

## 2022 Primary Endorsement Questionnaire

DEADLINE: Submit by 12:00 Noon, Monday, April 18, 2022

Email \*

lk@lkmonroe.org



Thank you for your interest in being considered for an endorsement by the Asian Pacific American Democratic Caucus of Alameda County. Please answer each question in 250 words or less. Be honest and direct. Please submit your responses by 12 Noon, Monday, Apr. 18. All questionnaire responses will be posted on our website for Caucus members to review.

Personal Information

Candidate Name \*

Alameda County Superintendent of Schools

City and zip code of residence.

Oakland, 94610

What is your campaign website address?

LKMONROE@acoe.org

What is your campaign email address?

lk@lkmonroe.org

Are you a registered Democrat? The APA Democratic Caucus can only endorse registered Democrats \*

Yes

No

Are you an APA Democratic Caucus member? \*

Yes

No

How long have you lived in the district which you are seeking to represent?

All my life

What are the names of any community or nonprofit organizations with which you have been an active volunteer in the past 3-5 years.

Supply Bank and Oakland Community Church

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## CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

1. What actions have you taken to address anti-Asian discrimination/bullying/harassment?

Please explain in what capacity you have acted and whether any of these actions were prior to 2020. (i.e., as an elected representative, member of commission/board/organization, and as an individual.

A line from the vision statement I wrote for ACOE in 2015 reads, "We believe in our ability and responsibility to address the pervasive issues obstructing the wellbeing of all students in Alameda County..." There are those who talk and meet about equity – I have made certain that at ACOE all our goals, programs, and every decision is grounded in equity. The recent uprising of acts of hate against our Asian community members is intolerable. We lead a peer education and leadership program across our districts and began a Social Emotional Wellness Dept two years ago to work directly with our districts as they learn about and implement affirming hate-free school communities. These district teams address issues like acts of hate against Asian students head on and put tools, systems, and spaces in place to promote dialogue and affect change.

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2. One out of every 3 Alameda County residents is of Asian ancestry but are underrepresented in elected office. What have you done and will you do to elevate their issues of concern?

To begin with...I believe in leading by example – of my 11 cabinet members, 10 are women, two are Asian, and one is part of the Pacific Islander community. Their sheer presence as Asian women in senior leadership resonates. They bring collective and separate perspectives and wisdom about the issues that face the Chinese, East Asian, and Pacific Islander communities they represent. I count on each of them to raise their voices if we are in danger of missing the mark, as well as making sure we prioritize the inclusion of our Asian communities both through language representation and the cultural competence needed to elevate and celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of our API learners.

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3. One-third of Alameda County residents were born in another country. Do you believe that the needs of immigrants have been adequately addressed by the office you are seeking to represent? What changes are needed to better center their needs?

I do believe we are representing certain needs in some communities well and we can and should do more. I think our Parent Engagement Network, among other places, provides an opportunity to support immigrant and newcomer families. Additionally, through our Core Learning Dept we provide professional learning and technical assistance to our districts related to newcomers. We also hold an English Language Development Network which has increasingly focused on the language and personal needs of our immigrant students and families.

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4. What have you learned about Asian Americans in the past year that you were previously unaware of and how has that impacted you?

Well, I'm going to take a liberty and share that two years ago when I was talking to a friend who is Asian, she shared with me the challenge of extremely diverse cultural experiences and realities being categorized under a single "Asian" moniker. Though I have always know from leading schools in the Fruitvale and San Antonio neighborhoods of Oakland that not only are these communities often separated by language, but by country of origin, food, faith, customs, and a host of other distinctions that are only diminished when considered only in the aggregate. She and I participated in a race conference that included affinity groups. While the African American group I was part of was able to engage in deep and meaningful conversation about what we perceived as being at issue for us, the Asian American group had to begin the conversation with issues of personal and cultural identity within the Asian community. She ended up not feeling affirmed as there were no other members of her particular background in her group. This further heighten my awareness of what is lost when we rely on labels over story, narrative, and experience.

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5. What is the difference between supporting Asian American/Pacific Islander issues and being an Ally?

Allyship is a WITH, not a FOR construct. By listening, learning, and taking direction from friends who are part of Asian American/Pacific Islander communities and asking what advocacy or partnership should look like – the risk of providing the "help" one thinks is needed over the actual expressed desire of the group or group member is reduced.

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6. What resources (people/organizations) will you tap to increase your knowledge and understanding of the on-going needs of the Asian and Pacific Americans living in your district?

The APA Democratic Caucus, for one. A goal of mine is to form a Community Cabinet to advise and give input on education matters from the perspective of various communities throughout the County. This was delayed as we focused on responding to the pandemic – my hope is that 2023 will bring an opportunity to resume some of the work we had begun.

We continue to elevate and assist our districts efforts to serve their Asian/Pacific Islander communities – both academically as these student groups are called out on the Ca State Dashboard, as well as socially as we work directly to ensure students primarily from immigrant communities are seen and served well.

7. Please identify any Asian Pacific American candidates whom you have publicly endorsed/supported over the past 5 years including this election cycle. If there are none, please explain.

In this cycle I have so far endorsed and am supporting Shawn Kumagai for Assembly.

Thank you for completing our questionnaire.

Only candidates who submit questionnaires by noon Monday, April 18 will be considered for endorsement.

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