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Current occupation:

Educator: from 2013-2014 I was interim supt of schools for Oakland USD. I currently volunteer teach Adult ESL at Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana Oakland, and provide technical assistance to the San Bernardino City Unified School District Board of Education.

Note: You may respond to any question with a link to your website or other posted positions. For the yes/no questions, please answer "yes" or "no" and if you wish to add to your answer, feel free to do so.

1. Motivation -- Why did you choose to run for School Board? Oakland families, educators, and residents have called me to service again, and I am answering that call. I served on the school board from 2002 until 2013, during a tumultuous period that included significant fiscal challenges and a state takeover. I also led the board to a return to local control during my board presidency (2008), and a period of significant academic gains. During the Great Recession, we were forced to make difficult but necessary cuts to our programs, but we continued to make significant gains in our academic programs. In 2013, the board unanimously voted to ask me to return to become interim superintendent, and during that year, we adopted a balanced budget with significant reserves and a \$2m surplus. I believe that I have the necessary real-world experience and leadership skills to work with the leadership team-board and superintendent- and the community to regain fiscal stability and build high quality educational opportunities for all of Oakland's students.

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?

The main priorities of the School Board are: to adopt a balanced multi-year budget consistent with its mission to prepare all children for college, career and community success, and to hire and evaluate the Superintendent, who is their primary staff person.

Specific ideas:

- A. In 2014, I led the highly successful parcel tax, Measure N, College and Career for All, which provided funds for high schools adopting a Linked Learning model, integrating, hands-on career technical education into rigorous academic classes in all of our high schools, for all students. The dramatic gains I high school graduation rates this year have been attributed to this significant investment in our high school youth. Expanding the innovations to scale will require a determined board to monitor effectiveness and impact, and make appropriate changes in the District budget and policies when necessary.
- B. The board has adopted three necessary policies over the past five years, which require review and integration: An Enrollment Policy; a Quality Schools Development Policy, and a Community of Schools Policy. I worked on the first as a board member, the second as the superintendent, and the third as a critical friend to different board members and policy makers. When revised, integrated and implemented, they can form the basis for significant improvements in the District's fiscal health and better and fairer access to high quality schooling across the district, no matter what the resident's zip code.

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?

My background and qualifications have developed over a forty year career as an Oakland educator, teacher, principal, central office administrator, Board member, and Interim Superintendent. I attended Oakland schools (Castlemont), my children are also products of the Oakland schools (Skyline and Tech) and my grandchildren currently attend and Oakland school. I have also been a professor in Education as well as Vice Chancellor of the Peralta Community Colleges.

While not a current board member, I believe some of the highlights of my tenure on the board (2002 to 2013) include: establishing a strong professional ethos for the board through policy governance training, leading the return to local control (2008); helping to develop the signature five year plan: Community Schools, Thriving Students, focused on building a culture of community schools for the entire district (2011); leading the policy development for:

- Neighborhood Schools (BP5116);
- Quality School Development (BP6005)

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

There are a set of excellent Oakland schools, many have achieved "Blue Ribbon," "Distinguished Schools," and "Academic Achievement" status. While many believe these are only "hill schools," some are also locate in economically distressed neighborhoods. Until the Board adopts a uniform and transparent Quality Standard

(BP6005), I don't believe it is appropriate to assign a rating to the district's schools as a whole. I am, however, very pleased with the changes I have personally observed in most of our high schools, with the intentional investments and accountability standards established under Measure N, where I currently serve as a Commissioner. The academic gains are very impressive, and even more, the belief that students, teachers, and parents have that our schools are moving in the right direction.

The major shortcomings are three: innovation overload (having too many initiatives that are not fully funded); serious fiscal deficits and deficiencies that impede the ability to stay in a direction for more than a year or two at a time; system culture that shifts and swings because of the short tenure of leadership; at the district level, and at school sites.

5. Budget -- What changes to the OUSD budget would you suggest? (include changes to revenue). Why has there been ongoing budgetary crisis the previous school year? What responsibility does the Board have for such shortfalls?

Expenditures and revenues: there needs to be:

- a re-examination of the organizational structure of central office, a legacy of the former superintendent to reduce expenditures
- A careful review of underenrollment at schools, student attendance, free and reduced lunch counts, disproportionate suspensions and other indices that can increase revenue if well managed

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

LCAP is a particularly cumbersome document to be used by parents at schools, particularly in schools and districts which are facing significant cuts that require midyear revisions.

7. School Properties: What are your thoughts on maintaining current OUSD sites/properties? What is the impact of forcing public schools to accommodate charter schools? When I was an Oakland principal (1989), there were only 60 OUSD schools. Innovations and a desire to provide different choices for parents increased the number of schools, partly through the small schools movement, and partly through charter schools. Both had unintended consequences.

A number of district schools are underenrolled, for a variety of reasons, many having to do with demographic shifts, and others having to do with parental choice. Neither are within the control of OUSD. I am not aware of any desire by district staff to force public schools to accommodate charter schools; this is a function of state legislation (Prop 39).

8. Discipline: Do you believe the current OUSD policy on suspensions is effective? What role do you envision for restorative justice programs?

9. Truants and Drop-outs -- What do you suggest we do about the truants and those who have dropped out? Students who do not come to school on time or who have poor attendance in the lower grades, are usually affected by strong family circumstances that usually require more intervention than a school alone can provide. Secondary students often have needs to support their families and their attendance can be spotty. What the District can do, is to be sure that the other reason for truancy and dropouts, that is, schools that don't seem to be connected to what students need or want or see as important for their future, those reasons are not the cause. That's why Measure N, and the Career Academy movement is the most promising strategy that I've seen in recent times.

10. Charter Schools -- What should Oakland's policy be around charter schools? Do you favor a moratorium on new charters, Do you distinguish between the different types? Would you support putting charter schools under the union contract? What are your views on 'common enrollment'? Should public property be provided for charter school organizations?

This is a popular topic for these questionnaires, but the reality is, charter school policy is largely set by the state, and my responsibility as a board member is to act in accordance with those policies. Having said that, There is a need for a revisit to that legislation to take into consideration that charter schools do have an effect on a district's health. At the same time, if you ask Oakland parents who live in low wealth neighborhoods about why many have chosen charter schools, they will say what middle class parents have said for generations: "I'm doing it for my kids' future." Until everyone agrees to commit to high quality classrooms for every student, both charter and district classrooms, and a way to fairly assess that quality, it is highly unlikely that favoring or not favoring a moratorium will have any measurable affect on the number of charter applications, nor on the quality of all of our schools, nor on the willingness of parents to find alternatives to schools they believe do not meet their perceived need for educational opportunity.

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? H What do you see as the impact of the standardized testing regime on the quality of education for our students?

State testing is currently undergoing serious revisions. I worked with CORE group, as board member and superintendent, and I think that the SQUUS system that CORE established has merit because it has an equity orientation, it uses value added indicators, and it includes measures for Social Emotional Learning. As for teacher evaluation, I believe in a collaborative approach, when there is a culture of high quality that is infused in the school, so that teacher can learn from each other. But responsibility for safety and competence is ultimately placed on the principal of a school, and he/she needs to have valid and reliable tools with which to assess the staff.

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

I think Common Core as far as it goes, is a step in the right direction. I wish that it had anticipated and included more Career Technical Education standards which I believe is seriously missing.

13. Small Schools -- What are your ideas on the experience in the OUSD with 'small schools' ad/or 'academies'? Small schools are expensive. Academies are too, but that's why I led Measure N, to fund the extra cost.

14. Central Resources -- How do you think the allocations of central resources should work and how should that relate to local school funding? How can there be greater balance in different socio-economic communities in the city? This is too big a question to be thoughtfully addressed here, but briefly, look at all resources available in a city: how many are "balanced?"

15. City/Government Relations -- How should the City of Oakland support the OUSD, and education in general? The mayor has adopted a supplemental approach, which I believe is far better than that of former Mayor Jerry Brown. However, I believe the right approach is for the city to build on its own resources for youth: parks, libraries, public safety, and create opportunities for youth to use their out of school time in constructive ways, such as internships and work based learning in city offices.

16. Police -- What is your position on Campus police? How would you create an environment where police are not needed? Have the programs around restorative justice been successful in lessening conflict/ violence on campuses?

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? I have been in leadership in one district union, the United Administrators of the Oakland Schools. My relationship with the unions has been historically positive.

18. Adult Education -- What is your position on Adult Education? It's good. I volunteer teach Adult ESL to newcomers.

19. Vocational Education -- What is your position Vocational Education? Voc educ historically was a "track" for students who weren't going to go to college, because of race, class or preparation. It's not appropriate anymore: the correct term is Career Technical Education (CTE). I have been a state leader in both dual enrollment, where high school students take CTE courses in community college and use state of the art equipment (for example the Fab Lab at Laney College)

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? Play works and other youth development programs provide important opportunities for students, and many provide them without additional cost to the students. Bringing community resources into the schools, when budgets are tight,

are important. But so has been the development and continuation of the music program in the schools.

21. The School Day/ Learning environment -- What is your opinion on the length of the school day and the role of before school and after school programs? How critical to quality of education is class size reduction? How might this be implemented?

22. Accountability/ responsibility -- How do you propose making yourself accountable and accessible to the citizens of Oakland? How might this relate to policies advocated for by the superintendent?

23. Money in Politics -- 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 and Yes

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). I have raised less than \$5000 to date. I plan to raise more. My campaign contributors are listed in the City of Oakland. I would not accept money from anyone or any organization whose overall values and policy direction I do not agree with

25. The District has often been out of compliance with Ed. Code's requirement that 55% of the District budget be spent in the classroom. What will you do to insure compliance? When I was the superintendent, 2013-14. I met that standard.

26. What do you see as the Board's role in supervising the District Superintendent and District staff? I have worked to build a highly reliable and collaborative superintendent evaluation protocol, based on my time on the board and as a superintendent. I would be happy to share that with you.

27. We have become aware of pressure being exerted on Board members to present a unified face to the public. We think this is wrong and that the public has a right to know about disagreements on the Board. What is your view of this issue? Board disagreements are not unknown. But in the end, after a vote is taken, the board should act as a whole. A united face is necessary to support the policy actions, even if preference is for a different outcome.

28. What do you think the Board's role in oversight of Oakland charter schools should be, regardless of the origin of their charter? This is part of state legislation. In general, because of my professional experience as an educator, I am very careful in reviewing authorizing and renewal applications from charter organizations. I have seen very good, and very bad charters.

29. Endorsements -- Who has endorsed you so far? By whom do you expect to be endorsed? Who are you endorsing, from President all the way down ballot to local

aces? The Mayor, the city councilperson, the incumbent, four school board members.
See my website www.yee4schools.com

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

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire, as much as you can.

Sincerely,

Greg Jan
Green Party of Alameda County

(Please RSVP now, and respond to GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com by
Thursday, August 23).