

# Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee

## Endorsement Questionnaire for Education Candidates

### Candidate Information

Candidate Name: Andy Levine

Race/Area #: Fresno Unified School Board, Trustee Area 5

Address: 234 E. Simpson Ave., Fresno, CA 93704

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Phone: (559) 355-5169

Campaign Manager/Consultant: Maria Reina Lemus

### ***Please use no more than 100 words to respond to each of the following:***

1. Please describe how you will improve the quality of education as an elected trustee for the school district?

In my first two years, I have already championed investments that are decreasing chronic absenteeism and improving academic outcomes, including the rollout of 19 Community Schools and investments in basic needs that prevent students from making it to school and focusing on learning while there. I passed a resolution that already has led to almost 3000 more students claiming their at least \$500 in College and Career Savings Accounts.

I firmly believe we are now primed to see double-digit academic gains through programs such as our new initiative to get all students reading by the end of 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

2. Describe how the school district can provide additional social emotional supports at all school campuses?

I'm proud the budget we adopted just after I joined the Board included a \$33 million increase compared to previous years in mental health and social emotional supports. This included increased staffing across sites, social workers specifically for our foster and unhoused students, and behavior intervention specialists for students in primary grades.

I helped pilot a new program at Fresno High that builds on the Advance Peace model by supporting a cohort of most at-risk students.

Two priorities I still have are: a 24/7 mental health app and partnering with affordable housing providers to subsidize housing for our unhoused students.

3. What role should the school board play in determining the selection of books / materials for school libraries?

The Board should approve and follow the selection of library books and materials that are on the State's Recommended Literature List but also trust the judgment of librarians and adhere to the Library Bill of Rights. Importantly, we should not and will not engage in any "banning" of books that are

standards-aligned. Fortunately, while I am confident that our Board would not consider censoring material that is necessary for an inclusive, diverse and affirming learning environment for our students, a State bill signed into law last year (AB 1078) legally prohibits all school governing bodies in California from doing so.

4. What should be the policy of the school district as regards notifying parents of student's request for use of gender pronouns and other identifying characteristics?

It is critical that our schools serve as spaces for our students to feel safe, have trusting adults that they can confide in, and to be their full selves without fear of bullying or retaliation. Our LGBTQ+ students need to experience this as much as any student in our system. Fortunately, similar to my previous answer above, the State has most recently passed a law that legally prohibits us a school board from considering any policies that would require educators notify parents when a student asks to use a different name or pronoun. We will follow this law.

6. Please list your top 5 campaign donors and the amounts contributed.

Andrew Clare - \$2500

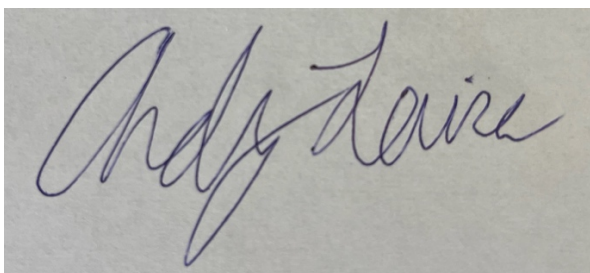
Trudi Thom - \$2000

Janine Nkosi - \$1600

Tom Breen - \$1500

Juan and Amy Arambula - \$1500

**Candidate Signature:** *(Use a script font to sign below). Signing confirms candidate's permission to post responses on the CVPPAC Web site.)*



If you want to be considered for endorsement by the CVPPAC, you will need to complete the attached candidate questionnaire and e-mail it back to us at [fresnocvppac@gmail.com](mailto:fresnocvppac@gmail.com) no later than 11:59 p.m. on Saturday, August 31st.