

Santa Monica Democratic Club

2020 School Board Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in the Santa Monica Democratic Club endorsement. Candidates seeking the endorsement of our Club must complete and return the following questionnaire.

Note that only registered Democrats are eligible for our consideration.

Please send the completed questionnaire to smdemocrats@gmail.com by August 16, 2020.

Interview appointment times will be scheduled for August 23 on a first come first served basis as the questionnaires are returned.

Submitting this questionnaire constitutes acknowledgment that its contents are now part of the public record and may be reproduced and distributed by the Santa Monica Democratic Club.

General Information

Candidate Name:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Candidate's Current Occupation:

Candidate's Employer:

Campaign Contact Person (if other than candidate):

What qualifications do you bring to this office?

Why are you running?

What are the top issues of your campaign? How do you plan to address those issues once elected?

Please list your top individual and/or organizational endorsements.

How long have you lived in Santa Monica? Where else have you lived?

Party / Activism

How long have you been a registered Democrat? Have you ever been registered as a member of another political party? If so, which party and why?

What is your experience with political activism? Have you ever volunteered or worked for a political campaign other than your own, and if so, in what capacity were you involved?

Which political candidates have you endorsed or supported publicly in the past? Please list as many as possible.

Please list any organizations with which you are a member, including any leadership position you have held in each organization.

Please confirm that you have read the latest version of the California Democratic Party Platform, as found here: <https://cadem.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Final-CDP-Platform-2020-2.pdf>

List any items in the CDP Platform with which you disagree. (This is in no way a litmus test for our endorsement; however, because the party delegates have worked so hard on every word of this platform document, we believe it will be a helpful guide to comprehend the policy differences between each candidate.)

Campaign Finance

Please indicate Yes or No to the following statements:

1. I pledge not to take contributions from oil, gas, and coal industry executives, lobbyists, and PACs.
2. I pledge not to take contributions from police or law enforcement unions, lobbyists, and PACs.
3. I pledge not to take contributions from development firms, lobbyists, and PACs.

If you answered No to any of the above contribution questions, please explain here:

City Governance

Do you believe Santa Monica's current Council-Manager system of government is working well, or would you push for changes to the City Charter? If so, what changes would make the city government more democratic?

Do you believe we should keep the current system of seven at-large council districts? What other type of representation would you be interested in exploring?

What is your assessment of the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic? If there was room for improvement, what should have been handled differently?

Do you support the mandatory mask requirement, enforced by fine? Does the current requirement go too far, or not far enough?

General Education

How do you see your role on the School Board in relationship to different stakeholders: parents, students, credentialed teachers, classified staff, CTA, LACOE, Sacramento, the City of SM, etc. It has been 4 years since the Pedro Noguera report. What is your opinion of the report, and how has the district done in addressing those concerns?

How often, and how, do you think the work of the Superintendent should be assessed by the School Board?

What is your plan to heal the wounds stemming from Malibu's attempt to unify?

The district was facing a devastating budget deficit even before covid-19. What led to this deficit? Could this budget crisis have been avoided? What are your non-negotiable priorities for the district given this deficit?

Are you committed to student data privacy and security, especially given the continued distance learning?

Distance Learning

Do you believe that SMMUSD should go to all virtual education for the 2020-2021 school year, or should there be some effort made to resume in-person classes? If we go to all virtual instruction, what new challenges does this present, and what solutions do you suggest?

What can the School Board do for working families who need childcare or supervision during the school day while distance learning is occurring?

How can equity and quality of education be maintained for all students during distance learning?

How will you assess the process of safely re-opening schools once the district is approved?

What is your opinion of parents hiring credentialed teachers for their own homeschool "pods"?

Student Concerns

What is your idea of the perfect learning environment?

How do you feel about campus surveillance?

What is your position on gun safety at school? What steps can the School Board take to prevent violent shootings?

Do you support SMPD officers in the schools?

How will you support our students to be critical thinkers, leaders, and activists, starting in elementary school? Would you support student activism such as the recent student walkouts in support of gun control, racial justice, climate strike, etc.? How can these ideals be incorporated into the curriculum?

How will you increase mental health support for our students?

Social Justice

What is your assessment of the City and SMPD's response to the events that occurred on May 31, 2020? If there was room for improvement, what should have been handled differently?

In what ways can SMMUSD ensure that, in a real, practical sense, Black Lives Matter in our community?

In what ways can SMMUSD best protect the undocumented residents of Santa Monica?

How would you use your position on the College Board to assist BIPOC and other disadvantaged residents of Santa Monica?

Ballot Measures

Do you support California Proposition 15?

Do you support California Proposition 16?

Do you support California Proposition 21?

Do you support the Reimagine LA County ballot measure?

Do you support the Santa Monica transfer tax ballot measure?

Federal Legislation

Do you support the federal Green New Deal legislation (H.Res 109)?

What steps must Santa Monica take to enact a Green New Deal in our own city, if any?

What are the most significant environmental justice issues in Santa Monica, and what role does the School Board have in addressing them?

Do you support the federal Medicare For All legislation (HR 1384)?

Whether you support that bill or not, how can we ensure universal, single payer health care coverage for all Santa Monicans?

What role do you believe the Santa Monica Democratic Club should have in our City?