

**Potrero Hill Democratic Club
City College Board of Trustees Candidate Questionnaire
for meeting Tuesday, September 13, 2022, 6:30pm
Potrero Hill Neighborhood House
953 De Haro St**

Candidate name: Thea Selby
Contact person: Thea Selby
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*Please write a brief response (up to 200 words) to each question. **Please email the completed questionnaire to contact_us@phdemclub.org by Monday, September 5.** The questionnaires will be made available online to club members.*

Please describe your qualifications for this office.

Elected Trustee for the past 7 years with a lifelong commitment to public education, I, Thea Selby, a CA Dem elected delegate, and small business owner, will fight for City College and for you, the community. My CCSF accomplishments:

- Shepherded CCSF through the past accreditation
- As Board President, implemented FREE City College **for all students** and grew enrollment **the first year** by 25%
- With Student Success and Policy Committee members, found \$2M to lower student debt
- Negotiated \$400,000 from private developer to support student-led low-cost transit campaign

This next term, I will

- Work with my colleagues to deliver accreditation once again (2023)
- Support student-led Transit Team to secure transit passes
- Focus on keeping finances stable and **growing enrollment**
- Work to use unallocated FREE CITY funds to recruit students
- Form agreement with Building Trades for students to work on \$845M worth of CCSF construction projects

If elected, what are your top 3 goals for CCSF? Specifically, how do you plan to accomplish these goals?

1. Get re-accredited. I was part of the team that got us re-accredited last time. It's important to show that you have a balanced budget, a good permanent Chancellor, and a board that works for the entire college, not just a single constituency. I can demonstrate that we have done that and will continue to do so.
 2. Focus on enrollment. We lost almost 30% of our enrollment during Covid. We need to have a laser focus on growing enrollment now that we have eliminated our structural financial imbalance. The more we grow enrollment, the more we can grow our offerings of classes and programs.
 3. Secure a transit pass for our students. I've been working on this with a student-led team over the past years. AB1919, which has passed the Assembly and Senate is in front of Gov. Newsom. If he signs it we have the framework for free transit for ALL students, including community college. This is huge. We will continue to advocate at the federal, state and local level until we get it.
- Why did you choose to run for a 4-year term and not a 2-year term?
Two reasons—if I ran in the two year, I'd be running against Murrell Green, who I think is a good addition to our team. And, secondly, I think there are four more years to get everything done that I'd like to get done as a Trustee

If you are an incumbent, please tell us what you are most proud of. If you are the challenger, describe something the incumbent(s) did that you would have done differently

I am proud of fighting for City College while we were creating the Free City Program. I was President, and we increased enrollment by 25% when we implemented this program. I think we can do that again if we have a strong outreach and marketing program, which I would advocate could be paid by the unused Free City funds.

I am also proud that we started the food pantry program with my support. Many of our students are food insecure.

I am proud that we negotiated with Balboa Reservoir housing developers to build us 100+ units of housing for our faculty and staff. This will help us recruit a more diverse faculty. I also spearheaded Balboa Reservoir developers' commitment to pay \$400,000 to help the students in their campaign for a free transit pass. That money should be coming to us next year.

I am finally proud to be working with our stellar student leaders to get a free transit pass up and running at City College—we are the only higher ed institute without one.

What allocations in the current budget are higher/lower than needed and why? Please describe your current or previous experience with budgetary oversight.

I have been on the budget committee in the past, have an MBA, and am probably one of the more numbers-savvy members of the Board of Trustees, as I also run a small business with lots of budgets for me and my clients.

The current allocation for programs is lower than I would like. To eliminate the structural financial deficit, we cut classes and staff—administration, classified and faculty. We lost 30% of our enrollment during the pandemic. We must grow our enrollment so that we can grow our programs and classes. I would like to see more counselors, more classes, more support for students, more of a lot. But, we will not get re-accredited if we spend beyond our budget, so we must grow enrollment to grow all these things.

I don't think there is anything in the budget that is too high.

- In addition to what you might have cited in your goals, what is CCSF doing well that needs to be supported and maintained? How would you support these strengths as a trustee?

The legislature did something we could not do ourselves a few years back. They passed AB 705 and 1705 to eliminate the need for testing into college-level classes. Prior to that time, the gap between students who tested in and those who didn't was growing larger and larger. The students who did not test in were stuck in a purgatory of classes that were supposed to get them college-ready. Many dropped out before ever seeing a college-level course.

Now, with AB705 every student starts at college level. They do not test in. And, we support them in a variety of ways to make sure that they have the best chance of passing the class. Our enrollment level for black and brown students in college-level Math and English more than doubled and the passing rate for those classes also more than doubled. Clearly this was a huge equity issue. We must maintain the support classes and services to make sure our students can take and pass college-level classes so they can go on to whatever goals they might have. This is how we reduce the opportunity gap.

As Chair of Student Success and Policy, I make sure that we are kept abreast of our progress on this front. We monitor what is being done and we regularly ask how, with our tight budget, we are ensuring that our students have the support they need (the need for tutors, for example, is paramount) to succeed. I can also advocate for additional funding for this support. Unfortunately, government can be good at requiring

something, but not so good at providing the funding to make sure that you can fulfill the requirements. Obviously, this is right in line with everything that San Francisco stands for in terms of equity, and I will continue to monitor and fight for funds for it.

In addition to what you might have cited in your goals, what is CCSF not doing well and how would you bring about improvement or change as a trustee?

We have never made it easy to enroll online in City College. Our registration software basically sucks. We have many work arounds (they did something like 37 fixes last semester on it!), but we really need a new simple registration system. Thanks to our budgeting, we have funding to pay for that this year. I hope this will take that barrier away.

We do not use all centers equally well. Mission Center has been emptied out during the pandemic. But it is an incredible building in a very accessible place. The Chancellor is aware of this problem, we have a new dean in place to help with that. We need to build programs in all the centers, much as we have at Evans (automotive, City Build, motorcycle, custodial) and John Adams (all things health-related) so that we use all our centers well. The Chancellor is aware of this issue, which is partially technical, and is working on it.

I think we could do a better job of recruiting students, whether they are seniors who want a better quality of life or career and technical ed students seeking better jobs or those who want to get the four-year education at ½ the price (take the first 2 years at CCSF!). One of the major reasons for that has been the strife and turnover at the college. With a permanent young Chancellor, a board with good governance rather than flashy statements in mind, and our excellent faculty, we can focus on steadily building programs and creating new ones and better recruitment of students. This will be my focus in the upcoming term. I have already worked to introduce the Chancellor to the head of the SFMTA and the Director of Operations, and they came up with an area of study that we already have that could be incorporated into the needs of SFMTA skills training. We've had 7 mostly temporary Chancellors since I've been at City College. A steady set of leaders with the best goals for City College today and in the future will be a great help.

Thank you for taking the time to fill this out, and thanks for running!