



The Education Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire:

This questionnaire for Mayoral Candidates is to be submitted and collected by United Way and made public.

Questionnaire

1. What is your vision for education in Los Angeles?

My vision for education in Los Angeles is that every student that graduates from high school has the opportunity to go to college or the skills and career path to enter the workforce. To do that we must reduce the dropout rate of students in Los Angeles, continue to build relationships with private organizations and non-profits, and develop more career pathways for students through vocational education. My education platform focuses on Middle School students and developing better outcomes to ensure that Middle School students enter high school at grade level and ready to achieve.

One Charter School that offers high school education claims that the average education performance level for students entering their high schools from South Los Angeles is the 5th Grade. This requires a great deal of work and educational support to help students achieve grade level. If high school curriculum presents a great challenge for our middle school students how can we expect to retain them in high school and have them graduate to college or the workforce? We must do better.

I also strongly support locating social and health services at our schools to offer as much support as possible for students and their families. Kids growing up in extreme poverty, foster care, and living with economic pressures to work and support their family face great challenges. Programs that offer diversion and gang prevention are important and merit our ongoing support as well.

I want to help build an educational system that ensures every student enrolled in LA receives a quality education and the opportunity to either attend college or the skills and career path to enter the workforce.

2. What lessons have you learned from Mayor Villaraigosa's work in education? What has worked and what would you do differently?

The next mayor should be involved and seek better education outcomes for our students. I will appoint a Deputy Mayor for Education and seek help from the best available experts in the field of education I can find. As Mayor, I will work closely with LAUSD as a partner to deliver whatever resources I can. I will also continue the

work Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has started. One important lesson learned from Mayor Villaraigosa's work is that the more eyes on education focused on: how schools are performing, where resources are most needed, and how city resources can best be used to support our schools and positively impact education outcomes, is critically important. The mayor must be engaged to assure that our schools are getting the resources they need from pre-school to adult education.

3. As you know, low student performance significantly impacts a city's well-being. What are the 3 most important things you would do as mayor to improve our schools?

Lobby Sacramento & Private Donors for more money invested in our classrooms – California is 49th in the country in per-pupil funding, we must do better, see that funding reaches our classrooms and that poor performing schools get the resources they need to improve education outcomes. This is a great challenge. I will focus on foundations, non-profits, businesses, and corporations to create more partners in the battle to better educate our children.

Better Coordination between the City of LA and LAUSD – As a Councilwoman I committed a staff member to work directly with every principal at every school in my district. This strong relationship allowed me to deliver resources directly to schools and do my part to partner with the schools in CD9. Knowing the needs at local schools helps facilitate better coordination of city services and gave me the information I needed to advocate for locating health care clinics and other wrap around services at high school sites with the highest drop out rates.

Early identification of at risk behaviors, learning interventions, health and mental health care services, are all part of the important effort needed to retain our kids in school and should be established at school sites with the highest dropout and teen pregnancy rates in the city. The mayor should advocate for our schools to get the resources they need and work to coordinate those resources, seek adequate funding for before school and after school programs, like Safe Routes to Schools, and advocate to co-locate support and case management services on school sites.

Encourage Collaboration Between Charter Schools and Traditional Schools – to help schools learn from and improve by adopting successful strategies from each other. As Mayor, I will establish relationships with every school in the City of Los Angeles and support an education summit for our teachers, counselors, colleges and universities. It is vital that our schools know from early education forward what level of achievement is needed for our students to succeed in college.

4. As mayor, would you support John Deasy remaining Superintendent? Would you use your position to champion Deasy's push for reform – and if so, how?

I support John Deasy and his efforts to reform the LAUSD. I believe in and will support traditional schools, charter schools, charter co-location, pilot schools, and magnet schools. Also, I support real choices for parents on the selection of quality schools for their children.

I have worked with both LAUSD and charter schools to build 30 new schools in my council district. I also established an Education Director on my staff to focus, coordinate, and maintain communications and support for schools in my district. As Mayor, I will continue to focus on education by creating a Deputy Mayor for Education, to ensure that the Mayor's office has a strong relationship with LAUSD and all other schools throughout Los Angeles.

5. As mayor, would you support charter school expansion in Los Angeles? Do you see a need to limit charter school expansion or charter school funding?

I support the establishment of Charter Schools in Los Angeles. I believe school choice is extremely important for parents and students. If a student is not able to perform well in a school having an alternative choice is very important. All school expansion in the city will be relative to the funding available for education.

6. Some would consider UTLA resistant to many of the recent reform policies that have been implemented to improve school performance. What is your opinion on this?

There may be some resistance to change however UTLA knows what is at stake in Los Angeles. Our schools must perform better. We need an educated work force that can respond to the job opportunities made in our city. Adult Education centers have been a lifeline for many that dropped out of high school and returned to earn their GED and receive job training. Given the heightened awareness in our city about poor education outcomes and failing schools, UTLA should understand the need for change and reform to improve our student's chances for finding success in their lives.

There is no industry, organization, company or system of governance that has not had to face changes in their operations to meet the demands of the future. The school district is not immune to change.

7. It is essential to include student achievement data when evaluating our teachers.

I agree, but it should not be the only measure of a teacher's performance. Measurements should be weighted and include many factors that could include student observation, examples of student work, prior student achievement, graduation rates, test scores, peer and principal evaluations.

8. If you had a child entering middle school, to which school would you send your child? Explain your answer.

My best response to this question is my choice would be based on my child's personal needs. There are some fine Middle Schools for students in Los Angeles. Walter Reed is a good example as is Kipp LA College Prep. In my council District Synergy Kinetic Academy offers a good education foundation and preparation for success in High School. There are also small Charter Schools like the Accelerated School that provide education K – 12 and offer families an opportunity to be closely connected to their child's school. Too often students in South Los Angeles leave Middle School and are not able to meet the demands of a high school curriculum. This is a significant problem that can contribute to the high school drop out rate problem.