

the (Y) files

a (y)outh publication of the
oakland youth advisory commission

the (y) files

A briefing on the 2006 mayor, city council and
school board candidates' **views** on **ISSUES**
that affect **youth** in the City of Oakland.

The **Oakland Youth Advisory Commission** (OYC) is a group of 25 youth ages 13-21 appointed by the Mayor and City Council to advise the city on youth issues.

The **Y-Files** was created by the OYC to educate the larger community on where the candidates stand on issues pertaining to youth, to help youth become more aware of local elections and candidates, and increase candidates' awareness of and responsiveness to youth concerns. The commission interviewed each candidate featured. The candidates were asked the same questions and commissioners chose some of their most interesting answers to feature in the Y-Files.

The commission contacted all the candidates several times to schedule interviews. Unfortunately, a few of the candidates were unavailable.

We would like to thank all the candidates that took time out of their busy schedules to be interviewed by the Youth Advisory Commission. The commission looks forward to working with you in the future!

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We would also like to thank each other. This publication would not have been possible without the hardwork and dedication of the y-files committee who interviewed candidates and helped to compile the y-files: Edward Baraona, Glenda Frost, Katrina Gilbert, Connie Ip, Rocio Molina, Andy Nguyen, Renato Rocha & Diana Tran!

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Just one more thanks to Andrea Tacdol, Aida Mariam and Helen Wu, the youth commission staff that helped coordinate this project.



IGNACIO DE LA FUENTE

candidate for mayor



What are your proposals for preventing and addressing youth violence?

We have to make sure that the educational system gives you choices and options to keep you away from potential violence. We need more comprehensive entertainment venues for you. We also have a responsibility to protect our citizens, and police officers are part of that. I also want young people that live in the city to take advantage of those good paying jobs of police officers and firefighters.

Do you or would you support plans to provide government-sponsored comprehensive healthcare to all children and young adults in Oakland?

Supporting it, yes, no question about it! I would definitely go to Sacramento, go to Washington to lobby and push for that legislation, but I am running for Mayor and I know there are limits to what we can do. I will work with the county and maximize the resources to provide medical care. I have worked with many non-profits to help them to raise money so they can provide medical care for low-income families.

Do you support military recruitment at Oakland public schools?

Heck no. I oppose this crazy war we are in. There is a reason why some people don't like America; we try to impose our views on everyone else. We are the police of the world, trying to impose things on somebody else at the expense of young people, young people dying sometimes for causes that are unnecessary. We can use those billions of dollars in resources to rebuild our infrastructure and have the best educational system.

What other ideas do you have for the youth of Oakland?

We don't have enough soccer fields, baseball fields and basketball courts. I think young people are entitled to those amenities. I will take your input to implement an agenda. I don't have all the answers, but I have the willingness to listen and a willingness to make things work for you.



CHRIS DOBBINS

candidate for district 6 school board

If you could accomplish one thing on the school board that's important to young people what would it be?

To make sure every student graduates and has a good education. I think we should have 100% of the students graduate.

How do you think the school board can make change for Oakland youth under the state administrator?

We don't have any real power per say, but we are still at an advisory capacity and as an elected official you still can work with community groups that go to the school sites and work with the different PTAs. I have three goals: 1) Increase school site management. It gives the principals, teachers and students at the school site more autonomy to make decisions at the school. This you can still achieve under the state administrator. 2) Increase parent involvement. My goal is to put a district-wide parent group together and encourage parents to come out. 3) Put together outside programs to help youth.

Do you support military recruitments at Oakland public schools? Do you support the military's access to all the names and contact information of youth enrolled in public schools?

I think the military academy which gives children the option to go there, is a good thing. Some kids just need that discipline and instruction. I didn't like being called by recruiters in the 12th grade. It's your personal information. Under 18, you have a lot less ability to get in there. There are opportunities there in the military, but I think the parents should be able to opt-in to give all the information to recruiters.



WANDRA BOYD

candidate for district 6 school board

Name three ways you plan to help OUSD?

1) I would insure that there is a standard-based curriculum that meets state framework. 2) I will make sure we have bi-weekly postings on the budget so the community knows where the money is going and the community will not get a surprise that we overspent 65 million dollars. 3) Work very hard to foster and facilitate collaboration between teachers, administrators, parents, businesses, and churches to make sure our students get what they need to be successful.

What should be done to make sure the Williams Case* is implemented in Oakland schools?

We need to identify which schools qualify, because you have to have a certain score/ranking for the money. We need to immediately assess those schools. I think that it's the district's responsibility even if the school is ranked and qualified for the money. They must make sure the school has textbooks, qualified teachers. Your school building should be safe and without vermin or broken windows. We need to work so that we won't need the Williams Case money. We should have a check-list of what is missing and visit the school sites as a board responsibility.

What do you think should be done about the High School Exit Exam?

Our students must take the exam. My #1 reason for running is to make sure that there is standard core curriculum at each school, that at every grade-level students are covering what they are supposed to cover. Unfortunately tests are the rule of measure that we have. I would work with the state school board to really explore more in-depth and to look at what other state's are doing.

*Eliezer Williams, et al., vs. State of California, et al. was a class action law suit settled in 2004 in favor of Williams. The basis of the lawsuit was that the agencies failed to provide public school students with equal access to instructional materials, safe and decent school facilities, and qualified teachers.

RON DELLUMS

candidate for mayor



If you could accomplish one thing in office that's important to young people what would it be? Why?

To involve you in the governing of the city. The youth are also citizens. Many people speak about them when they should spend more time listening to them. You should sit on the planning commission, recreation commission, the different boards. You should be advising, but also part of the decision making in the city. That is my #1 thing, involving you in the process so you are not standing on the outside.

What have you done in the past to support or serve the youth of Oakland?

I have spent my whole life on that. I served 31 years in elected office. Everyday that I was confronted with an important decision, I always asked what is in the best interest of the young.

What are your specific plans to keep families, particularly low-income families in Oakland?

Affordable housing/workforce housing has to be a priority. We need to embrace the ideas of affordability. Oakland should have an inclusionary zoning policy. We need to make sure there are economic opportunities so people can afford to live here. I would like to see Oakland become the Silicon Valley on green technology and sustainable living.

What are your proposals for preventing and addressing youth violence?

Crime and violence is a metaphor for everything wrong in our city. We have neglected our young people. First, we need community policing that gets police into the community to build relationships. Police need to cooperate with community leaders because they can't solve crimes by themselves. Second, we need to give young people a sense of tomorrow, of dreams and possibilities. We need wrap-around services in the schools, after-school programs and job opportunities. We need to deal with poverty, healthcare and our schools.

NANCY NADEL

candidate for mayor



If you could accomplish one thing in office that's important to young people what would it be? Why?

I would improve the schools. With limited power over the school district, I am proposing an increase of mayor's power to present the budget to the school district just as the mayor does with the city's budget. Nobody looks at the city, school district and port together. There should be more equity between these institutions.

What are your specific plans to keep families, particularly low-income families, in Oakland?

Work for education, jobs and public safety. We need education for adults. About 30% of Oakland's adults cannot read at a 4th grade level and this limits their ability to compete in the job market. We need to make it comfortable and easy for them to come back to school. I am trying to increase the job opportunities in Oakland. We need additional expertise on city staff to bring in industries and develop jobs. We need to save industrial land for industry and have an industrial preservation zone. I hope to attract businesses like film studios, high-end foods, energy industry, and retail.

What problems do you see (if any) with the current juvenile justice system? What ideas do you have to address these problems?

Big problems especially with CYA (California Youth Authority). I use the campaign trail to educate people about it. I support other cities' models of having smaller home-like spaces closer to the community where the young person lives so family could visit them. We need to lobby the state to make that change.

Do you support military recruitment at Oakland public schools? Do you support the military's access to all the names and contact information of youth enrolled in public schools?

Big no!



MARCIE HODGE

candidate for district 6 city council

What are your specific plans to keep families, particularly low-income families, in Oakland?

I plan to be a proponent for affordable housing. I want to give people the opportunity to get affordable housing; to buy houses, not just rent.

What are your proposals for preventing and addressing youth violence?

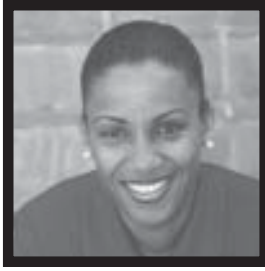
My proposals are to have a short term problem-solving system, increase the number of police officers and make their presence seen within the community, connect youth to programs where they know they can be successful in trade or college. Whatever they access they can always try something else and figure out what they can be good at. We also need after school programs that put students in a positive arena.

What problems do you see (if any) with the current juvenile justice system? What ideas do you have to address these problems?

I would work hard to eliminate the feeling of isolation, recruit more mentors to have a one-on-one relationship with them, create better families. I would also connect them and refer them to group homes, get people involved and I want to see Alameda County replace the decaying facility with a more modern and up-to-date facility.

In what ways do you plan to help improve OUSD?

I, as part of the city, can help with wrap-around services, increasing library hours and opening programs like Youth Uprising. I would especially like to connect youth to mental health services because they just need someone to talk to. They also need somewhere to have fun so I would connect them to recreational parks and different areas to play sports.



DESLEY BROOKS

candidate for district 6 city council

What are your specific plans to keep families, particularly low-income families, in Oakland?

I support affordable housing. I try to find ways to recirculate dollars in this community so people can have jobs and we can have the amenities we need. Quality of life, restoring safety and sense of community in our neighborhoods is something I work for. We need to look at things holistically.

What are your proposals for preventing and addressing youth violence?

One of the problems we are having is an increase in Latino gang violence. We had disbanded our gang unit in the police department and are behind the ball in having the intelligence needed in order to move forward in an effective way. Giving support to the gang unit is one thing to do. Preventative programs go a long way. We need to look at violence with a public health standpoint. We look at the indicators that cause violence and address those issues.

Do you support the establishment of more youth centers throughout Oakland?

There is a need for more teen centers. I'm not sure if we need to build another building in the city in order to provide teens the program and services they need. Then, a lot of money goes into infrastructure rather than programming. If you look in every community there is a school building that closes after school closes and if we utilize those buildings more effectively, couldn't we do more things you'd like to do? When you think of buildings these days we're thinking of millions and millions of dollars. Would that money be better spent doing the programming in school buildings or other buildings?

ARNIE FIELDS

candidate for mayor



What are your proposals for preventing and addressing youth violence?

We need more programs. We need technologies integrated with these programs so they can have classes and workshops. I am determined to clean the city. We need to make it very clear to people that you can't come to Oakland to litter. It will have a profound affect on people's psyche not to do crime. We do not need a litter tax, it sends the wrong message that it's okay to litter. We need trash cans everywhere and make it easy for people to get rid of their trash and we need to stop people that are littering by the police. There is no reason why teachers cannot start educating our youth why they cannot litter in our city. This will bring on civic pride and the crime will get better and there will be less homicide

What problems do you see (if any) with the current juvenile justice system? What ideas do you have to address these problems?

A lot kids get involved with drugs. It's a medical issue. You can't treat them like a criminal. You need medical facilities. We need drug prevention and information when kids are young so they stay in school. We need to integrate certain programs to get students on track.

What do you think the city should do to decrease drug abuse among youth?

Drug dealers come after school at middle schools and high schools. There is no reason why we can't bring trained dogs onto the schools to find drugs. We need to educate youth when it comes to drugs effects. Drugs and alcohol don't discriminate.

Do you support military recruitment at Oakland public schools? Do you support the military's access to all the names and contact information of youth enrolled in public schools?

I don't support the government coming in, taking our young people and sending them to wars I don't believe in. So no, I don't.

**RONALD
OZNOWICZ**
candidate for mayor



If you could accomplish one thing in office that's important to young people what would it be? Why?

#1: Attitude. I would try to instill a positive attitude, an attitude that says "I want to succeed," "I want to be successful," "I want to be proud of Oakland." That's it. We don't give attitude enough credit.

What are your proposals for preventing and addressing youth violence?

I am very saddened that we don't have a juvenile division at the Oakland police department anymore. We do not have a youth and family intervention division anymore. When a kid is picked up and arrested now he is taken to a holding facility that is established by the Sheriff's department. When I was a kid, when I was picked up in Oakland, I was treated roughly, but I was treated roughly with people who had hearts. They let me go. Youth get in trouble, but they are not lifetime criminals. We don't want to arrest them and make them lifetime criminals, we want to intervene to talk to their family, whoever is watching them.

In what ways do you plan to help Oakland Unified School District?

I can get school kids involved in city government and I can get them to be a part of it. It's nice to be involved, but I'd like to see an actual deputy city council of kids from the schools. I don't want them to be a quasi information group. I'd like to have three deputy city councils: kids, parents and teachers. People come up with speaker cards to ask them questions and put them on the spot. Each of these city councils can pass resolutions that the city would be aware of. It's going to make a difference.



JEAN QUAN
candidate for district 4 city council

If you could accomplish one thing in office that's important to young people what would it be? Why?

The most important thing for young people is to improve the public schools. That means getting back local control for the community and better funding. Getting local control is a state decision, but as a council member I have worked hard to get the city to help the schools - providing librarians for elementary schools, new after-school programs, high school internships, violence prevention programs, resources for new schools and libraries, and services for kids who need extra help especially homeless and abused students.

What are your specific plans to keep families, particularly low-income families, in Oakland?

Many of the low-income families in Oakland are immigrant families. What is happening nationally is pretty important. With threatening legislation many could be deported. Locally, working on affordable housing is one of the biggest things we can do.

Do you support the establishment of more youth centers throughout Oakland? If yes, what ways can you use your future position to support this?

For older kids, I want teen centers run by youth themselves as I had growing up. It is a big responsibility, youth leaders have to make the rules, decide on programs, and worry about keeping the centers safe and violence free. The Youth Uprising Center near Castlemont is doing well, but it took an incredible amount of money from the county and now the city. We can only afford a few centers like this, so there has to be other choices between nothing and centers that cost millions of dollars. We need youth leaders to take responsibility to help us plan new centers.



PAT KERNIGHAN

candidate for district 2 city council

Do you support the establishment of more youth centers throughout Oakland? If yes, what ways can you use your future position to support this?

Councilmembers hear all the time that young people don't have enough to do. Sometimes people even say that it's changed over the last 20-30 years ago when kids had more things to do. I'm not so sure why that was. I know that Oakland's Parks and Recreation programs used to be a lot better. They say that there was always a program going on at every park and every recreation center. It was safe, fun and supervised and we don't have that level of staffing. It would be important to staff up the rec centers. It would be great to have more teen centers like the new one in East Oakland.

What have you done in the past to support or serve the youth of Oakland?

I have helped to renovate numerous playgrounds in parks in District 2. Most recently, I partnered with the Golden State Warriors to renovate the Lincoln Square playground to resurface the blacktop, repaint the playground, and install new basketball hoops. I also helped secure \$500,000 for the renovation of the Lincoln Square Junk Boat. San Antonio Park is now a real community destination complete with a new soccer field and play structures. These park improvements have attracted more park users than ever before. I am very proud that I played a significant role in making this happen.

Do you or would you support plans to provide government-sponsored comprehensive healthcare to all children and young adults in Oakland?

I believe every person in Oakland deserves comprehensive healthcare. I would support state or federally funded healthcare for everybody in Oakland.



AIMEE ALLISON

candidate for district 2 city council

What are your proposals for preventing and addressing youth violence?

Violence in Oakland is not new. It's pervasive, endemic and a decades old problem. We need to recognize where the true roots of violence come from. I am supportive of efforts to break through the special interests that are preventing the deployment and hiring of the police that we are already paying for through Measure Y and our regular taxes. I am absolutely opposed to using the need for police as justification for taking away from youth programs. Investing in youth is the best way to reduce crime long-term.

Do you support the establishment of more youth centers throughout Oakland? If yes, what ways can you use your future position to support this?

Absolutely, it's why I'm running. City Council can do a tremendous amount. Every city councilmember gets Paygo funds, \$300,000 they can put toward whatever project that isn't currently in the budget. My plan is to use the bulk of Paygo funds for youth programming. The city should change priorities to fund these programs. I want to work closely with Parks and Rec and other agencies to direct city money and also find other money to support youth programming.

How do you plan to increase youth employment, opportunities, and programs in Oakland?

I want to do what the City of Boston did 10 years ago, called the Boston Compact. They worked with local businesses, large corporations, community based organizations and the city to take responsibility for providing opportunities for young people. The Top 10% of high school graduates in Oakland that don't go to college should get a living-wage job within the city.



SHIRLEY GEE

candidate for district 2 city council

What are your specific plans to keep families, particularly low-income families, in Oakland?

It comes down to more affordable housing that has an inclusionary policy where the rich and the poor can live together. There is a high immigrant population in District 2. For immigrants, I would increase their representation in government while working to provide support services and medical services for adult and children.

What are your proposals for preventing and addressing youth violence?

It starts with the kids: getting more money for preschool with Head Start programs, improve public schools so kids stay in schools, give support to the parents so they can keep their kids in schools and have more after school programs for kids between 3-6 o'clock to support them to do things that are more productive like the Dragon Boat Project. We need boys and girls centers, especially more done for the girls. I'd like to see more funding for youth centers. We need to get money for the parks. The youth programming is the key. Kids need to tell us what's hip.

What ways do you plan to help OUSD?

The city has done very little to support the public schools. There is so much more we can do. We have a budget and there is no line item that says schools. There is no item that says we're going to help the schools. If they need money for a playground falling apart, we can help by financing that. Incorporate as a line item for schools and finance that item. I was envisioning financing things like art supplies, supporting music programs, after-school programs, transportation and field trips. This is something the city could actually provide and budget each year so we offer assistance so the schools can thrive. We should work closer with our school district representative and visit the schools.

Interested in joining the
City of Oakland's Youth
Advisory Commission?

call 510.238.3245 or come pick up
an application at 150 Frank
Ogawa Plaza, Suite 4211, Oakland, CA!