

**Margie Sherratt**  
**Candidate**  
**AUSD Board of Education**

## **City of Alameda Democratic Club**

### **1. What have I done for the Democratic Club, what will I do in the future?**

I have been a registered Democrat since I was 21 years old. I have voted in each election since that time as a Democrat. As a School Board Member, I will be happy to speak to and inform the City of Alameda Democratic Club of updates, and of the challenges and successes of Alameda Unified School District.

### **2. Describe your view of the role of an elected board member, and the role of management/staff in a government entity.**

First and foremost, a School Board member is there as the conduit of the community. He/she must listen to and act upon the input from the community at large. Our Superintendent works directly with and takes direction from our School Board members. This process follows to the Principals of each school, who also take direction and input from not only the Superintendent and the Board but also the community at large and their own school community.

In other words, no Board member works in isolation. Board Members must collaborate with all stakeholders before making decisions that will affect the schools and the community.

### **3. Financial challenges. Steps to ensure fiscal solvency**

Until the voters of the State of California demand from the legislature a real solution to our budget deficit, the challenges to each local District will be great. Therefore, Alameda Unified must solve their fiscal issues themselves. I believe that the District has been prudent in their decisions thus far. Cuts have been made at all levels, from salaries to programs, to raising class size and now to possible closure of school sites. The Superintendent and the current Board of Education has put forth a master plan of action for the next few years. As a School Board member, I would suggest we prioritize all areas to be reduced, put a price tag on each and work creatively with all stakeholders to find alternative solutions to many of these drastic cuts.

**4. More effective in creating transparency, what concrete steps will I take to encourage citizen participation in decision making?**

I believe that we can always be more transparent in every project or issue that comes before the community. There are so many perspectives that need to be listened to and then a response formulated. With each response more questions may arise. Disagreements or differences of opinions may occur. Therefore, the process of transparency is ongoing for both the District and the community at large. As a School Board member, I will insist on complete data that anticipates as many questions as possible before presenting an issue. And then, I will continue to listen and retrieve more data until all stakeholders are satisfied.

**5. What specific ideas do I have to increase achievement for ALL AUSD students?**

AUSD has come a great distance in providing programs for all students to achieve proficiency. Intervention programs are in place at all grade levels. Student data is readily accessible to students, parents and teachers. Content standards are taught, common assessments in Reading/English and Math are administered throughout the school year.

However, there are still students in AUSD that perform at a Basic or Below Basic level. These students have Individualized Learning Plans developed for them. A student's actual achievement levels need to be carefully looked at and a specific tutorial plan created. While this task may be daunting, a one on one analysis of student progress and an intervention plan must then be developed.

After school programs that are already in place, could/should take a strong part in helping students with homework, providing a quiet and safe environment, offering one on one tutoring, and teaching computer and technology skills. I will assist in creating liaisons with the high schools and community colleges to provide tutors. Many such models are already in place in AUSD.

Students that are engaged and involved in school achieve at higher levels. As a School Board member, I will work to ensure that our schools remain a safe haven for all students.

## Mike McMahon - AUSD

1. The City of Alameda Democratic Club's mission is to elect like-minded Democrats to local, state, and federal office. Please describe what you have done in the past to help grow the Democratic Party in Alameda, and if elected, what you will do as an elected official to support the City of Alameda Democratic Club and our mission.

For the past seven years I have served as Treasurer of the Alameda Democratic Club. In 2010, I assumed the role of Membership Director also. I have attended over 95% of the regular monthly meetings assisting whenever needed.

2. Describe your view of the role of an elected board/councilmember, and the role of management/staff in a government entity.

During a campaign I act as an individual in an attempt to convince voters I am qualified to serve as an AUSD trustee. Once elected my role changes as I now a member of a five person Board that needs to work with the Superintendent and staff. As such I need to work with fellow Board members and staff to arrive consensus about the issues facing the District. Otherwise I will be an ineffective Board member relegated to playing minor role in shaping the actions of the District.

3. All government agencies are facing financial challenges in today's economy and budget environment. Describe the steps you will take to ensure your entity remains fiscally solvent.

School districts are facing significant challenges due reduced State funding. I firmly believe that the one viable short term fix is passing a parcel tax. Given the results of the recent parcel tax, I believe the next parcel tax structure needs to be based on building square feet.

4. Do you believe your entity should be more effective in creating transparency, and if so, what concrete steps do you plan on taking to encourage citizen participation in your decision-making process?

I have proven track record of communicating with the Alameda community over the past eight years. I have maintained a website that provides ongoing District information as well as contextual research on the public education issues. I remained committed to continuing this work if I am reelected.

### AUSD

1. What specific ideas do you have to increase achievement for ALL AUSD students?

Teaching and learning occurs in the classroom. As a District we need to fully develop our theory of action on continuous improving the rigor of the academic content, providing professional support to teachers to deliver the rigorous content by ensuring students are engaged in mastering the rigorous academic content.

## Stewart Chen - Hospital Board

### Democratic club questionnaires

1. The City of Alameda Democratic Club's mission is to elect like-minded Democrats to local, state, and federal office. Please describe what you have done in the past to help grow the Democratic Party in Alameda, and if elected, what you will do as an elected official to support the City of Alameda Democratic Club and our mission.

I have been a staunch Democrat all my life. My voting record will also show that I strongly support the party line. I have supported the Democratic Party in discussions with other people, at the polls, and through financial contributions. In fact, I am currently a member of the Alameda County Asian Pacific Democratic Caucus and I intend to join the City of Alameda Democratic Club. If elected, I promise to promote the Democratic Club and be one of its strong supporters. I will reach out to our community, especially the Asian population, and encourage their participation and membership into the club.

2. Describe your view of the role of an elected board/councilmember, and the role of management/staff in a government entity.

I have served on a number of government boards and commissions and have interacted with members of management and staff during this time. In my view, the management and staff are composed of qualified, well-trained, and experienced professionals who are employed to run an organization as efficiently as possible. They oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization to ensure that the organization is able to sustain itself to continue to provide the service for which it was originally intended.

On the other hand, an elected board/councilmember is someone who is responsible for providing guidance to the management and staff to ensure that the government entity stays on course with its original mission. Because of this responsibility, elected board/councilmembers need to have an unbiased and objective point of view. They need to constantly be aware of the mission of the government entity while staying in touch with the community that they serve. The feedback and concerns that they receive should be passed on to the management and staff to improve the effectiveness of the organization.

3. All government agencies are facing financial challenges in today's economy and budget environment. Describe the steps you will take to ensure your entity remains fiscally solvent.

Government entities have often been criticized as being bloated and inefficient. I aim to dispel this image from the entity under my responsibility by applying similar rules and principles that have worked in the private sector. I will ensure that we have a well-qualified management and staff that can carry out the mission of the organization efficiently and effectively. This should help cut down on wastes and expenses. Regular performance and salary reviews can also be implemented as a way of promoting efficiency. Other cost-cutting measures, like Friday Furloughs and voluntary reduction in hours, will also be considered, if necessary. However, I plan to focus more on carrying out the mission of the organization and I would like to see increased utilization of our hospital services among all sectors of our community - maybe roll out an aggressive outreach and marketing campaign to the underserved segments of the population to let them know what services are available.

4. Do you believe your entity should be more effective in creating transparency, and if so, what concrete steps do you plan on taking to encourage citizen participation in your decision-making process?

*I believe that a government entity should have the trust of the community that it serves. In order to earn this trust, it is important to create transparency and promote participation and collaboration among members of the community. We should make information available to citizens to show them how the*

## Stewart Chen - Hospital Board

*organization works and give them the opportunity to provide their feedback to help improve the organization.*

*I would like to have more sessions and meetings that are available to the public so they can actually see the issues that are being discussed and listen to the opinions that are expressed. Hopefully, this will increase their appreciation of the work of the organization and encourage their feedback. I would also like to publish the government audit reports as well as salaries of the employees to show that we have nothing to hide and further gain their trust.*

*A government entity exists for the people and there should be no barriers in between.*

*Additional questions for each specific race up for endorsement:*

### Healthcare District Board

1. What role, if any, do you believe Alameda Hospital should fill in our City beyond providing emergency medical services?

As a source of emergency medical services, Alameda Hospital provides a much-needed service and gives its residents the peace of mind that medical care is available when they need it. However, in addition to curing the sick and making them healthy, I also believe that a hospital should play a major role in helping people stay healthy. After all, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

We need to be more proactive in the type of health services that we offer. Extol the values of preventative medicine and encourage a healthy and active lifestyle to improve one's quality of life. Change the image of the hospital from "a place where sick people stay" to "a place where people stay healthy".

I would like to utilize the hospital's staff and resources to provide regular educational forums on various health topics, such as diet and exercise. Aside from holding lectures, we can invite a panel of experts for more in-depth discussions on particular topics of interest to members of the community. We can also offer classes on Yoga, Tai Chi, and nutrition.

We can also explore the possibility of working with businesses in the community. I'm sure businesses are always interested in ways to keep their employees healthy and reduce the number of injuries in the workplace, so we can offer services like administering flu shots, health screenings, and providing advice and assistance on OSHA compliance.

By taking a proactive role such as this, I believe that Alameda Hospital will be seen as an important partner in the community's development instead of an expensive service that is seldom used.

*Questions for All Candidates*

*1. The City of Alameda Democratic Club's mission is to elect like-minded Democrats to local, state, and federal office. Please describe what you have done in the past to help grow the Democratic Party in Alameda, and if elected, what you will do as an elected official to support the City of Alameda Democratic Club and our mission.*

I am a registered Democrat, but as you know the Healthcare Board is non-partisan. Unfortunately, I disagree as a policy matter with the conclusions of the leading Democrats with respect to Alameda Hospital. I certainly support the aims of the Democratic Party in partisan elections.

*2. Describe your view of the role of an elected board/councilmember, and the role of management/staff in a government entity.*

Management/staff serve to run day-to-day operations and act in an executive capacity except where superseded by Board directives.

*3. All government agencies are facing financial challenges in today's economy and budget environment. Describe the steps you will take to ensure your entity remains fiscally solvent.*

The number one priority is to close the Hospital because it provides lower quality care at a higher price. This will free up funds for more productive efforts.

*4. Do you believe your entity should be more effective in creating transparency, and if so, what concrete steps do you plan on taking to encourage citizen participation in your decision-making process?*

I think that the Hospital Board has abused the closed meeting privilege. I would make sure that the number of items discussed in closed session would be limited.

*Additional question*

*What role, if any, do you believe Alameda Hospital should fill in our City beyond providing emergency medical services?*

The Hospital Board should close its emergency room. It should create an urgent care clinic with extended or 24/7 hours. It should create a disaster plan in case of some catastrophic event that requires triage or emergency treatment locally in Alameda. This plan should be in place for such an event, but should not require ongoing expenditures of the size that the current subsidy to the Hospital requires.