



Contra Costa County Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire, Leadership and Candidacy

Fatima Alleyne
Contra Costa County Board of Education Area #1

1. Why are you running for the Contra Costa County School Board?

I am running for re-election for the board because I want to continue the work I started my first term, which is to:

- Hold our system accountable to place students first;
- Ensure fiscal oversight to adopt a healthy budget and appropriate reserves;
- Increase access to post-secondary education programs like career and technical education (CTE) and college courses;
- Utilize data-driven approaches to improve student achievement; and
- Increase transparency and accountability on how we spend tax dollars.

As the only member with school-aged children, I would like to continue to be the voice of parents of school-aged children on the board. As our public school system has evolved over time and will now need to imminently pivot due to COVID-19 to ensure the safety of our students, teachers, and their families, we need someone who will bring continuity, experience and expertise and whose decisions are student-centered to lead this endeavor.

2. As a school board member, you will be required to manage competing interests and inputs. How do you plan to balance the needs of your individual voting district and the entire county? How do you plan to research and gather feedback from your community when making important decisions? How would you support a healthy team culture among school board members that promotes dialog?

As a member of the county board who is voted in by residents in selected areas of West Contra Costa County, I balance the needs of West Contra Costa and the rest of the county by listening to diverse voices, using data to drive decision-making, and ensuring that my actions are student-centered, ethical, consistent with law and based on my values.

Throughout my tenure on the board I have intentionally and consciously sought input from diverse stakeholders throughout the county by posting updates on my Facebook page and encouraging and empowering members to email me with their comments. I've organized trainings to empower parents and teachers and support their advocacy.

Approaching my work from a student-centered approach requires respectful dialog, teamwork and collaboration. While my fellow trustees and I are not always aligned, my colleagues on the board and I have had healthy dialogs on some controversial issues that ranged from superintendent compensation to charter schools to board policies. This process has not always led to consensus; however, it has allowed us to prioritize our action items and execute efficient and effective board meetings.

3. As a board member you have one no employees. How will you hold the county superintendent accountable for day-to-day operations, the decisions and actions of his/their team, and overall student outcomes?

The county superintendent is not the employee of the board; thus, the way we hold them accountable is through the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), board policy, and budget. Given that we, the board, have had positive working relationships with the past two superintendents, the superintendent has been responsive to the requests by the board for more information.

4. COVID-19 highlighted the inequities in our district, as we saw students receiving very different educational experiences, even between classrooms at the same school. What will you do to ensure more consistent delivery of high quality instruction and student supports throughout the COVID crisis and beyond?

Prior to COVID-19, I advocated for an analysis of the inequities in the Contra Costa County Office of Education. For example, I requested an analysis of the diversity of our leadership and the professional development opportunities afforded to the staff. This led to targeted outreach to diversify our staff to ensure that our students, who are mostly Black and Brown, see themselves in positions of power and authority.

Since COVID-19 led to worldwide shut-downs, I have advocated for the continuation of high quality instruction and resources throughout the county, with a particular emphasis on our court and community schools and special education programs. To better understand the pervasiveness of and address the inequities, I requested information on how our students were served in our county and district programs as well as charter schools. I inquired about access to meals, instruction, and technology for remote learning for our students and if necessary supports were in place for our teachers to transition to remote learning while caring for their own families and needs. I've communicated with our legislators e.g. Assemblywoman Buffy Wicks and Congresswoman Barbara Lee about the need for additional finances for our traditional schools given that charter schools were afforded additional funds via the Payroll Protection Program. Additionally, I volunteered to serve food in West Contra Costa County (disseminated ~10,000 meals) and care for the children of our essential employees.

As trustee, I will continue to monitor student and teacher access to resources and advocate for more funding and accountability.

5. The WCCUSD budget is in a clear crisis. What would your process look like to gather the key information you need to make decisions to move the district out of a position of deficit? What key actions would you take locally and at the state and federal levels to improve WCCUSD's fiscal situation?

As a county board member, I will continue to:

Leverage my relationships with families, teachers, and other elected officials to advocate for increases in funding and accountability for how we serve ALL students in our public schools at the local, state, and federal levels;

Empower community members to advocate for students and their right to high quality education at the local, state, and federal levels;

Leverage my relationships to provide funding to the district and county to increase the offerings of career and technical education courses and college courses; and

Engage in discussions with industry, colleges, labor organizations, and others to gain foresight of the workforce in the next 10 years to ensure we provide adequate and appropriate programming for students to prepare them for their future.

I believe these efforts will help to secure additional funding opportunities for our public schools as we advocate for the state and federal government to prioritize public education.

