

Questionnaire for Candidates for Berkeley USD

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot: Karen Hemphill
2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number)
Berkeley School Board Director
3. What is your current occupation or elected office? Berkeley School Board Director (currently Board President) and my occupation is City Clerk for the City of Emeryville
4. Are you the incumbent? Yes
5. How long have you resided in this district and city? I've lived in Berkeley since 1977 when I came to go to graduate school at U.C. Berkeley.

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:	Re-elect Karen Hemphill for School Board 2010
Address:	P.O. Box 2081
City, State, Zip:	Berkeley, CA 94702
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OUR ISSUES (18-35 year olds)

Please answer the first four questions in 250 words or less

1. What would you do as a board member to address the growing equity and achievement gaps facing Berkeley's students?

My major platform has been to strengthen overall student achievement while specifically targeting bridging the opportunity gap in education. I am (and will continue to be) the Board's liaison to the 2020 Vision Leadership Committee and the All City Equity Team and was the Board's first liaison to the intra-District Equity Team. I was the chief proponent and champion of the first District-wide student achievement plan to address the achievement gap. The result is that after years of widening or stagnant gaps in achievement that the achievement gap is now narrowing in Berkeley while student achievement for all groups is growing.

2. Certain local measures on the November ballot directly affect the Berkeley USD. What are your positions on the special tax for residential buildings (Measures H) and on the school bond (Measure I)?

I am one of the co-chairs of the Yes on Measure H and I campaign committee.

3. What are your top three priorities if you are elected to the School Board?
 - a. Finding ways to maintain core academic programs and student support services in extremely difficult economic times (we are projecting up to a \$6million deficit for School Year 2011-12) through innovative but sound fiscal strategies and creative community partnerships.
 - b. Continuing to reduce the opportunity gap in education through emphasizing early and consistent intervention, 21st Century curriculum and teacher training, family partnerships, and use of data/evaluation.
 - c. Establishing a District-wide safety/disciplinary system (including addressing alcohol and drug use and truancy) that is based upon prevention and restorative justice.
4. All public schools in California are facing very difficult budget choices. What will your priorities be if Berkeley USD is forced to make cuts, and what will you do to minimize the need for budget cuts?

My priority will be to protect what is working in our schools to address overall student achievement, including bridging the achievement gap based upon data and evaluation rather than anecdotal evidence. To minimize cuts, I will work with our State legislators to lobby for full State funding of public education and work to develop and/or sustain creative partnerships with the City, U.C. Berkeley and Berkeley City College, local non-profits, the business community and local/regional labor unions to broaden and deepen our resources.

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.

I have attended Youth Together and other student group meetings to hear their concerns and incorporate their ideas into Board policy/program initiatives and I have appointed youth/young adults to advisory committees beyond the Youth Commission (such as the Peace and Justice Commission) and will continue to do so if re-elected. Last time I was elected, my campaign assistant was a high school student. This year, my teenage sons and friends are assisting me in some of the grassroots campaign work.

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.

In my professional life as an executive in local government, I have made it a point to regularly have paid and/or volunteer teenage/young adult interns (most recently participating for the current and past two years in the Cal in Local Government Program and this summer having several high school/community college interns through federal stimulus funded youth employment programs – but I've had high school and/or Cal undergrads or recent grads as interns throughout my career in local government). In my personal life, my home has always been a gathering place for my son's friends (now teenaged/young adults) and am often called their "second Mom", dispensing advice (usually only when asked!), meals, and at for one of my son's 19 year old friend, an alternative place to live while mediating with his mother so he could return home (which included successful encouragement to complete a G.E.D. after dropping out of school). As a School Board Director, my passion is public education's mandate to develop young adults that are ready to take on the complex challenges of the 21st Century - academically, politically, socially, and personally.

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 attach a resume and/or a list of endorsers here.

I am currently President of the Berkeley School Board and have been a member of the Board since 2006 (I am also a co-chair of the Yes on Measure H and I campaign committee). Before being elected to the School Board, I was an active parent in the Berkeley Unified School District for ten years, serving variously as President of the Washington Elementary School Site Committee, co-President of the Berkeley High Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) as well as a member of the Longfellow Middle School Governance Council, Berkeley Schools Excellence Program (tax measure) Planning and Oversight Committee, District Advisory Committee (DAC), District's Strategic Plan Committee, Berkeley High Principal's Advisory Committee, and the successful Yes on Measure A (school parcel tax renewal) Steering Committee. I am also actively involved with Parents With Children of African Descent (PCAD) and am a member of United In Action, a grassroots advocacy group dedicated to raising the academic achievement of children of color in Berkeley's public schools. I am a mother of two sons – one a Berkeley High sophomore and the other a 2008 Berkeley High graduate.

My other public involvement include being at various times a past member of the City of Berkeley's Civic Arts Committee, Committee for Socially Responsive Investment, Committee on the Status of Women, and the Solid Waste Management Commission. I am currently a member of the California School Board Association, the City Clerk's Association of California, the Municipal Management Assistants of Northern California, the NAACP, and the National Women's Political Caucus: North Alameda. I am also a mentor emeritus for the Intergovernmental Management Training Program ((IGMT), a

leadership program for federal, state, regional, and local government officials and am formerly an elected representative to the California State Democratic Central Committee (AD 14).

I have an undergraduate degree from Brown University in Asian Studies/Political Science and a master's degree, and post-graduate work in Political Science/Public Administration from U.C. Berkeley. I currently serve as the City Clerk as well as the Assistant to the City Manager (special projects, including being on the citywide budget development team) and Public Information Officer for the City of Emeryville.

I have been endorsed by the Berkeley Federation of Teachers, the Alameda County Central Labor Council, the Wellstone Democratic Club, the John George Democratic Club, and Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA) as well as State Senator Loni Hancock, State Assemblymember Nancy Skinner, Mayor Tom Bates, the entire Berkeley City Council and the entire Berkeley School Board as well as numerous community members.