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San Leandro Unified School District
Application for Governing Board Appointment
THIS APPLICATION IS A PUBLIC RECORD

The appointee will hold office until the next regularly scheduled Statewide General Election for governing board members, which will take place on November 8, 2022. [EC § 5091(e)]

QUALIFICATIONS:

Applicant must be a registered voter and a resident of the San Leandro Unified School District and a resident in Area 2. An employee of a school district may not be sworn into office as an elected or appointed member of that school district's governing board unless and until he or she resigns as an employee. [EC § 35107]

Certification of qualifications on page 5 must be signed by the applicant.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

This application must be received no later than **January 28 at 5:00 p.m.** Applications may be mailed or hand-delivered to:

Dr. Michael McLaughlin, Superintendent
c/o Michelle Mayfield
San Leandro Unified School District Office
835 E. 14th Street, Suite 200
Tel: (510) 667-3522

(Please type or print):

Name Liz Toledo

Address 424 Callan Ave Apt 221 San Leandro, CA 94577

Telephone No. Home (510) 458-8978 Business ( )

Years of Residence in the San Leandro Unified School District: 16

QUALIFICATIONS: (Limit each answer to no more than 500 words.)

1. Provide a description of your educational work and/or public service background.

2. Why do you wish to serve on the Board? What do you hope to accomplish?

3. What skills, abilities, and experience would you bring to the Board to assist in carrying out its responsibilities?

4. List your involvement in activities that demonstrate your understanding and support for public education, such as membership on committees/organizations, offices held, volunteer work, and community service.

5. List, in order of importance, the major issues confronting public education and, specifically, the San Leandro Unified School District.

6. Explain the mission of the San Leandro Unified School District.

1. **Provide a description of your educational work and/or public service background.**

I served as Class Treasurer for two years, to which I thought had already exceeded my abilities. I was convinced that would mark the highest level of influence I would ever reach. That was until I was elected ASB President my Senior year of high school. I was the first Latina student during my high school career to become not only president but also the School Board representative. San Leandro High School is rich in diversity, and I felt it was my duty to make sure the student council board and I were reflective of that. Not only was it a new found spirit of mine to organize wide-scale events, but also mentoring others.

Upon graduating San Leandro High in 2018, I began my undergraduate studies at UC Berkeley. I quickly realized a majority of my classmates in the large lecture halls did not resemble my old classmates or share similar experiences to mine despite attending a public institution. There were times I questioned my admission to the prestigious university and over-analyzed my educational journey as a first generation student. In search of answers and a drive to learn about the state of education, I got involved in student government, social justice organizations on campus, and volunteered at neighboring Oakland and Berkeley elementary schools. My involvement in the Latinx community endorsed student senate's office introduced me to policies that widely affected underrepresented communities' attendance in higher education. I worked with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions to distribute a UC Berkeley admissions fact sheet across public high schools in California in hopes of demystifying higher education to Black and Brown students. Furthermore, I engaged in conversations with Campus administration and collected data from the diverse Latinx student community regarding the quality of education, safety, well-being, and academic support they received during their time at UC Berkeley. This allowed my team to gain a better understanding of our role in advocacy initiatives and how recruitment efforts and resource allocation earlier on in a student's education can alleviate the gap we were working to address.

I started volunteering at Sankofa Elementary in Oakland and witnessed how under-resourced schools directly translated to low student achievement. As a literacy tutor, I was assigned several students who read far below grade level standards, and at times had not yet memorized the alphabet. Through extensive training, I was able to create tailored lesson plans to make sure their skills consistently progressed along with providing mentorship in any way I could as a majority of my students were in low-income, working class families. Then, my experience volunteering at Ruth Acty Elementary in Berkeley demonstrated how different educational opportunities can differ between schools that are miles apart. Based on my prior experience, I was able to lead a couple lesson plans in a third grade science class, requiring me to familiarize myself with California curriculum standards and different methods of pedagogy.

2. **Why do you wish to serve on the Board? What do you hope to accomplish?**

My strong support for public education stems from the values my family instilled in me, the continuous encouragement I've received from San Leandro educators, and my younger sister. I am the middle child of three and though there are stark differences by my ten year age gap with each of them, we all share the ability to say we are the product of San Leandro public schools. My parents immigrated to the United States without a high school diploma and no English skills, but did whatever possible to make sure we received a quality education. My brother graduated from San Leandro learning English as a second language and paved the way for what became the most monumental thirteen years in my life. Having been the first in my family to complete my full K-12 journey in San Leandro schools and become the first out

of my entire family to attend a four year University, I feel responsible and indebted to my community. I made the conscious decision of staying local as I wished to learn more about the community that poured so much to my growth and stay involved as much as I could in my sister's education. However, through my various interactions with the public education system, participation in social justice movements, and my experience as a first-generation student I believe a transformative, quality education is the true catalyst for change. Serving on the board means prioritizing youth voices as much as parents and educators when making decisions concerning students' overall experience and success in San Leandro schools. I wish to work alongside students, parents, teachers, partners, and fellow board members to shape a culturally relevant, innovative, and inspiring district that will instill a passion for lifelong learning and prepare students with the sufficient tools to take on a career or higher education and life's challenges. I hope to implement a balanced literacy program that ensures all students across grade levels read, write and communicate proficiently. I also hope to provide college and career guidance, counseling and support to ensure students are secure in their plans for high school and beyond. That means attracting, recruiting, hiring and retaining the best employees who reflect the diversity of our students throughout the district. I also hope to start conversations about implementing data science in our schools. Finally, I hope to work alongside the San Leandro community to make Ethnic Studies a high school graduation requirement and begin envisioning an Ethnic Studies K-12 curriculum.

What skills, abilities, and experience would you bring to the Board to assist in carrying out its responsibilities?

I have the unique experience of attending San Leandro public schools from start to finish, therefore I can provide my expertise as a recent graduate. Aside from my lived experiences, I have worked in the Chicanx Latinx Student Development Office in UC Berkeley as an Office Manager for the past three years. Throughout my time, I on-boarded 28 staff members and 2 office manager interns. I worked closely with the organization directors, university faculty, and specialists to plan bi-weekly staff meetings, putting collaboration and our organization's mission at the top of our list. In connecting our staff with outside partners, strengthening our alumni networks, and prioritizing student needs, we have conducted Anti-Blackness and Addressing Homophobia and Transphobia trainings for Latinx organizations on campus, collected data for a future Latinx student center on campus, and facilitated alumni panels for Latinx students pursuing careers in designated fields. I was able to lead the organization as we transitioned most of our services online and worked to create and maintain a centralized online workspace since we did not have one before.

List your involvement in activities that demonstrate your understanding and support for public education, such as membership on committees/organizations, offices held, volunteer work, and community service.

- San Leandro Student Representative for School Board 2017-2018
- San Leandro High ASB President 2017-2018
- ASUC Office of Senator Nick Araujo, Brown Student Equity and Inclusion Department Associate
- ASUC Office of Senator Sahvannah Rodriguez, Mental & Emotional Wellness Department Chair
- Berkeley United in Literacy Development, Sankofa Elementary Literacy Tutor/Mentor
- CalTeach, Ruth Acty Elementary Science Teacher Assistant Volunteer

List, in order of importance, the major issues confronting public education and, specifically, the San Leandro Unified School District.

- Monitoring of the omicron variant, distribution of rapid tests and masks
- Student learning, achievement, and access by re-evaluating curriculum and student services
- Ethnic Studies as a high school requirement
- Educator talent and development

Explain the mission of the San Leandro Unified School District.

San Leandro students are all individuals, with their own assets, interests, needs and goals. The San Leandro Unified School District, in partnership with parents and community, can provide a well-rounded and quality education that develops character, critical thinking skills, and integrity. The main way to achieve progress in our community is approaching our decisions with love towards one another and a commitment towards justice and innovation, even when it means challenging tradition and creating new ones. Our students are equipped and empowered through academic opportunities, career and technical experiences, and programs needed as engaged community members to excel in their plans in San Leandro and beyond, like career and college success.

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CERTIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS:

I understand that upon appointment I would be required to file a Conflict of Interest Statement and take an Oath of Office.

I certify I am not disqualified to hold this office because of a conviction of any of the crimes on the attached list and further certify I am not otherwise disqualified under the California Constitution or statutes from holding public office.

I certify I am a registered voter and that I reside within the San Leandro Unified School District, Area 2. I attest the foregoing information is true to the best of my knowledge.



Signature of Applicant

1-27-2022

Date

Information contained on this application may be subject to verification.