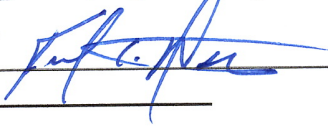


Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee
Endorsement Questionnaire for FUSD School Board Candidates

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2018
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Please limit your responses to no more than 300 words per question.

1. Educational outcomes in the Fresno Unified School District are significantly impacted by poverty, segregation, and school funding inequities. As a school board member, how will you combat these issues to improve public education in Fresno Unified? To truly use LCFF money to close the learning gaps of these children by reducing teacher/student ratios and emphasizing technology in the classroom with instruction by well trained teachers who are compensated at their contracted rates to master the technology. Our students receive between \$11,000 to over \$14,000 (foster youth and students on probation) to help close these gaps. Board members must understand the gravity of such a responsibility to our students and citizens. Our district is top heavy. We need to keep these funds as close to the students as possible.

2. Recent studies conducted by the non-profit organization In the Public Interest have shown that the unrestricted growth of charter schools takes away resources from public schools. As a school board member, what are your solutions to curb charter expansion within Fresno Unified? Require that charters offer staff the opportunities to join the Fresno Teachers Association and the CSEA local and live up to the collective bargaining contract that is in place. Require lower student/teacher ratios than in traditional settings. I plan to work to have technology based, lower student/teacher ratio classrooms (14 to 1) for ELD, foster youth, students on probation, and academically low performing students who wish to enjoy 21st century learning within regular ed. Campuses (schools within schools), thus eliminating the argument for more charters.

3. Evidence-based, comprehensive sex education has been shown to decrease teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection rates. As a school board member, will you support the use of evidence-based sex education in Fresno Unified? Yes. The eradication of ignorance is the job of education. Also, members of the board who are against sex ed. need to be countered by intelligent debate by other members who refuse to be part of any backsliding in advancements of our society which include but not limited to LGBTQ rights, bigotry, and policies that help Dreamers and their families.

4. Go Public Schools Fresno is predominately funded by corporate billionaires who have significant ties to the charter school industry, and a strong history of promoting the privatization of public schools. As a school board member, what will you do to evaluate and limit the influence of such an organization on Fresno Unified? I have already met with this group. They are very persuasive in their efforts. I pledge to hear all sides. School leaders need to hear the pitch, how else can you work to undo efforts at privatization that has been hawked to fellow board members who believe that all capitalism has a place in all arenas? Our students' education should never include a profit margin.

5. Despite the many positive effects they have had on funding and program development, public sector unions have come under attack. What role do you think FTA and other FUSD labor partners has in supporting the growth of students and schools in Fresno Unified? They must partner to introduce curriculum regarding the role and impact of unions in our history. Appropriate classes for this would be civics and other social studies classes like U.S. and World History. Unions created a living wage and safe working conditions for their members. Their efforts have positively influenced non-union jobs in our society. The legacy of unions and their leaders are just as important to teach about as those of politicians and military leaders in our history. As past grievance chairperson, negotiations chairperson, and president of the Madera County Office of Education Teachers' Association (CTA/NEA), I understand the importance of collective bargaining and imparting that importance to future generations.

6. FUSD serves an ethnic student population that is nearly 90%; however, ethnic site principals comprise less than 50% of that workforce. Studies have shown academic achievement improves when students of color see people reflecting their background in leadership positions, like school principals. Will you commit to hiring policies that encourage the appointment of principals who are more representative of FUSD's student population? As a Latino educator I understand the importance of role modeling. Understanding the culture of students and their families is important in imparting education. When they see people from the neighborhood in positions that help them on their own journeys it can be a powerful and inspiring influence.

7. Community based schools that offer wrap-around services, such as health clinics and social workers, have been shown to decrease the achievement gap, especially in socioeconomically disadvantaged communities like Fresno. What will you do to increase the availability of services to students and their families on campuses in Fresno? Work with agencies and universities to provide space for such services that contribute to the overall physical and mental health of the community in exchange for career technical education opportunities for FUSD students and their families.

8. FTA and FUSD have recently agreed to create a work team to explore a special tax with the aim of decreasing class sizes in Fresno. Would you support such a tax? Yes. Lower student/teacher ratios should be a basic foundational policy going forward in the district.

9. What does your dream public high school look like? Student centered, technology strong, schools within schools (like universities), partnerships with community colleges, reduced levels

of administration, lower student/teacher ratios especially with high risk students enabling teachers to also take on academic counseling roles (with training) in conjunction with certificated counselors, police on campus trained in pedagogy that interact positively with at-risk students, and be a place of academic and social sanctuary where all dreamers can progress to being a positive and integral part of our community free from fear.

10. What is the purpose of public education? To eliminate ignorance and illuminate a just society where graduates are ready to progress to even higher learning and careers that provide a livable wage and ultimately create voters that see democracy as the instrument to attaining a just society.

Thank you so much for your time and energy in completing this questionnaire. Your answers will be distributed to our members prior to the September 8 endorsement meeting through the CVPPAC Website.

Please return this questionnaire by email to Mike Rhodes < mikerhodes@comcast.net >. The deadline is Sunday, September 2 at 11:59 p.m. If you have any questions, call CVPPAC president Pam Whalen at (559) 994-9390.