

Questionnaire for Candidates for Alameda County Board of Education Trustee Area 1

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot: Joaquín J. Rivera
2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number)
Alameda County Board of Education, Area 1
3. What is your current occupation or elected office? College Professor, former Director of the Berkeley School Board
4. Are you the incumbent? Yes No
5. How long have you resided in this district and city? 24 years

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:	Joaquin Rivera for County Board 2010
Address:	1938 Marin Ave.
City, State, Zip:	Berkeley, CA 94707
Name of staff contact:	
Campaign Phone:	510-525-9374
Campaign Fax:	
Campaign E-mail:	jojorico@pacbell.net
FPPC#	1325133

OUR ISSUES (18-35 year olds)

Please answer the first four questions in 250 words or less

1. Faced with the continual threat of budget cuts and layoffs, what would you do in your position to preserve educational funding for Alameda County schools?

A role of the county board of education members is to advocate for fair revenues from Sacramento and D.C. I'll be a strong advocate to oppose the budget cuts that threaten our children's future and to secure adequate resources for our schools. Part of the advocacy effort is to demand the Proposition 98 dollars school districts deserve. There are strong reasons that the voters of California mandated that there be education dollars and I will advocate to ensure that those dollars are fully appropriated. However, even fully funded, those dollars are not enough. California has a lower per pupil spending than most states. I will work with fellow board members statewide and with other partners in the education community parents, Unions, etc.) to educate the public about the devastating effects these budget cuts are having in for our youth and the need to find new sources of revenue to fund our schools and colleges.

As a Board member, I will work to encourage collaboration between the different county's school districts to bring in additional resources to help protect the most vulnerable children in our county.

I will also work to secure and expand federal and state resources for our schools through grant writing and other means.

2. Given the inevitable cuts that Alameda County school districts face as a result of the budget crisis, what should be the priorities as schools and districts allocate ever-scarcer resources? How will you help the BOE provide strong fiscal oversight for the schools and districts in the county?

The number one priority has to be maximizing the dollars and resources that go into the classroom. Although this is a decision that should be made by school boards at the district level, the County Board and Office of Education can help by acting as a coordinator, mediator, and consolidator of services. It can offer technical assistance to school districts to: provide training; increase Average Daily Attendance dollars; develop mechanisms for schools districts to share liabilities and services; and seek community and private partners to encourage quality education. As a Board member I want to facilitate coordination and collaboration among school districts on critical education initiatives.

I also want to ensure that districts utilize sound fiscal practices. While that function lies with the superintendent, I will work with the board to develop strategies that can support the superintendent as she assists the districts and to hold her and her staff accountable for the proper oversight of the districts in the county.

3. The Alameda County BOE serves expelled and incarnated youth. What steps would you take as a member of the board to improve services for these youth? What role do you see for these schools in the county's schools system overall?

First, I want to: ensure the availability of adequate resources in the classroom; expand academic opportunities in county/court schools; and improve support services for our students. Our focus should be working towards the goals of: closing the achievement gap; decreasing the dropout rate; and increasing the graduation rate for all students. In order to accomplish this, we need to ensure that appropriate educational placement options are available for students who have been expelled and as well as other at-risk

students. These programs must be designed to help pupils take a renewed interest in school and learning, attend school consistently, and set and attain academic and career goals.

We need policies to ensure that the level of service needed for the student is determined prior to enrollment in the program and that the educational path for youth involved in the ACOE's court and community schools is clearly established. We need to work with the student's school district to develop a clearly articulated educational success plan for when the student leaves the county schools.

In addition to academic support, many of the students we serve face serious challenges at home or with their health and will need additional services. We must develop partnerships between ACOE, the truancy court, school districts, and social and mental health services providers to ensure we meet all the needs of our students.

4. Sacramento's broken budget process has placed a tremendous burden on our education system. What reforms do you support to improve the budget process in Sacramento? Do you support a simple majority of the legislature to pass a budget and/or new revenue?

In the budget process, some items should be non-negotiable. That was the idea behind Proposition 98, to secure funding for education. However, the Governor broke that promise. The first step is to make Proposition 98 irrevocable so that its funds cannot be "borrowed" or "funneled" into the general fund at the expense of the quality of education for our students.

Second, I am in strong favor of going from the 2/3s vote to simple majority to **both** increase revenues and pass the state budget. The majority should not be held hostage to the minority. We need to work hard to pass the initiatives on this year's ballots

Third, I would get rid of term limits so our legislators can develop the necessary expertise on school finance and other education issues. This would stop the Capitol from being held hostage to special interests who now control the institutional memory (and rewrite history to fit their means)

5. Have you collaborated with young adults in your community work in the past (list specific examples)? How are young adults involved in your campaign? How will you continue to involve young activists in your work after you are elected? Please be specific.

In my professional capacity as a community college professor I work with young adults every day. I know firsthand the effects the budget cuts are having in their lives. With the elimination of sections students cannot find all the classes they need to transfer and/or graduate. As a Union leader in my district (former president of my local for 13 years and currently chief negotiator) I have worked with students to fight the budget cuts to higher education. I have worked with them in organizing demonstrations at meetings of our Board of Trustees, the annual "March in March" in Sacramento, teach-ins and to stop many of the cuts our administration was proposing this year.

I welcome help from everyone in my campaign. I'm looking forward to work with your organization in both my campaign and in fighting the budget cuts that are affecting the lives of so many young adults and children throughout the state.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Please describe in detail at least three of your accomplishments that have improved the lives of young adults. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities that apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

1. As a community college professor I have touched the lives of thousands of young adults. I work with them everyday and motivate them to help them achieve their goals. It is very rewarding when students tell me how appreciative they are of my work with them. I have had students who tell me that they did not believe they could do chemistry until they had me as a teacher and that I have inspired them to pursue greater goals in life. Many of my former students are still in touch with me, even after they have graduated from medical school!

2. As a school Board member in Berkeley I worked very hard to improve student achievement for all students and several of our schools were recognized statewide for their success. I'm particularly proud that our district defended (and won!) our student assignment program in court, the implementation of the District's literacy plan (which I was the driving force behind it), and for holding sites accountable for their student achievement plans

3. As a community college professor I see the challenges my students face. As a Union leader I have worked to empower these students. I believe it is very powerful when students talk to legislators and community members about the impacts the budget cuts are having in their lives. As I mentioned above, I have worked with students to fight the budget cuts to higher education. I have worked with them in organizing demonstrations at meetings of our Board of Trustees, the annual "March in March" in Sacramento, teach-ins and to stop many of the cuts our administrators were proposing this year.

EXPERIENCE

Please list or describe your current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life. Please explain how your experience would make you an effective advocate for young adults as an office holder. You may also list endorsements here.

See attached resume and list of endorsements.

JOAQUIN J. RIVERA

Occupation:

Community College Chemistry Professor, Skyline College (1990-present)

Education:

M.S., Chemistry University of California, Berkeley, 1990
National Science Foundation Fellowship

B.S., Chemistry, University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez, 1986
Summa Cum Laude; Antoine Lavoisier Award for excellence in Chemistry; Luis Stefani Raffucci Award for academic excellence; elected to the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society; Dean's List

Leadership:

- Director, Berkeley Unified School District Board of Education (1996-2008), three terms as President, (1999-2000, 2002-03 and 2006-07) and three as Vice-President, (1998-99, 2001-02 and 2005-06)
- President AFT, Local 1493 (1993-2006)
- Alameda County Democratic Central Committee (2006-2008)
- Vice-President, California Federation of Teachers (1994-2000)
- President, Skyline College Academic Senate (1996-98)
- Commissioner, Berkeley Police Review Commission (1993-96)

Awards:

- Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, U.C. Berkeley, 1990
- Phi Theta Kappa Outstanding Teaching Award, Skyline College, 2000
- Community College Leadership Award

Berkeley Unified School District Board Activities:

- District Literacy Committee
- Audit Committee
- Berkeley Adult School WASC Committee
- Berkeley Adult School Community Advisory Committee
- Biotechnology Partners Advisory Committee
- District English Learners Advisory Committee
- Improving Programs for English Language Learners Planning Team
- Citizens Budget and Finance Committee
- School District/City 2 x 2 Committee
- Berkeley Alliance Executive and Student Achievement Committees
- Association of California Urban School Districts
- Minority Student Achievement Network

CSBA Activities:

- Delegate, California School Boards Association (CSBA) Delegate Assembly (1999-2008)
- Masters in Governance
- Presenter, 2007 CSBA Annual Conference
- CSBA/CSTA Joint Task Force on Science (2005)
- Region 7 Working group on Achievement Gap
- Federal Issues Council (2004)
- CSBA Policy Platform Committee (2000)
- Nominating Committee (member 2001, chair 2002)
- Legislative Committee (2002 and 2003)
- Facilitator- Policy Platform breakout session
- CSBA Urban School Districts Council (2001-2008)
- Legislative Network
- Governmental and Federal Governmental Relations Chair
- Legislative Action Conference
- Delivered the Inspiration at the December 2000 Delegate Assembly
- California High School Exit Exam Standard Setting Committee (2001, 2003)
- California High School Exit Exam and Golden State Examination Community Review Committees

Joaquín Rivera

for Alameda County Board of Education

(partial list of endorsements)

Mary Hayashi, Assemblywoman

East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club (Former East Bay Lesbian Gay Dem. Club)

Alameda County Superintendent of Schools Sheila Jordan

Alameda County School Board Members Jacki Fox Ruby, Ken Berrick and Fred Sims

School Board Members:

Dick Allen (Mount Diablo)

Gwen Estes (New Haven)

Janice Friesen (Castro Valley)

Teresa Gerringer (Lafayette)

Sarah Gonzales (Hayward)

Cy Gulassa (Peralta CC)

Patricia Low (Albany)

Shirley Issel (Berkeley)

Dave Mandelkern (San Mateo CC)

Kathi McLaughlin (Martinez)

Grant Petersen (Hayward)

Charles Ramsey (West Contra Costa)

Nancy Riddle (Berkeley)

John Selawsky (Berkeley)

Sheila Sims (Hayward)

Alice Spearman (Oakland)

Nancy Thomas (Newark)

Tony Thurmond (West Contra Costa)

Lara York (Fremont)

City Council Members:

Max Anderson (Berkeley)

Jane Brunner (Oakland)

Laurie Capitelli (Berkeley)

Darryl Moore (Berkeley)

Susan Wengraf (Berkeley)

Kriss Worthington (Berkeley)

Gordon Wozniak (Berkeley)

Richard Holober, Executive Director, Consumer Federation of California

Mark Friedman, Chief Executive Officer, First 5, Alameda County

Joel Cohen, President, California School Health Centers Association

Bill Huyett, Superintendent, Berkeley Unified School District

Michele Lawrence and Jack McLaughlin, former Superintendents, Berkeley Unified School District

Laura Rico, Vice President, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

Wilma Chan, former Assemblywoman

Liz Figueroa, former State Senator and Assemblywoman

Pam Webster, Berkeley Rent Board Commissioner

Julie Holcomb, Chair, BSEP Planning and Oversight Committee