



CULVER CITY DEMOCRATS UNITED
CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE
CULVER CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL BOARD

Deadline to return questionnaire: Friday, July 19, 2024, @ 5:00pm.

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Culver City Democrats United (“CCDU”) endorsement. Candidates seeking the endorsement of CCDU must complete and return the following questionnaire. Please do not make changes to the questions even though the questionnaire is provided to you in WORD format for your convenience in editing. Please send the completed questionnaire to endorsements@culvercitydems.com

Signing and submitting this questionnaire acknowledges that its contents are part of the public record and may be reproduced and distributed by CCDU.

About Culver City Democrats United

CCDU was founded in 2023 in Los Angeles County in an effort to ensure that Democrats of every shade of blue living in and near Culver City have a chartered¹ Democratic Club that they can belong to, and which expresses in its name a geographic relationship to Culver City and its environs.

CCDU believes that Democrats in Culver City have a responsibility to Los Angeles County to make informed decisions about candidates for elected offices throughout the county which have a bearing on our collective life together.

It is our mission to ensure that candidates endorsed by CCDU embody the inclusive values of the Democratic Party and the values of the majority of Democratic voters in our region. CCDU rejects the politics of faction and exclusion that would seek control of the Democratic “brand” for a limited clique or constrained ideological orthodoxy.

We are committed to the Democratic Party.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Candidate Information

- a. Name: **Andrew Lachman**
- b. Email: lachman4ccusd@gmail.com
- c. Occupation: **Attorney**
- d. Employer: **Mirantis**

2. What office are you seeking? **CCUSD Board of Education (at large)**

3. Are you registered as a Democrat? For how long have you been a registered Democrat? (You must be a registered Democrat to receive a CCDU endorsement.). **I have been a registered Democrat since 1988, when I was first eligible to vote.**

4. Have you ever been registered in another Party? If so, which one and why did you change? **No.**

5. Briefly describe your educational background:

- a. **BA American University (Political Science and Public Communication)**
- b. **JD George Washington University (1L Year at Tulane Law) – Founded Tulane Journal on IP and Technology Law and Served on GW International Law Review.**
- c. **Emerging Leaders Program – Harvard Kennedy School of Government**

6. Briefly describe your work/professional background: **I currently serve as General Counsel for a leading technology company, and prior to that owned my own law firm focusing on small businesses, software and data privacy, as well as serving as in-house counsel for major movie studios and tech start-ups. I was a founder of and past president of the Los**

Angeles County Bar Association's Privacy and Cybersecurity Section. I also served as committee staff for the California Legislative Joint Committee on the Arts and Legislative Director for Congressman Ted Lieu and taught business law and government relations courses at Woodbury University.

7. Campaign Information

- a. Campaign Committee ID Number: **1463108**,
- b. Campaign Address: **10736 Jefferson Blvd. #1012 Culver City, CA 90230**
- c. Campaign Phone: **(310) 853-2299**
- d. Campaign Email Address: **campaign@lachmanforccusd.com**
- e. Campaign Consultant/Manager
 - i. Name: **Eric Hogensen**
 - ii. Contact Information: **414-745-4293**
- f. Fundraiser N/A
 - i. Name:
 - ii. Contact Information:

8. Campaign Finance

- a. How much money do you intend to raise? **\$45-50k**
- b. How much money have you raised so far? **\$45,000**

- c. How much cash on hand do you have? **\$38,000**
9. Are there any specific industries or PACs you will not accept donations from?
Gun manufacturers, Oil & Gas industry
10. Who are your five largest contributors?
- Howard Welinsky**
 - Michael Tuchin**
 - Nicole Mutchnik**
 - Walter Marks**
 - Congressman Ted Lieu/Assemblymembers Jesse Gabriel/Josh Lowenthal, Rick Chavez Zbur (each has contributed \$1k)**
11. Who are your top three individual endorsers?
- US Rep Ted Lieu**
 - US Rep Sydney Kamlager-Dove**
 - Culver City Vice Mayor Dan O'Brien**
12. What are your top three organizational endorsers to date?
- Culver City Federation of Teachers**
 - Democrats for Israel Los Angeles**
 - IUPAT Local 36 and IBEW Local 11**
13. Have you received any campaign contributions from organizations outside Culver City? If so, please list them:
- Andrew has received strong support from many members of the California Jewish Legislative Caucus and labor unions such as IBEW 11, IUPAT Local 36.**
14. Have you ever sought the endorsement of, or will you accept the endorsement of, political parties other than the Democratic party, including non-registered political parties such as the Reform Party, the Democratic Socialists of America, or the California Working Families Party? **No**

15. Have you ever been accused of, faced discipline for, or entered into a settlement related to misconduct or sexual harassment? **No**

16. Have you ever been accused of, faced discipline for, or entered into a settlement related to financial impropriety? **No**

17. Have you ever been convicted of a felony? If so, please explain. **No**

18. Do you belong to any organization that openly discriminates on the basis of race, age, disability, religion, nation of origin, against LGBTQ+ persons, or against women? **No**

II. QUALIFICATIONS AND VIEWS

1. Have you previously run for or held any elective or appointed public offices? If so, please list which office and dates: **I ran for County Committee in AD41 and 42 when I lived in the Valley and ran for State Assembly in 2012 (something I am definitely not interested in doing again, seeing how it has been for my friends who served in Sacramento). I have been a member of the Democratic National Committee since 2008, elected by the Executive Board of the California Democratic Party where I serve as Western States Caucus Chair and Small Business Council Chair.**

2. List any awards, commendations, or recognitions in your background that you believe should be brought to our attention regarding your candidacy for CCUSD School Board. **I have been a member of the Culver City Unified School District (CCUSD) Equity Advisory Board since 2022 and joined the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) PAC board and the Bond Oversight Committee and was a member of the Culver City Education Foundation Board. I also chair the Culver City Finance Advisory Committee providing input on bonds, taxes and budget issues. The committee has also held hearings on public safety and affordable housing. I am a member of the**

Exchange Club and on the board of Temple Akiba as well as being appointed by JPAC to chair a committee to address to Liberated Ethnic Studies. Andrew and his wife, Ingrid are members of the El Marino Elementary PTA and his wife Ingrid volunteers at Fall Festival and drop off.

3. Why did you decide to run for CCUSD School Board? **We are putting politics and personality ahead of the needs of our students and teachers. Seeing my daughter's experience over the last seven years as she went through El Marino Elementary as a neurodivergent student and seeing the challenges she faced and the challenge the school board has faced with the current atmosphere, with the financial and infrastructure issues made me decide to run. Having served as Finance Advisory Committee chair I bring experience in budgets and fiscal responsibility, as a former legislative staffer I have policy experience on arts and education issues, as a parent and community activist with experience on CCUSD committees and the Education Foundation I understand the relationship with our community partners, nonprofits, parents and teachers.**
4. If elected, what are the three most important things you would like to accomplish?
 - A. **Ensure bond money is spent in the classrooms and helping the students.**
 - B. **Increasing trust with parents and teachers through transparency and communication regarding budget and board activity, including listening to advisory board input, procurement transparency, studies of reasons for student leaving CCUSD, budget/cost analysis reviews (and follow through on commitments once made).**
 - C. **Ensuring best and evidence practices are used as a basis for policy (I know this sounds mundane, but the policies are the place where the Board has the most input into school operations, including administration processes, permits, class types (e.g. honors) and role of the board and staff, etc) and these are all up for review in the next two years.**
5. Do you believe CCUSD should offer accelerated, advanced, or "honors" classes for students ready for the material? Why or why not? **Yes we should offer honors and accelerated classes (including middle school algebra). It is important that we promote excellence and support students to do their best no matter how they learn. We make our education system better by**

encouraging every student and putting in resources to engage and support disadvantaged students.

6. What does “equity” mean to you in the context of Culver City public schools, and what concrete steps will you take to achieve it? **Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential. Equity can be achieved by focusing additional resources to support at risk and systemically discriminated against populations as well as those with disabilities. It also can involve programs to address deficiencies. For example the state updated the Local Control Funding Formula to require school districts to develop Local Control Accountability Plans to identify and fund programs to support unhoused, foster, English Learner and students with backgrounds that have faced systematic discrimination. We also can work with the Culver City Education Foundation to create an equity fund to help fund programs at Title I schools and those that do not have strong booster programs. These are two examples of how we can provide programming to work with parents and students to provide the support.**

I do not favor removing classes for the purpose of “leveling the playing field.” Our job is to enable each child to realize their potential. We do that by providing the resources to help students and challenging them.

7. CCUSD has failed for at least two years to meet the required 55% minimum spending in the classroom and is also confronting budget shortages. What concrete steps do you believe can be taken to rectify the financial situation and ensure the required minimum classroom spending? **Last year our spending in the classroom fell to 52%. This year our budget puts CCUSD at 56% spent in the classroom, but I do believe we can do better. We need to have a look at administration spending to determine how to realign personnel to be more efficient and I support Business Services’ review of outsourcing contracts with an eye to increase compensation and staff levels for educators.**
8. Describe in detail your level of involvement at CCUSD and its schools, including attendance and participation at school board meetings since the last election in 2022.
Over the last two years I have regularly attended school board meetings, mostly speaking out about antisemitism, but also about better

communication with parents and teachers, following processes to follow best practices and supporting safe student transportation options to schools. Here are my other areas of involvement in the schools.

- Culver City Education Foundation Board of Directors (stepped down to run for CCUSD Board) 2024
- CCUSD Bond Oversight Committee (CCEF Designee) 2024
- Volunteer El Marino PTA Fundraising Dia De Los Muertos 2023
- CCUSD LCAP Parent Advisory Committee 2023-2024
- CCUSD Equity Advisory Committee 2022-Present
- Member Culver City Exchange Club (raises money for CCUSD programs like Backpacks for Kids) 2019-Present
- Culver City Finance Advisory Committee (CCUSD Business Affairs sits on our committee) 2018-2026

9. Do you support contracting with non-union organizations to provide services where unionized employees could provide similar services? Explain your answer, being specific to any instances you are aware of at CCUSD.

I oppose outsourcing, and that includes services that can be provided by unionized employees. For example, CCUSD chose (wrongly in my opinion) to outsource certain counseling functions. Counselors build long term relationships with students during their time there and outsourced resources don't build that kind of trust as they leave for better pay and benefits. Further, outsourcing means a lack of quality control and accountability. In the case of the counseling by New Earth, there were allegations of lack of clear metrics and reporting and the well documented failure to provide and confirm counseling credentials.

10. How can CCUSD successfully compete to retain students who might otherwise leave the district for private schools or charter schools? In your answer, list some concrete steps you believe our schools should take. **We need to conduct a review of the reasons that families choose to take their children out of the district. CCUSD is known for its depth of options for classes, but we have seen our GATE programs (Gifted and Talented) shut down and some other challenging classes like 10th grade honors English removed without the accountability of numerical goals to measure success (The goal was to get more students to sign up for AP English). There are ways to ensure that we expand diversity for students to participate while challenging students at their level of proficiencies.**

We also can raise revenue from sources like use of our campuses and the Frost during the summer and weekends, increased attendance recovery programs, closer cooperation with non-profits like CCEF and community partners to better fund programs and resources for our students.

11. How long have you lived in Culver City? How do you believe your time living in Culver City has prepared you for a leadership role in the city? **I first discovered Culver City when I was the staff person on the Joint Committee on the Arts for the state legislature in 2009. Culver City was (and is) a shining example of diversity and the arts. I lived in Culver City from 2010 to 2012 and returned in 2018 after living in DC while I worked for Congressman Lieu. As a parent and as a community member, I have had the chance to be involved in so many parts of our schools (which I already detailed above) and the city, including serving two terms as chair of the Finance Advisory Committee where I got to learn about the financial and operational aspects of the city, bonds, taxes and public safety. I serve on the Culver City Police Chief Advisory Board and have been in leadership at Temple Akiba and a member of the Exchange Club, volunteering to serve my community. I also have been able to take my outside experience of having worked for the state of California and the Congress and put it to help others in Culver City. As parents, as community members we love this city and its people. The time I have spent getting to know the city and my involvement has not only taught me about how the various parts of the city and schools work, but made me want to be of service and run for school board.**

12. Explain the challenges that CCUSD faces with gender equity. Explain what concrete steps you will take to ensure gender equity in CCUSD. **With respect to personnel, I strongly favor policies that require equal pay in accordance with the Equal Pay Act and (which covers public employees, not just private ones) would favor compliance as requirement for anyone doing business with CCUSD.**

With respect to students, while Title IX of the Education Amendments bars exclusion from participation in, and denial the benefits of, any education program on the basis of sex, NYU's Professor Joseph Cimpian of the Brookings Institute notes that while we are required to report academic proficiency by gender, but there are no explicit goals of reducing gender gaps and no accountability tied to gender-subgroup performance.

Speaking as a parent of a girl who has been pressured not to participate in video game design camp because she was the only young woman in the class I see how our education system undervalues young women's contributions and underestimates their abilities. State tests show little difference in achievement between genders, but there are societal pressures that create outcomes to push young women out of these fields. I strongly favor working with our teachers and nonprofits (such as the California Girls in STEM Collaborative and CCEF) support programs to take on these systemic inequities.

13. What will your process be in deciding how to spend the first tranche of school bond, Measure E, money? What are your first 3 priorities in spending, ranked in order?

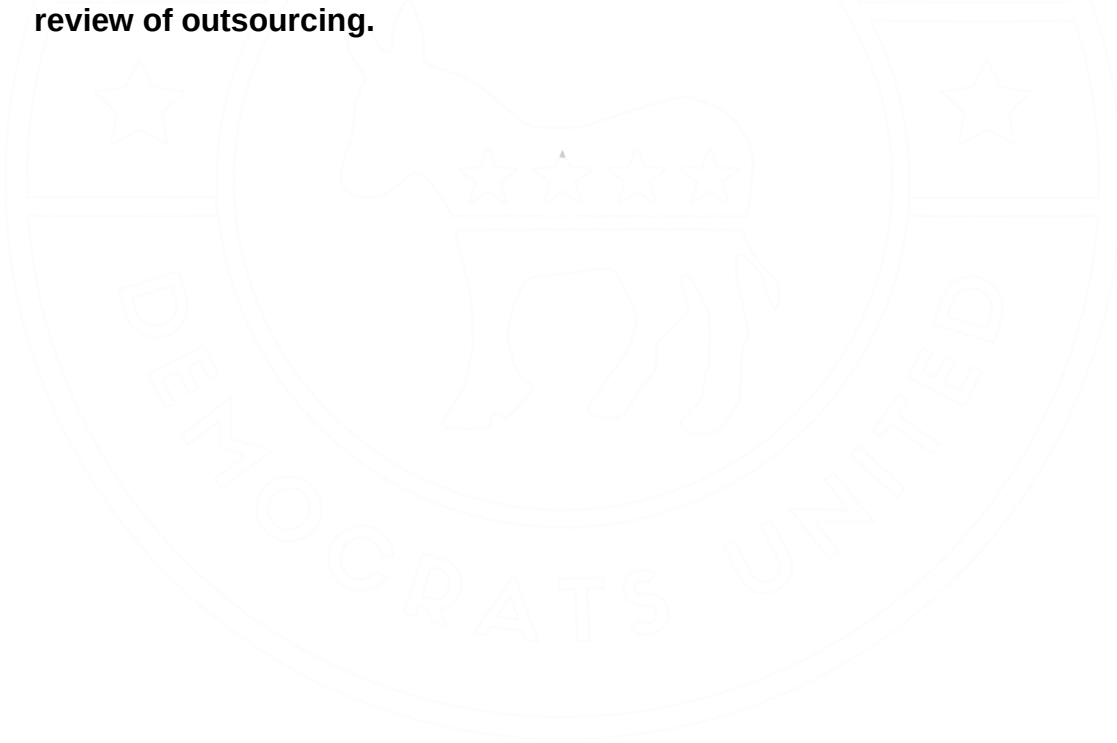
- a. Fixing and building classrooms
- b. Pipes, roofs and internal infrastructure (including campus security)
- c. Cafeteria and common spaces

14. Suppose a School Board Member is making numerous social media posts that are in contravention of the values of Culver City Democrats United. What would be your response as a fellow School Board Member? **There are values we hold as Democrats that bind us together. When those values are not respected it is important not to let those actions go unanswered. Here is what I believe we need to do when someone in leadership breaches the values we hold.**

- 1) **Training.** In order to avoid future problems I strongly believe that good training can help people understand where the lines are, including ethics and bias awareness training
- 2) **If you see (or hear) something say something.** First, after investigating, you talk with them directly to see if you can get to an understanding to hold themselves accountable. It is important to have direct communication and explain the impact of their actions or words on others and what they can do to make it right.
- 3) **Draw the line.** If they are not receptive to that conversation or meeting of the minds, then a more public statement may be necessary and if that cannot be addressed we have to look at whether more formal measures, like a formal investigation, mandated training (see below), filing complaints or censure are permissible.

15. According to both CCFT and ACE, morale is low among teachers and staff. What concrete steps will you take to restore the morale of teachers, staff, and administrators in the district? **I am honored to be endorsed by the Culver City Federation of Teachers.**

There is so much room for improvement here. There have been so many times that we have not involved or asked for input from the people who are on the ground doing the work with students (and undercompensating them); and when they did provide input we did not listen; or if we listened, we did not follow through. We must hold ourselves accountable to standard of greater transparency and involvement with our teachers, including meeting regularly with educators, strengthening and supporting the Labor-Management Partnership, pushing toward our promise to ensure our teachers and classified employees are compensated in the top 10% school districts in LA and we need to support CCUSD's cost analysis review of outsourcing.



III. FINAL SECTION

Is there anything else you would like Culver City Democrats United to know about you, or anything else you wish to tell us?

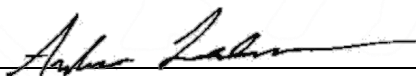
I am a lifetime member of CCDU and have supported the club by appointing someone from CCDU as my alternate to the LACDP and buying the Biden-Harris stand-up cutouts that have been so popular for the club to use at events. I don't just join, I take part and try to invest in the clubs I belong to. As a lifelong Democrat who has worked to bring people together to fight for our values and as a parent and activist, I have a demonstrated record of making change and building consensus and in addition am honored to be endorsed by CCFT, both members of Congress representing Culver City, four former CCUSD Chairs and four former Culver City Mayors, as well as former City Treasurer Crystal Alexander and supported by well over 200 community members.

We must stop letting politics and personalities get in the way of focusing on our teachers and educators. I will listen to, learn from and work with parents, teachers and the community to build greater trust and make our schools better. I hope to have your support

I CERTIFY THAT THESE ANSWERS ACCURATELY REPRESENT MY VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES.

Candidate

Signature: _____



Date: _____

July 19, 2024

Received By: _____

Date Received: _____

Please submit by email to: endorsements@culvercitydems.com