

View results

Respondent

85

Anonymous

391:06

Time to complete

1. I have been... *

☐ Appointed☒ Nominated

2. Your signature indicates your consent to be placed on the ballot and serve as a Delegate, if elected *

Vaishali Sirkay

3. Full name *

Vaishali Vinai Sirkay

4. Region/subregion *

20



5. Name of District or COE *

Los Altos School District

6. Years on board *

5

7. Profession

Self-employed- Social Impact Projects & Programs

8. Contact number *

408-455-4154

9. Primary email address *

shalisirkay@gmail.com

10. Are you an incumbent Delegate? *

☐ Yes☒ No

11. Why are you interested in becoming a Delegate? Please describe the skills and experiences you would bring to the Delegate Assembly. *

Delegates bring the local issues and concerns of school board members and school districts to statewide discussions. I want to become a Delegate because my use of a systems-level, assets-based approach rooted in equity to address the needs of students and school districts is an important methodology to bring to these state-level discussions. As important as this has been to my work as a school board member, I know this approach would be critical to the work of the CSBA Delegate Assembly. I believe I would be a strong, knowledgeable voice from Region 20 because my cumulative experiences serving on my school board, various nonprofit boards, and the Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC), have helped me understand issues from various perspectives and angles. This perspective is needed because the issues facing our students, teachers and staff grow more complicated and more intertwined every day. It is becoming impossible to address the issues our students, staff and families face in public education independently of other societal and political stressors.

For example, campus safety is one priority area where I have been doing a fair amount of work. I facilitated two conversations about campus safety between the JJC and our Santa Clara County school board members, the most recent one addressing the long-term impacts of suspensions and expulsions on our students. I have also been informing our CSBA PACER and several state legislators on how the Education Code actually reinforces the school to prison pipeline, whereas the JJC and school board members want to dismantle this route into the juvenile justice system. In addition, I have been working with nonprofit leaders to explore prevention strategies, examine how the juvenile justice system handles these students, and then finally, understand and describe successful re-entry plans back into the students' home districts.

12. Please describe your activities and involvement on your local board, community, and/or CSBA. *

I am very intentional in that the work that I do so that the boards and commissions that I serve on reflect my personal values and priorities. I have 25+ years of diverse experience with a proven commitment to addressing issues critical to local and regional communities. My experience begins at the intersection of public education and public health, and then is further enriched by working with people from diverse fields.

I am in my second term on the Los Altos School District (LASD) Board of Trustees, and it has been my greatest privilege to support our students, families, teachers and staff through the uncertainty and tumultuousness of the past few years. During my tenure as Board President in 2021, I was most proud that we were able to bring our children back on campus early, maintain high health and safety standards, and begin to address current mental health challenges and prepare for those that were coming. Amongst my other Board committee assignments, I continue to serve on the LASD Curriculum Equity Task Force.

I am in my second term serving as a commissioner on the Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission, and have chaired/co-chaired various iterations of the Education, Equity & Justice (EE&J) Committee. I believe in serving ALL children, and that includes our justice-involved youth and our students in the dependency system.

I am also grateful to serve on the Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association (APISBMA) Board of Directors. This role has given me a statewide perspective on the issues that affect our API students and API board members, and to explore how API allies can best support our API students.

I currently sit on the boards of the Los Altos-Mountain View Community Foundation and Asian Women Empowered, and have previously served on the board of CHAC (Community Health Awareness Council).

13. What do you see as the biggest challenge facing governing boards and how can CSBA help address it? *

There are many challenges facing school boards today, but the issue that worries me the most is the growing trend of hostility/violence towards school board members coupled with the politicization of education issues. This challenge is critical because it impedes the ability of school boards to do their very basic job of governing their school district. School districts have critical issues to work on, including declining enrollment, staffing shortages, unfunded mandates, etc. and dealing with hostile interruptions at board meetings and threats of violence is a distraction from focusing on these issues. It also systematically undermines the public education system. Public education is a critical pillar of Democracy (with a capital "d") and a great societal equalizer. It would be a dystopian future that does not include public education. I know that CSBA is having these discussions at the state-level, which is great, but I also think they can help local school districts by facilitating these conversations at the local level to help parents and community members find constructive, nonviolent ways of voicing their dissent. I also think that working on legislation that protects the physical safety of school board members and compiling a list of resources to help embattled school boards is a very appropriate role for CSBA.

Vaishali “Shali” Sirkay, M.P.H.

Resume Highlights

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY:

Over 20 years of diverse experience with a proven commitment to addressing issues critical to local and regional communities, using an equity-focused lens and a deep understanding of how the breadth and depth of the Social Determinants of Health create challenges and opportunities in communities.

EDUCATION:

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (Area of Specialization: Health Education and Communication)
Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, New Orleans, LA, December 1998

BACHELOR OF ARTS (Major/Minor: Anthropology/Biology)
Barnard College at Columbia University, New York, NY, May 1995

ADDITIONAL TRAINING:

- *Toastmasters International*, Public Speaking Education
- *Undoing Racism*, People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE: Select Examples

- Developed and implemented *Vaccine Dialogue*, a forum convening community leaders and healthcare providers to discuss vaccine hesitancy and barriers to vaccine access in vulnerable communities where COVID-19 vaccination rates were low. The *Vaccine Dialogue* resulted in vaccines being set aside for members of these communities at mass vaccination sites, as well as the establishment of a targeted vaccine pop-up with Sutter Health. Co-authored *Vaccine Dialogue Report*.
- Developed and implemented workshops targeted to older adults to teach them how to download and use ride share apps, as well as provide training on how to specifically use Lyft without the need for a smartphone. The objective was to create greater independence and empowerment in older adults so that they can age in place with dignity, and reduce social isolation and thus reduce the mental health impacts of isolation.
- Established a regular onsite COVID-19 testing program for LASD teachers and staff in conjunction with El Camino Healthcare District. This allowed students to return to in-person learning, and allowed our campuses to remain open during the 2020-2021 school year, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Working with El Camino Health staff from across various departments, this program was expanded to other school districts within the boundaries of the El Camino Healthcare District.
- Coordination of multiple, diverse key stakeholders also resulted in testing pop-up sites for workers and residents in Mountain View, Los Altos and Sunnyvale.
- Authored chapters on health informatics (“Health Assessment”) and disease prevention efforts (“Health Promotion”) in Louisiana’s Public Health Improvement Plan, and edited other chapters in this document. (Turning Point)
- Authored article “State and Local Collaboration: An Integrated Approach to Public Health Improvement,” Transformations in Public Health. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (Turning Point)
- Successfully awarded over \$1 million in grants based on grant proposals I have written for non-profits/projects. (Various)

ROLES:

- Executive Director, Cities Association of Santa Clara County, 2022-present
- Governing Board Member & former Board President, Los Altos School District Board of Trustees, 2018-present
- Commissioner, Santa Clara County Juvenile Justice Commission, 2019-present
- Health Program Director, Manzanita Works, Oakland, CA 2020-2022
- Community Relations Specialist, Government & Community Relations, El Camino Health, Los Altos CA 2018-2020
- Associate Director, Center for Age Friendly Excellence (CAFE), Los Altos, CA, 2017-2019