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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?

I am proud of what I have done during my first term - building my (and the board's) capacity to provide better oversight for our district's budget, building a broader base of parents, educators and community working together to stop the growth of charter schools, being accessible to constituents, and spending time learning from my principals, parent groups, our unions and building trusting relationships so that we can work together more effectively - but the work is just beginning.

We now have a better Superintendent and Chief Business Officer, but our board still needs someone who is comfortable with our budget and knows the questions to ask, and is willing to ask them publicly. This has been a weakness for a long time, and will continue to be if our board loses that capacity. I also want to keep us focused on improving our schools. That is ultimately what is going to bring families back and stop the downward spiral of declining enrollment and budget cuts. And I plan to continue to build the base of parents and community members who are involved in our schools.

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?

Charter schools need to pull their weight. We have to stop allowing them to selectively curate their students, concentrating all the highest-needs students in OUSD. We need to maximize revenue available to OUSD when charter schools occupy our facilities. We have to ensure the public is fully aware of the ways that charter schools are struggling - with teacher credentialing, unsafe conditions, financial mismanagement, Brown Act violations, improperly charging families for basic things, etc. OUSD is forced to conduct our business in public, because we are a public institution. There is no reason that we should not be reporting in open session the findings of our Office of Charter Schools investigations. It has allowed charter schools to paint an

inaccurate picture of their success, and they are using public money and many of them are not successful. The public should know about these issues so that they can make informed decisions when selecting schools.

I will continue to build our board's capacity to oversee our budget and pass and monitor implementation of our policies and practices to keep our district solvent and under local control. I will continue to work with parents and educators to change laws regarding charter schools at the state level, and to pass the Schools and Local Communities Funding Act to provide more funding for schools.

I will work to focus our district more narrowly on just a few strategies for school improvement. The way it is now, there is no alignment around what our strategies are as a district for improving our schools (12 different employees will tell you 12 different things). This is part of why our progress has been agonizingly slow.

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? I authored our Enrollment Impact Analysis policy, which requires staff to provide an analysis of the impact of decisions that affect enrollment, such as opening new charter schools, closing or expanding schools, etc, as well as the fiscal impact. This information was not being provided to the board previously. My resolution also forced staff to bring forward an Enrollment Stabilization Plan.

Through the Budget & Finance Committee, I have brought policies forward requiring our district to build a larger reserve (Fiscal Reserves) and to have a Structurally Balanced Budget. This year I will bring forward a policy requiring Long-Term Planning.

I co-authored our Sanctuary District policy.

I have pulled wasteful spending (mainly contracts) from the consent agenda at nearly every meeting, to call attention to the waste of student money and so that I can vote against waste. At my request, staff must now articulate why contracts have not gone out for competitive bidding. This year I will introduce a policy requiring competitive bidding for all expenses over \$100,000, because that is not required by law for "professional services," which is where a lot of the wasteful spending happens in OUSD.

I have helped to build and grow new parent and community organizations, like Educators for Democratic Schools and Equity Allies for OUSD to build the pressure on the board to make better decisions on behalf of our students.

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

Each of the 87 schools is different, so I won't go through them all. I will say that a good school has as much to do with the culture and climate as it does with students' performance on standardized tests, because if students don't feel safe and welcome, they can't learn. So we need to look at attendance, suspensions, climate surveys of students and families, and teacher and principal retention in addition to student outcome data.. These things tell us something about whether the conditions are good for student and adults to learn and do their best work.

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?

We need to do better long-term planning. Since I have been on the board, we have only budgeted in one-year cycles, even though we know when union contracts and parcel taxes expire, when elections are held, when pension costs are increasing, and when we will need to replace major purchases. This short-term thinking has been a disaster for our district and we need to do our budgeting differently.. This is why I am bringing a long-term planning policy for the board, and if we implement it well, we should be able to better minimize disruption to schools.

We need charter schools to begin pulling their weight, by incentivizing them to rejoin our SELPA (how Special Education services are provided), by publicly highlighting the ways that they are not serving students equitably and ensuring that charter school parents are more aware of how to enforce the meager due process protections they do have (this should slow the concentration of the highest-needs students in OUSD), and close the schools that refuse to do so, maximizing rent for use of OUSD facilities, and we must stop using any OUSD resources to promote charter schools (for example, including charters in our SchoolFinder tool). All of these things require a majority of the board to do, which is challenging when many of our board members have taken campaign money from the California Charter School Association.

I wrote a long blog post on the drivers of the budget crisis, which can be read here:

http://gonzalesforschools.nationbuilder.com/my_vision_for_ousd

There is a lot the board is responsible for. Our last Superintendent was incredibly irresponsible (he was picked before I was elected to the board), and my colleagues on the board allowed this irresponsibility to continued unchecked. I organized with parents against many of his destructive ideas (turning over 5 of our schools to charter schools, common enrollment system including charter schools, giving our Measure G money to charter schools) and also voted against much of his wasteful spending that grew the size of central administration, but there was not majority board support for stopping his irresponsible spending. The board is responsible for protecting such irresponsible behavior. However, there is also a lot that needs to change at the state level to address the drivers of the budget crisis. My blog points out what many of these issues are.

We need more money; California is 46th in per-student spending in the country, a scandal in the 5th largest economy in the world.

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?

It's very positive that there is now a clear equity agenda in education funding and that the role for parent and educator voices has been elevated, but it requires building the capacity of parents in order for them to be able to meaningfully participate. I think the state needs to provide more funding for this, in order for the potential of the LCFF to be fulfilled.

7. School Properties: What are your thoughts on maintaining current OUSD sites/properties? What is the impact of forcing public schools to accommodate charters schools?

I don't support selling OUSD buildings because in future, we may grow again as a district, and if we have sold our buildings, we won't be positioned well to accommodate the growth. We do

need additional revenue, so long-term leases to nonprofit organizations are a good alternative to selling buildings.

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

I think suspensions alienate students from the school community and increase the likelihood that students will drop out, and the record on disparate use with students of color is clear. However, I think we still have a ways to go on figuring out the best way to deal with disruptive students. Many students are still missing instructional time through in-school suspension, ie, they haven't been "suspended" from school, but they aren't in their assigned classes learning, and teachers are unclear on what tools they have for dealing with disruptive students. Not all schools have RJ Coordinators, and teachers have so many students that they don't always have time to use restorative practices, even if they believe in the approach. The focus on helping students to recognize and repair harm is the right one, I just think we haven't quite figured out how to make it work in every school. Reducing class size would help a lot.

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

OUSD has many alternative schools, and I am proud of the work they do to engage with students who are at risk of dropping out due to credit deficiency and other issues. I would need to talk with Lucia Moritz, who leads this work, to learn what we are doing now to draw students back into OUSD. My guess is that we aren't doing much about students who have dropped out, but I would want to hear her ideas about what we could do differently. My guess is that we need to work with other community organizations who are often providing other kinds of services to families, to identify students and figure out how we can serve them differently.

10. Charter Schools -- What should Oakland's policy be around charter schools? I 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?

I wrote a board policy that was introduced last spring (but not adopted by the board), which you can view here: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/u6ncgkavyt85bg1/18-0965%20Board%20Policy%20TBD%20-%20Charter%20Schools%20-%20Philosophy%20Goals%20and%20Objectives%20%28First%20Reading%29-2.pdf?dl=0>

This policy encapsulates much of my view about what our approach should be to charter schools, namely that they need more oversight and accountability and we should not be subsidizing charter schools that are not equitably serving Oakland students.

Yes, I support a moratorium on new charter schools, and have not voted for any new charter schools since I have been on the board.

I am not clear what the meaning of "different types" of charter schools is. Some schools better reflect the diversity of our city, which is better than those that blatantly discriminate against African American or Special Education students.

We cannot force charter schools to unionize, but I certainly support any teachers and staff who wish to unionize. I have written letters supporting teachers organizing at AIMS and other charter schools.

I do not support a common enrollment system, or any other practice or policy that would destabilize the school district by transferring our students to the charter sector.

I don't support co-locating charter schools in OUSD buildings, but it doesn't really matter what I think. State law (and several court decisions) says that charter schools are entitled to space in our buildings if there is vacant space. I have voted against Prop 39 offers every year anyway, but if there was ever a board majority that voted against making Prop 39 offers, we would be sued by CCSA and they would prevail. So we have to decide whether we think that is a good use of district resources (challenging charter access to our buildings), when it is a virtual certainty that we will lose. We need to change Prop 39, and I have talked with our state representatives about doing this once we have a different Governor, and they are supportive. One thing that needs to change is the low rate charter schools are charged for Prop 39 space (it is practically free), which is unfair to school districts (charter schools take our students and prevent us from using our own buildings for other purposes, such as generating revenue for the district).

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

Everyone deserves feedback on their performance, and students deserve teachers who have the chance to improve their craft as a result of feedback. The focus of our system should be to invest in the growth of our teachers, and give them the chance to become stronger teachers.

Standardized testing tells us mainly about the family background students are coming from. I am more interested in what our students can do, which I think can be better evaluated with a portfolio of work and performance based assessments. Standardized testing is also problematic because it is misleading when charter school test results are compared with OUSD results. Due to charter school curation of their students and exclusion of high-needs students, they aren't serving similar kids to OUSD, so any comparisons are inaccurate and misleading.

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

I think that more educators should have been involved in the development of the standards, but I support the move toward more nonfiction texts and building academic vocabulary, teaching students to use evidence in their evaluation of information, and understanding math concepts better (ie, not just learning formulas, but really being able to apply the ideas in different situations). I don't like how Common Core was developed in a top-down way, but I think that the impact on student readiness for college and career is going to be positive.

13. Small Schools -- What are your ideas on the experience in the OUSD with 'small schools' and/or 'academies'?

Some of our strongest schools in OUSD are schools that came out of the small schools movement, like CCPA, Life Academy, Parker, Greenleaf, etc, so I believe that students have benefitted from the small schools movement. However, where there hasn't been stable leadership, the schools have struggled. We need to figure out how to better support principals and teachers, whether in a small school or not, because this is crucial to school success. We are seeing impressive growth in our graduation rate right now, which is directly attributable to our Linked Learning academies, so I think this strategy is working and I'm proud of it.

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?

In general, we spend too much on central administration and not enough in classrooms. We are doing a Special Committee this fall that I am leading to make recommendations on budget cuts that are necessary to keep the district under local control in the coming years. My hope (though a board majority will have to agree with this) is that we can concentrate the cuts in central and minimize the impact on schools. Our board policy (Results Based Budgeting) says no more than 12% can be spent on central, and we have never been in compliance with this policy. Through the committee, we will explore why this is.

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

The city can and should be doing more to support our schools. They should have an assigned Public Works crew for OUSD to address dumping near schools and to address traffic calming needs that affect our schools. They can and should be providing more supports to our afterschool and enrichment programming, and our transportation needs. In Berkeley, the city provides much more for schools, and Oakland could provide much more support than they do.

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?

Our Special Committee this fall will be looking at the need for having our own police department, and learning how other districts of our size handle policing and security issues. After the session this fall, I will have more insight into this question. Right now, principals really value having our own OUSD police, but many students and community organizations feel that it is inappropriate. For me, it's just a question of whether this investment is more high leverage than just providing the money to schools for them to decide how to spend it on keeping their campuses safe.

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?

Unions should have more voice in the decisions of the district, and I look forward to working with our new OEA President Keith Brown to make that a reality. We are planning to provide

dedicated time on our meeting agendas for unions to raise issues of concern or comment on things happening in the school district. The board needs to learn more about the bargaining priorities for our unions, and the trade-offs for the demands they are making. I have arranged for a standing monthly meeting with OEA as well, which is new. I think we can have a much more collaborative relationship, but it is going to require more stability and more planning on the part of the school district. It's impossible to build in time for collaboration when there is constant chaos.

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

I support it and want to see it expanded. It builds our parents' capacity to support their students.

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

I support it and am pleased that we are bringing some of this back through the work of the academies. Not all of our kids are going to college, but we can make sure that all of them have a clear next step after high school toward a lucrative career.

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?

Different OUSD schools have taken a different approach to this, and I think we are seeing that there is no right way to do it. CCPA and Life Academy don't have all the bells and whistles but are getting great results for kids, and so are O High and Tech, which do have all the things that comprehensive high schools can offer. Ideally, all work with students would be done by district employees. Prior to Prop 13, this was more possible. I am supportive of reforming Prop 13 (I have collected signatures for it) and other ways to secure new revenue for OUSD, because everyone should have a good job with benefits and job security.

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?

Smaller class size is critical, and is a high priority when and if Prop 13 reform is passed in 2020. Right now the state is tripling our required pension contributions, enrollment is down and Special Education caseloads are increasing exponentially. We are struggling to maintain local control even without considering class size reduction.

Different OUSD schools are doing different things around the length of the school day and before and afterschool programs, and again, I think we are seeing there is no right way to do it. I support continuing to allow different schools to take different approaches.

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?

I hold monthly office hours, send out a monthly email newsletter and hold monthly community engagement events. I also meet regularly with constituent and parent groups, as requested. Ultimately I have to answer to voters every four years when I seek re-election.

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>)

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 about \$35,000 on hand, and am aiming to raise \$65 or 70k in total. The money I have raised is mainly from friends and family (I ask everyone I know to contribute, and many of the contributions are being raised via a robust house party campaign). I hope to raise \$10 - 15k from labor unions and PACs (I have applied to HONOR PAC, East Bay Animal PAC, etc), and the rest of it will come from repeat contributors or others who haven't given yet. It sounds like a lot of money for a School Board race (and it is), but I was outspent more than twice over the first time I ran. It costs a lot of money to run against the California Charter School Association.

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?

Through the Special Committee this fall, we are trying to build political will to make the long-overdue changes needed in slimming down the size of central to comply with our board policy of spending no more than 12% of the budget on central. We will see if there is a board majority willing to do this. I will continue to do what I always do, which is to advocate for spending less on central and more in schools.

26. What do you see as the Board's role in supervising the District Superintendent and District staff?

This is our main role and we have to do it better. What is frustrating is getting a board majority willing to do it. Most of the time, I have found my colleagues reluctant to hold staff accountable, for fear they will leave, or a misguided idea that holding staff accountable is "micromanaging."

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?

I agree that the public has a right to know about differing points of view on the board. There is also a tension between criticizing and holding board colleagues accountable and being able to work successfully with them to get things done. People who spend all their time critiquing others

can't get anything done, are marginalized and ineffective, and people who mindlessly rubberstamp proposals from the Superintendent are irresponsible. The place in between is where you can be a responsible and effective board member, but it means that you don't always say everything publicly that perhaps should be said in order to avoid alienating colleagues, and that you have to compromise at times in order to get things past the finish line.

As an example, I brought legislation last spring to begin appointing independent members of charter school boards, as we are legally allowed to do, but have never done (most districts in CA have not exercised this authority). My resolution identified that there were charter schools that have been issued notices of violation of law, and that we need to have more day-to-day oversight of these schools, and that the community expects us to hold charter schools accountable. The feedback from several of my colleagues was that the language was "too punitive" in tone and there was not majority support for it.

This month, I worked out compromise language with a colleague that has a better chance of being passed, and it will accomplish the same goal, an independent board member on the boards of OUSD-authorized schools. However, the language in the resolution is different, calling for "support" rather than accountability, because this was language that my co-author could get behind. At the end of the day, I think the community wants results, and if the end result is that we have stronger oversight into what charter schools are doing and how they are using public money, these are tensions that we have to live with.

Speaking for myself, I would rather have elected officials who are able to address community priorities (like charter accountability) than ones who say all the right things but are completely ineffective.

28. What do you think the Board's role in oversight of Oakland charter schools should be, regardless of the origin of their charter?

Education funding in California is woefully inadequate, so every public dollar we have to spend on kids is precious. OUSD has to be more accountable for how we are using public funds, and so do charter schools. The challenge of being part of a board is building a board majority that is aligned around your agenda. In my case, I have not been successful in getting the board to prioritize stronger charter oversight.

I introduced legislation this year that would have increased oversight of charter schools - no consent agenda real estate deals for charters, open session reports on which charter schools are receiving notices of concern or violation, and for what reason, all leases and real estate transactions should maximize revenue for OUSD students, forbidding the use of OUSD resources for the promotion of charter schools (for example, our enrollment system or parent guide) without a board vote, requiring analysis of the extent to which charter schools are (and are not) serving high-needs students equitably, using a dissimilarity index, publicizing the role of the Office of Charter Schools as a way for community members and parents to file complaints about charter schools, regular reporting to the board on charter student exit and entry data, and much more. This legislation was not supported by the board, but I hope to bring it back in the future.

Some of my colleagues feel it is "divisive" to point out the ways in which charter schools are underserving high needs students, or that charter schools are a threat to the fiscal stability of the district, and I have not been successful at getting them to understand that their lack of willingness to address the issues caused by charters is irresponsible and is undermining our district and its fiscal viability. What an individual on the board can do without a board majority willing to support their ideas is limited.

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 races?

Here is my list of endorsements so far:

http://gonzalesforschools.nationbuilder.com/2018_endorsements

The first endorsement I gave this cycle was to Jovanka Beckles, and that was in 2017. I have endorsed Igor Tregub for Berkeley City Council, but not many endorsements in Oakland. I am planning to stay out of the City Council races, but for Mayor I like the BBON picks: Brooks, Price and Karamooz.

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

We have half the per-student spending in CA that many states have. There is a lot that we can do better as a board, and I am leading much of that work via the Budget & Finance Committee, but the real problem is that there is not enough money given what it costs to live in the Bay Area. What teachers want is what families want: smaller class sizes, a better-paid, stable teacher workforce, more well-rounded experiences for students and ultimately, better schools as a result.

I have collected signatures for the Schools and Local Communities Funding Act (Prop 13 Reform), which will be on the 2020 statewide ballot and generate billions more for public schools, and I will work hard with others to help it pass, but even that won't take us back to pre-1978 levels, when California had the best-funded schools in the country. Ultimately we have to recommit as a state to public education, and use higher income taxes or some other revenue source like oil excise taxes to better fund our schools.