

2020 Endorsement Questionnaire

Email address *

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APA Democratic Caucus of Alameda County



PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT BY SEPT. 9, midnight. Please take time to review the questions before filling in the boxes since you cannot save the responses for later completion. Thank you for your interest in being considered for an endorsement by the Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus of Alameda County. Please answer each question in 250 words or less. Be honest and direct. Please note: your questionnaire will be posted on our website for Caucus members and the public to review.

Personal Information

Candidate Name *

Jennifer Williams

City and zip code of residence.

Alameda, CA 94502

What is your campaign website address?

williamsforschoolboard.org

What is your campaign email address?

jenniferforschoolboard@gmail.com

What is the office that you are seeking? *

- Alameda City Council
- Alameda School Board
- Berkeley, Mayor
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 2
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 3
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist.5
- Berkeley, City Council, Dist. 6
- Berkeley, Unified School District Trustee
- Berkeley, Rent Stabilization Board
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 1
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 3
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 5
- Oakland, City Council, Dist. 7
- Oakland, City Council, At-large
- Oakland City Attorney
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 1
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 3
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 5
- Oakland USD, School Trustee, Dist. 7
- AC Transit, Bd. of Directors, Ward 1
- AC Transit, Bd. of Directors, Ward 2
- AC Transit Bd. of Directors, At-Large
- EB Regional Park Dist. Bd. of Directors. Ward 1

Regional Assembly, Bd. of Directors, Area 1

AD 15, State Assembly Representative

AD 18, State Assembly Representative

Peralta Community College District, Bd. of Director, Area 2

Other:

Are you the incumbent?

Yes

No

Are you a registered Democrat? The APA Democratic Caucus can only endorse registered Democrats

Yes

No

How long have you been a registered Democrat? If less than 5 years, please explain your reason for becoming a Democrat.

32 years

Are you an APA Caucus member?

Yes

No

Why are you seeking the Caucus's endorsement?

The APA Caucus endorsement is one of the most prestigious endorsements that a candidate for elected office can secure. The Caucus endorsed me in 2016 in my successful election to the Board of Education and I am seeking it again because over 30% of Alameda residents are of Asian descent, and the Caucus represents the racial make-up of many families of color in our school district - indeed, 36% of our families identify as Asian and almost 10% more identify as more than one race. Having endorsements that represent the diversity of the community I serve is very important to me and reflects values I have of equity and inclusion for all community members I represent.

List ONLY the top 5 endorsements that you have received. (Please reference your website if you want to alert us to more).

Alameda Education Association, Alameda Progressives, Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, Vice Mayor John Knox White, and Alameda Board of Education Trustee Dr. Ardella Dailey.

If we endorse you, will you use our name in your campaign materials?

Yes

No

Maybe

How long have you lived in the district which you are seeking to represent?

Almost 20 years.

Educational background: What schools have you attended, date graduated, major and degree(s) earned.

I received a bachelor of arts degree in Political Science in 1990 from the University of California, Riverside, and a juris doctorate in 1993 from McGeorge School of Law.

Employment: List the last three (3) paid positions, indicating name of employer, job title, and length of employment.

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE
2011-present

THE OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY, CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
GENERAL COUNSEL, SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
August 1999-2011

THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS -
JUDICIAL REVIEW AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT
Juvenile Projects Attorney, August 1997-1999

What are the names of any community or nonprofit organizations with which you have been an active volunteer in the past 3-5 years.

San Francisco Worker's Children's Fund, Alameda branch of the American Association of University Women, Girls Inc. of the Island City.

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

1. What differentiates you from your opponents for the elected office that you are seeking?

My record of service differentiates me from my opponents in this race. I am the only incumbent seeking re-election to the Board of Education. During my time on the Board I have provided stability during the pandemic and have provided ongoing oversight over the remote and hybrid learning models. I oversaw \$180 million in bond expenditures to upgrade our facilities to 21st Century learning. I have been a member of the Wellness Subcommittee since 2016 and supported the District's first ever Mental and Emotional Wellness Needs Assessment survey in the 2018-2019 school year that identified student emotional health and behavioral needs and created a more coordinated and accessible behavioral health service system for all students.

I have also been a member of the City of Alameda/AUSD Subcommittee since 2016, worked with City partners to ensure equitable access to City sports facilities, and made necessary upgrades to Emma Hood Pool for student and community use. I have engaged community stakeholders to develop a graduate profile, and have worked with my colleagues on the Board to finalize a strategic plan. I have been through numerous budget meetings, and in 2018, made \$1.6 million in difficult but necessary budget cuts to give staff a much-needed raise. These experiences set me aside from all other candidates in this race. There are three open seats in this election, and this is not the time for a new Board majority with members who lack the experience I have to provide stability for our students and staff.

2. Describe one issue for the district you want to represent for which you have provided leadership and about which you are passionate.

I am passionate about our students' mental health and have provided leadership in this District around this issue. As a member of the Wellness Subcommittee for the past four years, I worked with staff to create the first ever Mental and Emotional Wellness Needs Assessment, that surveyed over 1,000 students, families and staff and identified student emotional health and behavioral needs. Based on the data from that report, I asked for and received \$100,000.00 from the Alameda City Council for two years in a row to fund mental health support for AUSD students, and almost \$300,000.00 worth of free programming from Girls Inc. of the Island City to run elementary literacy and STEM programs and the GEMS ("Girls Empowerment Mentoring Support") Program. These services provide additional support to address the social-emotional needs of our students and it is work I will continue to focus on if re-elected to the Board of Education.

3. What percentage of the district you [or intend to] represent are of APA heritage?

According to the 2010 Census, the City of Alameda's population was 31.2% Asian, .5% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and 8.2% two or more races. Within AUSD, approximately 36% of our students identify as Asian, and almost 10% identify as two or more races.

4. Please identify the three largest APA ethnicities in your district.

Chinese, Filipino, and Vietnamese.

5. Please identify the most at-risk APA community in your district and explain why.

I think recent immigrants from all APA communities are most at risk due to language barriers, xenophobia, and other racist stereotypes.

6. List the three top concerns of members of the APAs in your district.

I think the three top concerns of members of the APA community in the city of Alameda are public safety, access to a good public education, and economic stability.

7. During the COVID-19 pandemic, reports of anti-Asian verbal and physical attacks have arisen. If you are the incumbent, how have you addressed this? If you are a candidate how will you address this?

When I was elected in 2016, AUSD saw an uptick in bias-related incidents. I worked closely with staff to create a bias incident reporting policy, an anti-bullying policy based on race, gender, religion, and other protected classifications, and I directed District staff to create an anti-bias webpage with resources for students, families, and staff on culturally responsive materials and resources for families to assist them in talking to their children about hate-based conduct. I supported professional development around implicit bias and trauma-informed instruction so that our our teachers can lead more culturally responsive lessons in the classroom. I reached out to my fellow Alameda community member Willie Nguyen and asked him to chair the first Asian Pacific Islander Roundtable for AUSD, which he still chairs. AUSD has begun the important work to audit our policies and procedures to see where systemic racism exists and how we can amend our practices and procedures and adopt more culturally relevant curriculum that is as diverse and the community where we live. I will continue to work with our Administration on these efforts so that race-based inequities in AUSD are interrupted and all of our students have the tools they need to thrive.

8. Do you believe that Asian and Pacific Americans are adequately represented in local government? What can elected officials do to improve participation?

When over a third of the Alameda community identifies as Asian, I would say the APA community is underrepresented in local government if less than a third of our elected officials are from the APA community. Elected officials can improve participation in local government by appointing APA community members to boards and commissions, attending APA community events, partnering with the APA community around school functions, holding culturally responsive events and inviting APA families and community leaders to participate, and including APA authors and teachers in our classrooms so that our APA community feels welcomed and a part of the AUSD family.

9. Please identify all Asian Pacific American candidates whom you have personally endorsed over the past 5 years including this election cycle. If there are none, please explain.

I have endorsed Mia Bonta, Rob Bonta, and Phong La. I have personally supported Malia Vella and Austin Tam.

10. If you were faced with a situation that involved an Asian Pacific American community, would you seek consultation with our Caucus as a resource?

Yes

No

Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Please submit your responses by Sept. 9, 2020 midnight. Our North County Endorsement Meeting is scheduled for Thu., Sept. 24 beginning at 6:30 pm on Zoom. Only those candidates submitting the questionnaire on time will be on our endorsement ballot. No changes to your responses can be made after it is submitted.

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