

Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights School Board Questionnaire - 2026

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Did you include the requested Additional Materials? Yes ☒ or No ☐

Your Candidacy

1. What is your understanding of the role of a Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District board member?

The Board collectively sets direction for the district, sets policy, approves and provides oversight of the district budget, hires and manages the performance of the Superintendent, and engages with and represents the community. It is a volunteer position requiring a significant time commitment between preparing for and attending Board meetings, serving on committees, and doing meaningful community outreach and engagement.

2. Why are you running to be a SMMUSD board member?

I am running for the SMMUSD Board of Education to be the voice that supports families, because right now, we are missing from the table. If elected, I would be the second Board member with children attending schools in the district, and crucially, the only member with elementary-aged children. As I've engaged with voters for the campaign, everyone I've met thinks it's common sense that we should have at least some school board members who are current parents with children attending schools in the district.

I have four specific policy priorities that I would like to drive, specific to my candidacy, that I believe will help improve outcomes for our district and also help reverse our trend in enrollment decline.

1. Affordable After Care for All: We need a school board policy that assertively supports working families and acknowledges the absolute necessity of after-school care. LAUSD has already acknowledged this need and is aiming to provide a full day of coverage for working families. While SMMUSD has programs in place, they are very expensive and simply do not have enough space for everyone who needs them. If elected, I will push to get a resolution passed in the first 30 days of the term that directs staff to begin engaging with our partners to ensure there is sufficient capacity for afterschool care for everyone who needs it, and then start exploring options to bring the costs down to ensure it is affordable.

2. Safe Routes to School: It is incredibly stressful for parents to start the day dealing with frenzied drop-off scenes and near-fatal misses in crosswalks. SMMUSD needs to commit to deep collaboration with the City of Santa Monica on creating safe routes to schools with safe landing zones around the gates. The recent Waymo incident at Grant Elementary was a wake-up call. That status quo is going to lead to a tragedy. I will proactively engage with City Council leaders to explore safe streets solutions that align with their existing mobility initiatives, such as the Washington Greenway plan.

3. Green and Healthy Campuses: We need to support open spaces and green spaces at our schools, because every child deserves a place to play. Many families rely on the school grounds as their primary park. But the current board is reducing open space and eliminating green spaces. LAUSD has a goal that 30% of their schools need to have green spaces; SMMUSD is moving in the opposite direction and needs to adopt a similar policy goal.

4. Excellent STEM for All: Lastly we need a school board that understands the role of technology in our modern world. From my work on the Board of a non-profit that provides technology education to students from under-estimated communities, I understand how these opportunities are critical to ensure every child can reach their potential. Furthermore, I have spent my career on the innovation side of the technology industry, giving me a clear view of how our modern labor force is rapidly evolving, and I have hired dozens of graduating students into the field. To prepare our kids for what's next, we need to bolster the high quality education SMMUSD offers with more support for STEM learning, including extracurricular activities, and make them accessible to every student regardless of income level. I also support a slow-tech policy in our schools, because you don't need to teach a kid how to use an iPad. If elected, I would immediately push for a resolution to get us parity with LAUSD to limit screen time at school (Res-048-25/26: Using Technology with Intention: Establishing Guidelines for Student Screen Time), then I would engage a working group of experts, educators and parents to look into how we can improve upon that policy.

Lastly, I am also running to improve community engagement, which is currently lacking from the district and is eroding public trust in the institution. I have extensive change management experience, including stakeholder management and communications experience through my professional work and I am uniquely qualified in this race to improve the district's approach to community engagement. I believe this is critical to improve parent satisfaction and reverse the downward trend in enrollment.

3. What skills, background, and experience do you possess that prepare you for this office?

Professionally, I bring almost 20 years of experience in business strategy and executive leadership. I've spent my career managing complex budgets and leading large organizations through major technical and structural shifts. I will bring analytical rigor and stakeholder management skills to the Board to ensure we navigate the district's separation with fiscal precision, fairness, and forward-thinking academic leadership.

In addition to my professional experience, I have volunteered in education my entire adult life. I started as a classroom reader and then became a grade-level coordinator for a program called Reading to Kids, volunteering primarily at Hoover elementary in Los Angeles. Since 2021, I have served on the Board of an education non-profit called America on Tech, which provides technology education and career pathways to students in under-estimated communities in the greater Los Angeles area. In this role I advise on strategy, budgeting, outreach, among other responsibilities, and I'm proud that the organization has thrived despite the Trump administration's attack on DEI.

4. What sets you apart from the others running to be a SMMUSD board member?

What sets me apart from others running is my professional background and my unique perspective as a current parent of Elementary-aged children in the district. My experience managing large budgets (\$100M+) and organizations (100+ people) is unmatched by anyone running or currently serving on the board. Furthermore, my extensive change management and stakeholder management experience would be a critical asset to a district that has struggled with community engagement in the past. My experience is also unique, relative to the other board members, in that I have been a part of large organizational separations in my professional work. Organizational separations are incredibly complex, and if not executed flawlessly, services will not function on day one of the separation. Even with the Joint Powers Authority (JPA) in place for the Santa Monica and Malibu districts separation, it would be invaluable to have a board member who has this experience to assist and provide oversight to ensure all of our students have an excellent experience on day one of the new districts.

Now more than ever, it's critical to have board members who understand the needs of parents today and the challenges they face with the district. SMMUSD has faced a 25% decline in enrollment over the last 10 years. While these declines represent a broader national trend, they are much more severe in our district even compared to the surrounding area in Los Angeles. I believe this presents an existential threat to public schools in our community and public education at large if this trend continues. I have heard some say that this decline has stabilized, but there is no evidence of that. In fact, the district's own budget projections forecast future enrollment declines, and if you

further analyze the enrollment numbers from high school, to middle school, to elementary school, you can see that without a significant influx of new students transferring in at higher grades, the decline is already baked in. The implication of our shrinking student enrollment is that not all costs are variable, every district requires a base level of overhead to function, and our cost per student is now much higher than the national or even state average. I'm afraid if this trend continues, it could result in future teacher layoffs or even school closures, which are outcomes I'd rather not even think about, and is why I think it's so important that we act on these issues now. We need to be much more proactive in engaging with parents to identify the issues. Having a board member such as myself who has first hand experience with these issues, and who has concrete policy proposals to address them, would be a major benefit to the school board.

5. List each organization other than SMRR whose endorsement you have sought and whether or not you completed a questionnaire for that organization. Provide a copy of any questionnaire(s) you submitted to any other organization(s).

So far I have formally sought endorsements from the Santa Monica Democratic Club and Community for Excellent Public Schools (questionnaires attached). I also plan to seek endorsements from the SMMCTA and SEIU unions, and Santa Monica Forward.

6. Please list your main funders, endorsers, and supporters, and provide an overview of your campaign's financial progress to date.

I am new to the race and am just starting to seek endorsements. I believe endorsements should be made after a fair evaluation of all of the candidates in the race based on their substantive policy goals and an evaluation of their ability to achieve them.

I am running a grassroots campaign. At the time of this writing, I have raised about two-thousand five-hundred dollars from friends, family and other community activists to cover start up costs. I don't have deep-pocketed family money, and I have not and will not take money from corporate or other special interests that intend to profit off of our school bond money.

7. Will you accept donations from developers and/or their paid lobbyists for your Campaign?

I absolutely will not. I believe fundraising for our local elections has gotten way out of control. Based on my review of public records from previous elections, incumbents

have raised as much as \$80,000 for this seat, and recently the lowest amount raised for a newly elected candidate was almost \$14,000. This clearly demonstrates that the system is fundamentally broken and we need more regulation to take money out of politics. I can run a competitive campaign by focusing on grass roots mobilization, face-to-face engagement, and outreach to existing community groups.

8. Please provide a list of all organizations with which you are a member, along with a description of leadership positions held, whether related to your civic, community or professional endeavors.

Board Leadership:

- America on Tech, Advisory Board Member - serving second three year-term, since 2021. America on Tech is an education non-profit serving students from under-estimated communities.
- Santa Monica Synagogue Board Member - One two-year term 2021-2023.

Local Organization Membership: Santa Monica Democratic Club, Franklin Elementary PTA, Santa Monica Forward, Santa Monica for Renters Rights.

SMRR

1. How long have you been a member of SMRR? Please outline the extent of your relationship and engagement with SMRR.

I am new to SMRR and honestly I was hesitant about joining at the risk of appearing opportunistic for this election, but I ultimately decided to after being encouraged to do so by Steering Committee members. I was a renter for several years when I first moved to Santa Monica after graduating from college, and I am incredibly fortunate that my wife and I own our home now, but I hold progressive values that align with the values of this organization.

Regarding my campaign platform and priorities, I see a strong overlap with the SMRR platform, specifically:

1. **Expanded, Affordable After-Care:** SMRR explicitly supports high-quality, affordable early-childhood education, childcare, and youth services, and specifically urges cooperation between the City and the School District to ensure affordable childcare is available to every Santa Monica family who seeks it. My platform calls for an explicit school board level policy to provide expanded, affordable after-care for working families.

2. **Safe Routes to School and Walkability:** SMRR calls for infrastructure policies that encourage walking and biking, and specifically advocates for an efficient, multimodal transportation system that explicitly includes safe routes to school. My platform calls for collaboration with the City Council to implement low-traffic zones and safe streets around campuses that encourage walking and biking to school.
3. **Preserving Green and Open Spaces:** SMRR is committed to the restoration and expansion of public open spaces and emphasizes making the built environment resilient for future generations by ensuring more public open space. My commitment to preserving and expanding green spaces on school campuses, and ensuring everyone in the community has access to the park space they provide, aligns directly with SMRR's environmental and recreational tenets.
4. **STEM and Future-Ready Education:** Advocating for STEM education and preparing students for a workforce driven by AI and technology fulfills SMRR's commitment to robust academic and vocational/career programs that assist in residents' professional development. I'm afraid we currently have two systems even within the public schools, where affluent families can supplement public education with private extracurriculars, thus widening the achievement gap. Based on my non-profit work with America on Tech, I understand how important access to programs and exposure to career professionals is to young people and their future career prospects.

2. Do you pledge, if elected, to attend SMRR's monthly Steering Committee meetings to provide the School Board report (in rotation with other SMRR supported School Board members)?

Yes, this is a great opportunity for the School Board members. Engaging with SMRR and other political organizations is an effective way to gather input from the community, listen to concerns, and get feedback on proposals before they are finalized.

3. Do you pledge, if elected, to discuss major policy issues related to your office with SMRR leaders prior to making decisions?

Yes, again, I see this as a valuable opportunity to gather diverse perspectives and be well-informed prior to making critical decisions.

Issues Relating to the School District

1. What are the top 3 goals you want to achieve during your term on the SMMUSD Board? How do you think you can achieve these goals?

Much can be accomplished in four years, here are my plans for the first 90 days of my term if elected.

1. Create a policy that places reasonable limits on screen time in our schools. We already have a template from LAUSD's policy; however I would make some improvements, especially around AI use limitations and guardrails.
2. Adopt a policy to ban new purchases of artificial turf on school district land. SMRR and other organizations have shared letters with the school board requesting bans, at least on elementary school sites, and to conduct a grass pilot with the city to evaluate the most effective methods of grass management. The school board's current "pilot" is not a true pilot, as it lacks a clear objective, success criteria, and scientific methods, and it isn't coordinated with the city. SMRR emphasizes making the environment resilient for future generations. This is at direct odds with carpeting our campuses in artificial turf; surfaces with temperatures exceeding 120 degrees Fahrenheit 100 days out of the year, with climate change only worsening, make our environment significantly less resilient.
3. Adopt a resolution that recognizes the need for after care availability and affordable aftercare for everyone in the district who needs it. As a current parent of an elementary-aged child, I understand how our district places undue pressure on working families. In fact, lack of aftercare availability is also a significant factor driving families to enroll their kids outside of the district and in private schools. Immediately following the resolution, we will direct staff to work with vendors to increase capacity in the aftercare programs, then we will begin to explore ways to bring costs down and subsidize it for those who need it. This also applies to after school enrichment programs, because currently you have to be rich or lucky to get high quality enrichment activities for your kids. You should not have to be on your computer at 6:01AM the day CREST classes open to have a chance at getting a spot. As one teacher put it, CREST slots are hotter than Taylor Swift tickets. These opportunities matter, not only in college admissions, but educationally, as well.

2. What do you think SMMUSD has done well over the last few years, if anything?
What do you think SMMUSD has done poorly, if anything, and what would you propose to change to address what you view as shortcomings?

SMMUSD has a reputation for excellent public schools, and let's give the district credit for continuing to adapt based on modern education research and best practices. For example, some of the policies the district has implemented to address the achievement

gap seem to have yielded positive results. However, we should keep in mind that curriculum buy-in from the teachers, along with adequate standards and training, and keeping small class sizes are critical for the success of these programs.

Despite our success, there are legitimate concerns that our district is losing ground to surrounding schools based on data post-COVID. For example, our literacy rates had a minor drop of 0.73% last year, and our UC-admissions rates have actually fallen behind surrounding schools compared to 2019 when we led the pack. To address these concerns it's critical we take action.

Some policies that are worth accelerating due diligence on include limiting the use of screens in the classroom, implementing a seven period schedule, and offering an International Baccalaureate program at the high school level (it's currently only offered at one elementary school). Limiting screens in the classrooms would help create a more focused learning environment and improve foundational learning (more on this later). The seven period schedule would allow students to take a greater breadth of foreign language and other college-readiness courses. Data on these programs suggest they would increase our district's UC-eligibility rate, however the district abandoned the initiative to review this for Santa Monica High. International Baccalaureate (IB) is a globally recognized framework that provides academically rigorous programs that aim to produce critical thinking, open minded and globally conscious citizens, rather than focus on rote memorization and preparing for standardized tests.

As far as measuring success, I support formative testing versus standardized tests. Data shows standardized tests are problematic, many students don't take them seriously, and they provide an assessment only at the end of a semester when it's really too late to make any course corrections. The district is already doing formative assessments, which are smaller, more frequent knowledge checks that are lower stakes for the students and allow teachers to monitor progress more closely and intervene earlier. My main issue with the current formative assessment is that they are done on digital tablets. This is unnecessary; I would prefer more hand-written or oral assessments that empower the teacher rather than rely on unproven software.

In addition to these assessments, which put more trust in our teachers, we can and should still measure literacy, math, grade level progression, graduation rates, grade point averages, UC-eligibility, and UC and other college admission rates.

3. With all of the stress and strife in the world and on school campuses today, what will you do if elected to help alleviate tensions that may arise and keep our public schools

from being a hostile environment? Please address the issue in general, as well as address specifically the needs of our Black students, our Latino students, our LGBTQ+ students, our Jewish students, our Muslim students, our students from immigrant families, and students from any other groups targeted in the world with hate.

Public schools offer communities a chance to bring diverse populations together. Promoting participation in extracurriculars and community building opportunities at schools helps create an environment of inclusion and boosts student mental health and school-connectedness. Bolstering local community and neighborhood-level connections between people is one of the strongest bulwarks we have against hate and extremism.

All students need to feel safe and supported, which means a more effective anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy with clear, trauma-informed pathways for parents or children to find resolutions to situations where there is bullying. Unresolved bullying is one of the more common reasons cited by parents who exit the district. We currently have a district policy, but we need to bolster its reporting, the process to follow up on incidents, and training to ensure we are correctly and completely following the policy. This applies as well to harassment complaints of adults; there have been far too many incidents that could have avoided escalation with appropriate follow up and behavioral remediation.

For our immigrant families in our district, I am aware of leadership steps the district has already taken to ensure the safety of families, including communication and safety plans in the event of unlawful raids. We need to keep ICE out of our schools, and it's important to proactively and publicly reassure our families of their safety. This can feel challenging, because at the same time we need to be careful not to make our district a target. Constant communication and engagement is critical to make sure we can strike the right balance.

Lastly, for the groups listed, as well as any group frequently targeted for hate, in addition to a robust anti-harassment policy, I support policies that promote diverse cultural narratives and empower and engage students. The district is adhering to a state-wide requirement to make ethnic studies a required course for graduation. This teaching is important, studies show that taking ethnic studies improves student outcomes including grade point averages and graduation rates, and it's important for students to gain a more complete depiction of history, learning more about the contribution of marginalized groups. However, the state still lacks a comprehensive set of guidelines for how this course is taught, it lacks learning objectives, and in many cases the instruction has been filled with biases that blame or shame certain groups, including promoting Anti-Semitic tropes. Our district should look at this as an opportunity to lead in offering

truly inclusive learning that lifts up cultures without putting any others down and providing adequate teacher training to protect students from discrimination and hate.

4. What specific steps will you take to reduce achievement gaps of students from socio-economically challenged backgrounds (or otherwise)?

It's clear that this is a long-standing struggle the district has spent many years, a lot of effort, and funding trying to rectify. A report from a renowned specialist, Dr. Pedro Noguera, in 2015 indicated a number of institutional and structural changes were needed to successfully implement programs to support success for all students, and in fact, successfully operate as an institution in all capacities.

It's clear much of that was taken on board and implemented; however, disparities remain persistent. While much of that may be structural in our community and a product of deep economic inequality in our society, some of it may still be rectifiable in SMMUSD.

Policy research suggests that the earlier the intervention, the more impactful. In fact, even earlier than Transitional Kindergarten (TK) is often cited as most critical. The impactfulness of early intervention is one of the main reasons for the state mandated universal TK program. The TK rollout in SMMUSD was a bit rocky, and not as inclusive as possible. The lack of aftercare availability continues to hamper parental uptake, yet students are also being told there are no slots for them at their home school in TK. Additionally, the TK program displaced some of the district's existing early childhood opportunities that served even younger students. A re-evaluation of how the district wants to approach early childhood opportunities in the context of the TK mandate is probably merited at this time.

For TK-5, with regards to addressing achievement gaps as early as possible in the district, SMMUSD does take a proactive approach to early elementary literacy gaps. With frequent and early formative testing so as to be able to support those with early signs of struggle quickly with literacy specialists. An important correction, that I hope to see continued, and which aligns with that 2015 institutional assessment, was the decision to retain the literacy specialists after announcing they would be cut. While the right decision was ultimately made, this unnecessary and culturally damaging conflict was another casualty of the overly cautious budgeting approach that the district plans to right size, and is emblematic of the lingering of some of the structural issues that the Noguera report pointed out.

Outside of regular instruction, enrichment and extracurricular activities are another important area where the district needs to do more to close the gap. While there is a patchwork of enrichment and extended learning opportunities available, frequently these programs are still quite expensive for families that may not qualify for assistance and quality is not consistent. Funding gaps persist for important STEM opportunities (e.g. the defunded robotics club) which are often backfilled by parents who can afford to, but might create barriers for certain students to participate. A district recognition of the importance of these programs being high quality, universally available, and subsidized or free if needed is lacking. These opportunities matter, not only in college admissions, but educationally, as well.

In the upper grades, there is some evidence that the English detracking pilot program pursued at the high school might contribute to improved performance for student groups that traditionally did not pursue AP or honors courses. It appears this approach can lead to improved outcomes for all students, but it requires consistent support for teachers who must take on higher work loads. Also critical is a commitment to the smaller class sizes this approach necessitates to allow teachers to teach to different levels within one classroom. I believe this approach merits more time and study.

Finally, regardless of specific strategies, programs, and plans to address this issue, competitive teacher hiring, retention, and development are the most critical factors in the performance of all students. Continuing to improve this aspect of district operations should be a core focus at all times.

5. What can you point to in order to assure SMRR that you are truly committed to reducing achievement gaps for students from socio-economically challenged backgrounds (or otherwise)?

I would point to my board service over the last five years with America on Tech, an organization whose goal is to reduce the racial wealth gap by providing technology education and career pathways to students in under-estimated communities. In my board role, I advise on strategy, budgeting, outreach, among other responsibilities, and I have also done a significant amount of fundraising, placed students into internships, and provided mentorship to the students. I'm proud that this organization and the students have thrived despite the Trump administration's attack on DEI.

Before America on Tech, I used to volunteer with an organization called Reading to Kids, whose mission is to inspire a love of reading in children, particularly those whose second language is English. I volunteered regularly at Hoover Elementary in Koreatown, as both a reader and in a leadership capacity as a grade level coordinator.

6. Do you pledge to support continuing SMMUSD's policy of admitting students whose parent(s) or guardian(s) are employed in the district, even if they do not live in the district? Why or why not?

Yes, for moral reasons, I believe that the people taking care of our children deserve to also send their kids to the schools. It also deepens their connection to the community fabric and thereby enriches the school. It makes their commutes and lives easier and their kids safer, if for example their kid gets sick they are nearby. Furthermore, as I have stated, our schools are significantly under capacity so I think everyone benefits.

7. Education in California (and beyond) is changing a lot. What does the future of education at SMMUSD look like to you? What will you do if elected to facilitate your vision for the future of education at SMMUSD?

We are seeing some trends in the direction of increased attention to social and cognitive skills like critical thinking and problem solving, social emotional learning, and collaboration. The recognition of the importance of these skills is partly due to shifting workforce needs but also due to the increasingly rapid pace of social and cultural change we're all facing as a society. These skills will be critically important in the future and importantly, they will prepare our children for the age of AI.

Another trend we're seeing is a dramatic increase in the use of technology and AI in education in the last 10 years. This is a trend across the country, but we are also seeing a growing movement nationwide to push back against some missteps in how technology is being deployed in education.

In SMMUSD, I think the single biggest miss on the part of our district is how they rolled out education technology and 1:1 devices for students over the last five years. I support a balanced, data-driven policy regarding technology use in school that ensures students' educational, cognitive, and social-emotional wellbeing while at the same time affording teachers the autonomy, flexibility, and resources they need to do their jobs effectively. Classroom technology tools can be both incredibly useful and potentially harmful all at the same time. But as of now, the district has not instituted a thoughtful, comprehensive policy that includes meaningful and understandable rules, limits, or guidelines about the way technology is used in the classroom. This has caused so much confusion among teachers, students, parents, and administrators about the ways in which and how much these tools may be used, and it results in uneven implementation, confusing opt-out policies, and a concerning level of access to inappropriate content on school devices. I have heard parents recount numerous

instances of students spending an inordinate amount of time watching YouTube videos, playing video games, scrolling social media sites, and browsing inappropriate content on the internet on school devices, often evading ineffective firewalls.

Technology is an important part of our modern world and economy and our students absolutely need to be prepared to interact with it in a healthy and productive way in their professional and personal lives. As I have personally experienced, technology can also be an excellent career path but developing the core skills needed to pursue a career in STEM doesn't mean playing with an iPad during kindergarten free "choice" time.

Our approach to screens and digital learning should be undergirded by a few core principles:

1. Reducing distraction, improving foundational knowledge retention, and eliminating access to potentially harmful material: Neuroscience tells us that using a pen or pencil and paper can greatly improve knowledge retention, and that repetition is critical for consolidating our internal mental "schemata" or maps of knowledge. Screens and AI actually interrupt this process and don't allow students to fully build out their mental maps. Intentional use of screens should actually mean using them for specific learning opportunities that are computer related, like learning design or database software. Even the principles of coding, computer science, and media literacy can be taught with a pen and paper before incorporating screens at higher levels. District policy therefore needs to ban devices entirely for TK-2nd grade, ban internet connected 1:1 devices for grades 3-8 instead using a centralized lab or cart model, and limited use and limited connectivity on 1:1 devices in high school with teacher directed activity only. At the same time, there needs to be a robust technology education program which features an array of computer lab-based electives to teach students meaningful tech-based skills such as computer science, coding, digital graphic design and film editing, complex financial accounting, deep digital research skills, etc.

2. Prioritizing uniquely human skills and relationships: Computers can't replace teachers, period. Screens also tend to consume one's focus and crowd out everything else, resulting in less peer interaction, less physical play, and less time spent creating art or playing in social imaginative games. Devices distract students from interacting with each other in a healthy way, and prevent children from developing critical social emotional skills, interpersonal skills, and relationships. The district policy should ban screens during lunch, recess, passing periods between classes, and after-school programs. It should also eliminate screen-based rewards and behavioral incentives and reinforcement, such as allowing playing video games after finishing an assignment early. The dopamine-driven nature of computer games means using them as a reward

creates an unhealthy relationship with technology. And, as it goes without saying that students should not be exposed to advertisements at school, all smartboards and other devices used by students and teachers easily can and must have premium ad blockers preinstalled.

3. Transparency, openness, and good governance: Parents deserve to know the basics about what and how technology is being used in their children's classrooms. The district should require that all apps, programs, and content used in the classroom be independently verified for their educational efficacy and necessity to further the prescribed curriculum, and that any technology-related procurement or policy decisions are made entirely free from corporate or industry influence. If the computer programs the district implements gathers students' personal or behavioral data, they must first obtain affirmative consent from parents, and even then, that data must never be shared with any third party. All technology must have a way to monitor and audit its use, and that information must be shared with parents. It's not acceptable for parents to be held completely in the dark as to how, when and what their children are doing on digital devices provided by the school. Furthermore, parents must be permitted to opt their children out of technology use in the classroom, and be provided meaningful alternative analog instruction. Lastly, internet connectivity should never be a requirement for homework assignments, as doing so poses a great equity issue as it places the burden on working families to continually monitor their children's device use at home.

Specifically for artificial intelligence (AI), my position is that artificial intelligence tools must have independent proof of their merits and proof they are safe to use before we implement them in the classroom, especially when it comes to our youngest students. Additionally, it is a best practice to retain a "human in the loop" or "human in the lead," meaning AI can be an assistant to teachers but it should not replace teachers.

Currently, there isn't enough data about the merits of AI-based education tools that supports their adoption at this time, particularly for elementary-aged children. Further, some studies show that certain tools may actually be hampering learning development and are rewiring children's brains. There is evidence that they inhibit students' ability to fully engage with material and do the repetition and framework development required to eventually achieve subject mastery. Students also need to learn resilience, failure is a fundamental part of learning. Many AI tools are programmed to avoid struggle and failure, because they are optimized to maximize the amount of time a student is engaged with the lesson. Because of this, I think TK-8 should have limited to no interaction with AI, and only through the moderation of an adult.

In the upper grades, high school students should be taught about what AI is, what AI isn't, and how to use it effectively in the workplace. They need to learn how to use AI responsibly and securely, so they can use the technology in the workplace, without allowing it to copy their cognition, memory, or learning ability, and without allowing it to comprise proprietary data. They also need to develop strong media literacy skills, learning how to identify deepfakes, how to properly vet sources when using AI to conduct research, and think critically about generative AI output or answers.

Separate from student interaction with AI, there is opportunity in the near term to allow teachers to use AI to help with lesson planning to lighten their administrative load, such as some types of grading, to enable them to spend more time with their students. For example, AI could potentially be a useful tool to help teachers evaluate formative testing assessments that are completed by students with a pen and paper. Historically digital devices were used to collect these assessments because the data needed to be available in a structured format for analysis. AI on the other hand is very adept at pattern recognition with unstructured data, like images of handwritten notes, and it could help teachers with early intervention to address learning disparities.

8. Do you support SMMUSD building housing affordable to its workforce, including both teachers and non-teachers (such as maintenance workers, food services workers, crossing guards, etc.)? If so, what will you do if elected to assure that it happens?

I believe affordable workforce housing could possibly be an effective recruiting tool to attract the best teachers and service employees for our district. I also think it's morally justified that the people taking care of our children deserve to live in our community. In order to actually build affordable workforce housing, however, it's essential to have support from the teachers' and service employees' unions. The San Diego Unified School District, for example, is currently building workforce housing and their teachers' union organized for it. By contrast, I have spoken to union representatives within SMMUSD and workforce housing is not currently a priority of theirs. If elected to the SMMUSD board, I would continue to engage in a dialogue with union representatives to explore possibilities, and work to ensure that housing would not come at the expense of wages or healthcare in negotiations.

9. Do you support the citizens' initiative Parcel Tax measure that will appear on the November ballot? If not, why not? If so, what do believe is/are the strongest argument/s in favor of the Measure?

First I want to clearly state that I am committed to fight for robust and reliable funding for our public schools to ensure world class public education for the students in SMMUSD.

I strongly believe high-quality public schools are an essential resource for everyone in our community and critical for a well functioning democracy.

I endorse the parcel tax, and I have already stated publicly that I intend to vote for the initiative, because I believe the risk to SMMUSD's budget is real and serious. At the same time, I am very sensitive to the public perception about this initiative and how that might affect the district's ability to raise funding in the future.

I have talked to a lot of voters who have expressed that while they typically vote in favor of school funding measures, they have significant concerns over this measure, citing the regressive tax structure, and expressing a desire for greater fiscal discipline from the district. I think it's important to highlight that this actually isn't a school funding measure, the tax provides funding to the city that is budgeted for the schools. I know it may be a bit confusing, but the point is this initiative isn't due to a lack of fiscal discipline on the part of the school district, it's to prevent the city from defunding our schools because of the financial situation the city is in after lost tourism revenue and lawsuits.

I think it's important to acknowledge these concerns because this likely isn't the last tax initiative we will need to ensure adequate funding for our schools. I think it's also important to apply pressure on City Council candidates to clarify their intentions in how they will act whether or not this tax gets approved by the voters. If the parcel tax initiative does not pass, I pledge to advocate aggressively for the district to the City Council to ensure our schools do not lose any funding. I understand difficult times require difficult choices, but I just don't think that cutting funding for children and schools is an acceptable choice to make.

10. Voter approved 2022 Measure GS contemplated that an additional 5% transfer tax on sales of properties for \$8 million or more would go to providing additional funds for our public schools, for emergency and ongoing income support programs, for the preservation or creation of deed-restricted affordable housing, for right to counsel, and other programs aimed at preserving existing tenancies of and units serving lower and moderate income households. The first \$10 million collected goes to our public schools, as does 20% of anything collected above \$50 million. But on June 22, in Sacramento AB-736 was gutted and amended so that, if passed, it would cap the total transfer tax rate for all commercial and multi-family property in such a way that only 0.9% would go into the purposes outlined in 2022 Measure GS. Given that a City Council commissioned report in 2022 found that 93.4% of the total value of all transfers of \$8 million or more during the prior decade came from commercial and multi-family properties, AB-736 if passed will decimate the funding for homelessness prevention and affordable housing that 2022 Measure GS otherwise could provide,

and will preclude the potential for the public schools to receive more than \$10 million per year (and could threaten even that in some years).

a. Do you support AB-736? Why or why not?

b. Do you support any other changes to Measure GS (if so, specify the changes)? Why or why not?

c. Can SMRR count on you as an ally to oppose efforts that threaten continued funding of the homelessness prevention and affordable housing programs contemplated by Measure GS, even if funding to the public schools would remain unaffected? If so, what can you point to assure SMRR that you truly are such an ally?

I am an ally to SMRR in supporting homelessness prevention and affordable housing. When I was in middle and high school back in Phoenix, I regularly volunteered serving meals at the Andre House soup kitchen near downtown Phoenix. As an adult in Santa Monica, for several years my wife and I lived down the street from the Upward Bound House in the Wilmont Neighborhood. We were proud to have their center be part of our community and we were proud to support them.

I do not support AB-736 if the final bill includes the transfer tax cap. Based on the first few years of implementation, I think it's too early to conclude that Measure GS should be amended. It currently provides necessary funding for the schools, it collects the revenue from wealthy land owners, and the shortfall in the expected revenue for homelessness prevention and affordable housing is clearly being impacted by surging interest rates, rather than any fundamental flaws in the legislation.

When Measure GS was passed by voters in 2022 it was projected to collect approximately \$50M annually, the first \$10M going to the schools, and the next \$40M going to homeless prevention and to build affordable housing. Since it passed, the measure has fallen short of its revenue goal, but the full \$10M annually for schools has been realized. SMRR can count on me as an ally to oppose efforts that threaten funding of homelessness prevention and affordable housing programs. I am open to amendment suggestions to decrease the shortfall in revenue for homeless prevention and affordable housing, but we also cannot afford to sacrifice funding for the schools. I am hopeful that long term revenues will pick up given more stable interest rates, and that some of the negotiations the city has made with the affordable housing developers will yield positive results.

State Ballot Measures

1. Do you support the Howard Jarvis measure (or any substitute for that measure) to require a two-thirds vote on any and every form of new local tax? Why or why not? Will you actively encourage your supporters to vote the same way as you on this

Measure?

I do not. The Howard Jarvis Association is a Republican group that opposes any taxation of any kind. This initiative would effectively eliminate the ability for local governments to raise taxes for critical needs, such as our ability to raise funding for our public schools. I have been and will continue to be public about where I stand on this issue.

2. Do you support the measure to require that any ballot measure imposing a new super-majority vote requirement must itself pass by that same super-majority in order to become effective? Why or why not? Will you actively encourage your supporters to vote the same way as you on this measure (assuming it appears on the ballot)?

My understanding is this measure has already been withdrawn as part of a compromise with the Howard Jarvis Association. It was initially intended to be a countermeasure put forth by the Democratic party but both sides reached an agreement to pull their respective bills, and now the less aggressive, but still bad Howard Jarvis initiative will be on the ballot. To reiterate, I do not support that measure and hope voters will reject it.

3. Do you support the measure to condition the right to vote on new voter identification requirements? Why or why not? Will you actively encourage your supporters to vote the same way as you on this measure?

Absolutely not, this is another Republican-led initiative intended to disenfranchise voters who may not have the appropriate documents, targeting to disenfranchise women, people of color, and those based on socio-economic status. This measure is a solution looking for a problem, the incidence of voter fraud is miniscule, and the real motivation behind it is to pervert our electoral system. I have been and will continue to publicly speak against this measure.