

DPSC Endorsement Panel Report – November 14, 2019

SACRAMENTO MAYOR

NAME	RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRE	INTERVIEWED BY PANEL	RECOMMENDED	DPSC MEMBER?
Darrell Steinberg (i)	X	X	X	

Interview Panel Recommendation:

Endorse Darrell Steinberg (Ayes: 5; Noes: 0).

Panel Members: Andres Ramos (chair), Brenda Borge, Muriel Brounstein, Manuel Buenrostro, and Orlando Fuentes.

Panel Report:

Mr. Steinberg talked about his work as mayor to elevate the economic renaissance of Sacramento, have inclusive growth, and tackle issues of affordable housing and homelessness. He emphasized that there have been many good breakthroughs in Sacramento during his first term, such as passing Measure U to invest in inclusive economic development. He talked about his support for police accountability, including advocating for changing the standard on use of force. Mr. Steinberg characterized himself as a strong mayor in a weak mayor system and said that governance reform should be considered. He specifically thinks the mayor should be able to propose the city budget, hire and fire the city manager, and have veto power—but he emphasized that advocating for such a change would not be a priority. He discussed his approach of a regional effort for a mix of services to address housing and homelessness and is calling for a statewide right to housing. On the soccer stadium, he emphasized that it is different than the arena subsidy in that the city is supporting the infrastructure built around the stadium in the railyards but the city is not funding the construction itself.

Mr. Steinberg stated that his endorsement of Anne Marie Schubert was a mistake. He said that he endorsed her early when he thought she would be unopposed and that endorsing her would help him build a bridge with folks in the county that he wants to work with on issues like homelessness. He said that once he had given his word he did not want to take it back. Mr. Steinberg said that he would not do that again.

The panel appreciated Mr. Steinberg’s detailed answers in the interview and in his questionnaire and his humility in being direct and honest about his record and positions, even where he and the DPSC have disagreed. The panel appreciated him going through his thought process of why he endorsed Anne Marie Schubert and his statement that he will not do that again. Accordingly, the panel recommends endorsement of Mr. Steinberg.

Executive Board Recommendation:

Uphold the interview panel’s recommendation to endorse Darrell Steinberg (Ayes: 6; Noes: 0).

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SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL, DISTRICT 2

NAME	RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRE	INTERVIEWED BY PANEL	RECOMMENDED	DPSC MEMBER?
Allen Warren (i)	X	X	X	
Ramona Landeros				

Interview Panel Recommendation:

Endorse Allen Warren (Ayes: 5; Noes: 0).

Panel Members: Andres Ramos (chair), Brenda Borge, Manuel Buenrostro, Rachelanne Vander Werf, and Daniel Weitzman.

Panel Report:

Mr. Warren talked about his background before joining the city council. He sees the arena as the hallmark of success during his first term of office and supports a subsidy for a soccer stadium as a loan. Mr. Warren said that he is a strong advocate on homelessness and housing—we need to streamline and shorten the time for housing to get approved. On Measure U, he said that he supports the originally-stated plan that half goes to core city services (e.g., fire, police, parks, etc.) and the other half goes to investing in underserved communities. Mr. Warren emphasized that he has been the strongest voice on the city council on police accountability and reform.

Ms. Landeros did not submit the questionnaire, and was scheduled for an interview but cancelled. She was provided an opportunity to interview via phone or reschedule but did not respond. The panel decided to move forward with a recommendation.

The panel appreciated Mr. Warren’s thoughtful, honest responses—even on issues where the DPSC has disagreed with him in the past. The panel appreciates his advocacy on police accountability and appreciates that he was the only councilmember to rescind his endorsement of Anne Marie Schubert in 2018. Accordingly, the panel recommends endorsement of Mr. Warren.

Executive Board Recommendation:

Uphold the interview panel’s recommendation to endorse Allen Warren (Ayes: 6; Noes: 0).

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TWIN RIVERS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, AREA 3

NAME	RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRE	INTERVIEWED BY PANEL	RECOMMENDED	DPSC MEMBER?
Christine Jefferson	X	X	X	

Interview Panel Recommendation:

Endorse Christine Jefferson (Ayes: 4; Noes: 0).

Panel Members: Andres Ramos (chair), Brenda Borge, Rachelanne Vander Werf, and Daniel Weitzman.

Panel Report:

Ms. Jefferson has extensive experience with Twin Rivers USD and the Del Paso Heights community. She is retired from working in the district and volunteers mentoring girls at MLK Junior High. With regard to her relationship with the superintendent, she said she would be independent and would not be a rubber stamp. She disagrees with the superintendent on his proposal for school closures. Ms. Jefferson has a good relationship with the district’s educators and would meet with them regularly as a board member. She talked about how she has pushed back against over-policing by school resource officers (SROs) but has been able to build a bridge with SROs and is ok with having them at schools to protect kids as long as they do not engage in the over-policing practices that she previously fought against.

The panel appreciated Ms. Jefferson’s longstanding involvement in the community, direct experience working in Twin Rivers USD, and desire to be an independent school board member who will not be a “yes” person (in her own words). Accordingly, the panel recommends endorsement of Ms. Jefferson.

Executive Board Recommendation:

Uphold the interview panel’s recommendation to endorse Christine Jefferson (Ayes: 6; Noes: 0).

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TWIN RIVERS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, AREA 7

NAME	RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRE	INTERVIEWED BY PANEL	RECOMMENDED	DPSC MEMBER?
Linda Fowler (i)	X	X		
Daniel Savala	X	X	X	

Interview Panel Recommendation:

Endorse Daniel Savala (Ayes: 3; Noes: 1).

Panel Members: Andres Ramos (chair), Brenda Borge, Muriel Brounstein, and Orlando Fuentes.

Panel Report:

Mr. Savala talked about he came to live in North Sacramento after he was hired to work for Councilmember Allen Warren because he wanted to live in the community that he was working for. He talked about how he has a good relationship with the superintendent and wants to partner with the city and other districts. He opposes the proposed school closures and will meet regularly with the district’s educators. Mr. Savala talked about how he is very plugged in to the community through his time working for the city and as a community member.

Ms. Fowler has been on the board 41 years. She helped initiated the unification of Twin Rivers USD in 2007. Her passion is ensuring kids are treated well and encouraged to achieve. She stated that she was unhappy with the district cutting adult education in 2012, so she founded the Highlands Charter for adult education. She has a good relationship with the superintendent. She disagrees with the superintendent on school closures and emphasized that no schools will close in her trustee area. Ms. Fowler stated that she meets occasionally with the district’s educators.

The panel appreciates Ms. Fowler’s years of experience and personal commitment to the success of students. The panel is concerned about her having a lackluster relationship with the district’s educators, with the seeming conflict of opening a charter school in a district that she oversees, not being as connected as she needs to be with the diverse community she represents, and her emphasis that her trustee area will be spared school closures which implies she may support closing schools elsewhere. The panel was concerned with Mr. Savala’s need to better educate himself about the district’s budget numbers and him having his kids go to schools outside the district. But we believe that he is more plugged in to the community that he would represent, is more wiling to build good relationships with educators, and would oppose school closures beyond just his trustee area. Accordingly, the panel recommends endorsement of Mr. Savala.

Executive Board Recommendation:

Uphold the interview panel’s recommendation to endorse Daniel Savala (Ayes: 6; Noes: 0).