you received so far (from either groups or individuals)?

I am endorsed by Assemblyman Bill Quirk; Alameda County Board of Education Trustees Aisha Knowles and Amber Childress; Hayward City Council Members Sara Lamnin, Al Mendall, and Francisco Zermeño; Good Government Now!; Hayward Civic Leaders Advocating for Student Success; and East Bay Women's Political Alliance.

5. What are some of the most important issues in the Hayward Public Schools that need to be addressed, and what creative ideas can you offer to address them?

- a. **Mismanagement of Time:** One of the biggest problems I've seen over the last year is the mismanagement in terms of time—our board continually tables decisions, which then leaves them with fewer choices. Working with staff to gather the needed information before the meeting, so that decisions can be made in a timely fashion is the biggest solution to this issue in terms of immediate change.
- b. **Mismanagement of Funds and Underuse of Existing Resources:** I believe we have the funding we need, but that it isn't allocated in the most efficient manner. There are programs that overlap with one another in purpose, for example, and so taking a closer look at where we can optimize the great programs we have and consolidate where there's unnecessary overlap. We also have programs that our parents aren't knowledgeable of (like Pre-K and T-K), and so are underutilizing, which can affect funding for such programs. Communication is key, and so improving our correspondence with families is also a way to secure existing funding and capitalize on funding we're entitled to receive but don't have enough support for to demand.
- c. **Improve student achievement:** We need to increase professional development opportunities for our teachers to better prepare our students for 21<sup>st</sup>-century careers; we need to better equip them for special education instruction, bilingual education, and dual-immersion education; we need to provide more focused solutions in our classroom for bolstering our students who need the most help to bring up their math and reading scores; and we need to maintain small class sizes, so our students have the personalized and specialized instruction they need to succeed in learning.

6. How much money do you currently plan to devote to your campaign? Are your donors publicly listed on your website?

We have raised \$12,000 and hope to raise \$25,000. Our donors are not publicly listed on our website, but I am happy to supply a list upon request.

7. Do you consider environmental education as part of your vision for the public schools? If so, how would these concerns be implemented?

Environmental Literacy is a priority for me—I want to implement more fully Torlakson's Blueprint for Environmental Literacy in Hayward Schools, who right now have to rely on non-profit organizations in the Bay Area for help in this area now. Increasing professional development opportunities for our teachers is one solution. Making better use of the resources we have in our local area for environmental education is another solution.

8. Would you favor developing school community gardens to teach environmentally sound practices?

The sites that currently have school community gardens are a huge hit, and students have come to the Board and Superintendent to request a community garden at the schools that do not yet have them. I believe this is a great way to foster community, build respect for peers and nature, and to educate students on the environment and nutrition. So yes, I would most certainly favor expanded development.

9. Do you plan to have the schools to expand solar panel coverage on the roofs of school buildings and parking lots?

The Board has been working to bring solar panels to all of our sites in Hayward, and I fully support this effort (from my perspective, it is long overdue and a shame it took so long to have them act on such an obvious move toward sustainability).

10. What do you perceive as the most effective way to curtail student abuse of cell phones?

Having strict policies that are enforced is one way, and also making sure that the content in the classroom is engaging (more professional development for teachers is a benefit for many reasons), so our students are less reliant on cell phones as a way to keep their minds active. Additionally, developing mindfulness in the students will help them feel less anxious when not using their cell phones.

11. If funding were to become even more of a problem, would you favor short-term curtailment of some athletic programs?

Yes.

12. Would you favor an expansion of any current efforts to mentor new teachers?

Yes.

13. Do you have ideas for further implementing the schools' commitment to "no room for racism"? If so, how would this be done?

We need to expand use of conflict resolution models like Positive Behavior Interventions and Support and Restorative Justice to prevent racist practices from occurring in our schools and to teach our students about the social and emotional benefits of these models in their lives. It also is a great learning opportunity about implicit bias for students, teachers, and staff.

14. Would you take a stand against for-profit charter schools, even if doing so were to contradict federal policy?

I have publicly come out in support of Assembly Bill 406 to prohibit charter schools from operating as for-profit corporations. So yes, I have and would again. Charter Schools are a large concern in the state of California and in Hayward. I believe we need much more oversight in this area for existing charter schools and must hold charter schools accountable and to require transparency. This requires more oversight on the part of the School Board.

15. Finally, is there anything else you would like the electorate to know about you, your campaign, or your qualifications?

As an educator, working with students to ensure that they receive a quality education and have access to opportunity is my top priority and my true passion in life. I have been working with college students for ten years and will work to promote college and career readiness for our students in Hayward. My husband and I will be starting our family soon, and I want to do all I can to uplift our schools, not just for the benefit of our children, but for the benefit of all the children and families in Hayward who want to take pride in the schools in our community. Hayward is our home, and serving my community is my top priority.