

Candidate Name: **Jeanette Vazquez AREA 5**

NEIGHBORS UNITED FOR FULLERTON SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Space provided is not intended to limit the length of your response; use the space you need.

1. What is your vision for education in the Fullerton schools?

As an elementary school teacher born and raised in Fullerton, I believe education is the gateway of opportunity for every child. Our strong community partnerships have fostered high quality educational opportunities for our Fullerton children. I believe that we can assure every child has access to quality educational opportunities in their own neighborhood by adopting equitable policies that bridge the opportunity gap of our diverse student populations.

2. What do you believe are the top 2 or 3 priorities that need to be addressed at the district level?

I will make sure students are on the path towards college readiness starting in preschool. We can get this done by making sure our campuses are safe and welcoming for students and families. Our students will be ready for the California economy by expanding Dual Language Immersion and oral communication programs. Ultimately, it is my goal that every neighborhood has a high quality school and we can accomplish this by reducing class sizes.

3. What has been your experience in the public school system?

Growing up in Fullerton, I saw how hard my parents worked to make sure I had what I needed to be successful. I also had inspirational teachers at Richman, Nicolas, and Fullerton High School who instilled in me the importance of an education and giving back to our Fullerton community. Their partnership paved the way for me to become the first in my family to graduate from high school and college and earn a B.A. from UC Berkeley and a Master of Arts in Education Administration from Loyola Marymount University. I teach because I know it takes a community for our children to succeed.

4. In what ways do you feel you are prepared for the job of a Trustee? What strengths do you bring?

As a public elementary school teacher, I see first-hand the rapid changes in education and their impact on students and families. Both teachers and parents are still transitioning to the new Common Core standards as these have completely shifted the ways of thinking for our students. It is imperative for me as a teacher to make sure I build strong partnerships with parents in order to best prepare our students. I will make sure I add this perspective to the board.

5. What are 2 or 3 current activities or programs in which the district currently excels? How do you believe that you could ensure that these continue?

Our district has done an amazing job at assuring that our students have access to the 21st century skills they need to be successful in high school, college, and beyond. Our investment in educational technology has placed us at the forefront of blended learning models that maximize student learning outcomes and real-world exposure. As Trustee, I will make sure we are continuing to invest in maintaining our investment in technology by allocating funds in the general budget, promoting our foundation, and seeking private and public grants.

This year we launched the pilot Dual Immersion Program at Raymond Elementary in order to foster students that are biliterate and bilingual. This will assure that we are equipping students to become competitive in the California and global economy and gain multi-faceted cultural perspectives. As Trustee, I will advocate to expand the Dual Immersion program to families in Area 5 as well as initiate a Korean Dual Immersion Program long awaited in Area 2.

6. What is the best measurement for how a district is being successful or unsuccessful in student learning?

After almost 15 years of focusing on standardized testing and quantitative measures in education, we are finally moving to a more holistic approach in the state of California. Indeed, the development of a child can simply not be solely quantified yet measured by various elements that foster the whole child – student learning, socio-emotional health, exposure to real-world learning experiences etc. The new California model to measure school effectiveness, as proposed by the State Department of Education, includes such perspectives. School climate for example, is crucial to include in such measurement as it encompasses a variety of factors that affect student learning like parent partnerships, teacher retention, approach in student discipline policies etc. We must continue to measure student learning outcomes yet be cognoscente that critical thinking and creativity are complex to measure. Further, we must include various measurements that indeed foster the development of the whole child.

7. Do you favor uniqueness in the schools/courses/teaching methods offered, or do you believe that greater consistency is preferable?

As a teacher, it is vital for me to not only understand that every child is different and has different needs, but necessary for me to differentiate to these needs in order for them all to reach the same goals. Equity means that not every child or every school will get the same thing because they do not all need the same resources and programs to achieve their ultimate goal – access to educational opportunities for them to reach their fullest potential.

8. What are your views on integration of the arts at our schools?

Fostering the needs of the whole child are what have made our Fullerton schools among the best. We must continue to invest in the arts in order to give students the space they need to explore and engage their creative minds.

9. Is there anything you would like to add?

I truly believe that equitable access to quality public educational opportunities will not only allow every student to be successful and reach their goals, but ultimately contribute to a brighter Fullerton. We can assure this becomes a reality more than every by continuing to strengthen partnerships with our neighborhoods and communities.