

Candidate Name: Clifford Thompson

Email: cliffordthompson2@comcast.net

Phone Number: (510) 325-7606

Office & District Sought: OUSD Board of Education, Director-D7

Campaign Website: oaklandschools.net

Social Media Handles

- Twitter:
- Facebook: Clifford Thompson
- Instagram:
- LinkedIn:
- TikTok:

Expected total Fundraising Amount: \$40,000

Funds Raised To Date: \$4,000

General Questions

1. What is your background/experience in Oakland? I moved to Oakland approximately 45 years ago. I taught in Oakland and was an administrator in Oakland for a combination of 25 years. I raised my son as a single father in Oakland. My son attended school in Oakland and graduated from Skyline High School. I am presently on the OUSD Board and have been since 2020.

2. What are the top two challenges facing Oakland today? What are the bright spots? The top two challenges facing Oakland today are safety/crime and the unhoused population. The bright spots are its diversity and potential to be one of the greatest cities in all of the United States.

3. Why are you running for office and why are you uniquely qualified to fulfill the office you are running for at this time? I am running for this office to be re-elected to continue the work that I have started so that I can see it to its completion. I am uniquely qualified because I have been a lifelong educator: a teacher, an administrator, and a secondary coordinator. Also, I have several advanced degrees in education and understand the struggle to achieve when you have to face extreme odds.

4. Prior to running for office, how were you involved in local government, school board, and/or your community? What were your biggest accomplishments? Prior to running for the Board, I served as a community worker under the CEDA program. I was a community leader, who brought young people together to rally for social/educational change. I was also very involved in my church as a youth leader. I organized and led a tutorial program for the students of East Oakland. My biggest accomplishment is relishing in the fact that two of the students who I tutored when they

were elementary students are now carrying a 4.0 in our Oakland High Schools. One is a senior and the other is a junior.

Paid for by Empower Oakland Committee, PO Box 7669 Oakland FPPC ID# 1466279

Oakland School Board

5. What are the highest priority challenges facing Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)?

One of the highest priority challenges for the Oakland Unified School District is fiscal solvency. Staying solvent is the precursor for staying out of receivership in order to have a Board that can make decisions relative to our district. Next is making sure that all of our students have undergone necessary prerequisites to participate in post high school academics, career, and community opportunities.

6. What is your vision for OUSD in 10 years? What specific and measurable steps will you take to advance toward realizing that vision in the next 4 years? My vision for OUSD in 10 years is for the District to have created an equity centered approach for all of its schools so that all students will attend a high quality school no matter the neighborhood in which they live. In order for that to become a reality, in the next four years I plan to 1) prioritize the efficient use of all of our facilities (asset management), work on the committee to reimagine and restructure our schools, and advocate for high curriculum options for all students.

7. OUSD student enrollment has declined over the last five years. This is not just an Oakland trend but a trend across the Bay Area region. How do you plan to address declining student enrollment? You are so correct. It is a big problem that is being faced throughout this nation. I have advocated for several things. 1. I have advocated for us to continue to fund the work of the enrollment office to identify and bring back the students who are not attending school. 2. I have asked the administration to prioritize and develop strategies that will result in bringing our students back to the district. 3. I am currently working with one of my colleagues to investigate and then create a special contingent to work solely on increasing our enrollment.

8. Please share your perspective on the quantity of public schools in Oakland. Should the district consolidate schools or maintain the current number that exists today? My position is to always “look at” how we are managing the overall structure of the organization. Of course, that entails evaluating the budget and ascertaining where we are not being as strategic as possible. My function on the Board is to set policy that keeps the district out of receivership. Therefore, I suggest cutting where we are not being strategic and efficient. If that requires us to decrease the number of schools, I think that is one of my responsibilities. I do not favor consolidating school in general.

9. What are the sources of the low literacy and math scores of OUSD students? How

can the district meaningfully improve them? What will you specifically do to see that

change during your 4 years on the board? As a longtime educator and presently a classroom teacher, I feel that the source of low literacy and math scores are a result of curriculum, pedagogy, and monitoring, using a cycle of inquiry. The improvement will not happen overnight. The things that I have done specifically are holding the superintendent responsible for reporting on the progress of students at each board meeting, advocating and supporting the formation of the Teach and Learning Committee, and having the CAO report on the implementation of the curricula to reading, ELA, and math.

10. How will you ensure the equitable education of all students across the district and that prepares every student for college and/or career success? The main thing that I have been doing is asking that all data are disaggregated to that we can see how each subgroup is performing. Additionally, I have asked for a report on the results of the implementation of the curriculum that is being used.

11. What role should charter schools play in Oakland's education landscape? What do you feel OUSD should do differently as it relates to its oversight and policy-making for

charter schools in the district? What should it keep doing? What measurable steps will you take as a board member as it relates to OUSD charter schools? I am personally an advocated the high quality education. Charter schools should follow the prescribed guidelines set forth by the State. Also, charters should be willing to share strategies that they use that result in student academic growth. I feel that OUSD should be more welcoming of charters if they are getting high academic results. There need to be a greater understanding implementation of the 6,000 and 9,000 policies.

12. The district has been plagued by financial problems for years. What do you think should be done to fiscally put the district on the right track? There needs to be candid conversation as to what is being done and how it affects our bottom line. This should result in taking a hard look at where each dollar is spent and the return of the investment.

13. Teachers and staff are the heart of a thriving school district. What specific measures will you take as a school board member to make OUSD the district of choice for teachers, staff, and other employees? To be sure, our teachers, staff, and other employees are what keep this system going. There are several things that I have done and will continue to do in order to lift up our district. The first thing is recognizing those who are making the commitment, above and beyond. Secondly, trying to find the resources in order to make the salaries competitive, and lastly, reach out and give support to any employee when needed.