

Coastside Democrats Candidate Survey

An email address is required to ensure integrity. Please note this form in its entirety will be posted for Public Review.

Email *

andrearosenthal27@gmail.com

Thank you for your interest in applying for the endorsement of the Coastside Democrats. Please complete this submission by **Friday, September 4, 2026**. All Club members will vote on candidate endorsements.



Cabrillo Unified School District (CUSD) Governing Board Member

The role of the CUSD school board is to provide leadership and oversight of the district. The Board ensures that the district is responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community. The school district has approximately 2,600 students attending one of the district's seven schools.

CUSD holds district-based elections for its five Board Members to staggered four-year terms. There are three districts that are up for election in 2026: Districts A (Daniels), C (Cortez), and E (Alexander).

1. Candidate Name *

Andrea Rosenthal

2. As a Club under the California Democratic Party, we only endorse fellow Democrats. Please state how long you have been registered to vote as a Democrat:

*

- ☒ Always been a registered Democrat
- ☐ Have been a registered Democrat for the last ten years
- ☐ Have been a registered Democrat for the last five years
- ☐ Just registered as a Democrat this election cycle.

3. I certify the information provided on this application and in any subsequent interview or written submission is true and correct.

*

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Statement Questionnaire

4. Why are you running for this office? *

I just started my 23rd year of teaching high school math in the CA public school system. I'm passionate and very experienced at all things education, and I want to use that passion and experience to serve my local community. My two children are both students in the CUSD (both attended Hatch elementary and are now at Cunha in grade 6 and 8), but I care about making school the best it can be for all of the students in the district.

5. What will be your top priorities if elected? *

Teacher compensation and working conditions.

Student accommodation and inclusion.

College and career readiness for all students.

Transparent and proactive communication with all families and community members.

6. Please explain how your background and experience have prepared you for this office. *

I have been advocating for students, their families, and teachers for 22 years in education. I have an intimate understanding of public education funding, policy, and programming. I teach special education students, English language learners, students in advanced placement math, and students of all economic backgrounds. I have worked with the SMUHS district administration in multiple roles to to work on curriculum, testing, professional development, and budgeting (in relation to teacher contracts).

7. What do you see as the major issues on the Coastside? *

-Unfortunately, the public school funding system does not benefit our small town with little industry. We face a very real inequity of state funding, which is our main source of revenue.

-Our district was moved from Differentiated Assistance (requiring support from the county) to Direct Technical Assistance status (requiring support from the state) due to student achievement gaps.

8. Is there anything in your background which, if you receive the Club's endorsement, could cause embarrassment to the club? If so, please provide the details. *

No.

9. Who is supporting your campaign at this stage (e.g., endorsements, donors), and are there any potential conflicts of interest we should know about? *

Titles and affiliations are for identification purposes only.

Naomi Patridge, Former Mayor of HMB

John Parsons, Local business owner, Coach

Amber Stariha, HMB High School PTO President

Misty Veloso, Local Educator

Kristen McGraw, Hatch PTO President

Kendra Holland, Cunha PTO President

Molly Stone, El Granada Elementary PTO President

Catrine Brown, Spanish Immersion Parents Association President

Breanna LaFontaine, CUSD School Board Member

Doug Machado, Local business owner, CUSD Parent

Specific Questions

10. For which district are you running? *

☐ District A

☐ District C

☒ District E

11. California schools face chronic, critical inequities and other challenges in funding. ★
Describe this challenge for CUSD and how you would work to address it.

Since the Coastside does not have big industry, such as tech companies or international airports in our school district, we unfortunately do not receive close to as much state funding as other districts in the area. As an active citizen I have and will continue to reach out to state officials asking for a change, but I think a school board member's efforts are most useful when focusing on what we can do locally. We supplement with parcel taxes, bonds, grants, PTO/ELAC/SIPA fundraisers, and the CEF endowment, but it's never enough. There are two items on the ballot in November that I support; Prop 3 (San Mateo County tax extension) and Measure Z (Local parcel tax increase of \$3.41 per month) that would continue to provide important funds. I'd like to find creative ways to save money and generate more revenue. For example, in SMUHSD we found a way to lessen the expenses of teacher healthcare that I'd like to look into for CUSD. Also, the board approved money for two pools at the high school. If they do go forward with both pools, I would hope to rent out one of the pools for programs so that we can help cover some of the maintenance costs of the pool. Lastly, I want to work with CEF to increase our donations as much as possible. Growing the endowment can be a crucial resource, especially in providing enrichment for our students.

12. School boards must often make decisions incorporating input and perspectives from a wide variety of stakeholders. How do you plan to engage with groups who don't typically participate in education-related meetings, including non-English-speaking families? *

Quick Summary:

- More than just language translation.
- Reach out through trusted community members and programs.
- Celebrate culture.
- Get out into the community.
- Work with schedules and childcare needs.

Full Response:

I've seen MANY different tactics used to engage all stakeholders in the education of our students. Simply sending out all correspondence, including surveys, in English and Spanish is not enough to engage everyone in the community. It's not just about language, but also about understanding culture. There are so many factors that contribute to why families don't engage, such as burdens from financial instability or gaps in their formal education. There are two methods I've seen that have been most impactful. One is to work with local programs and people that are trusted by the community. For example, directly working with ALAS. I used to work with community liaisons from Moonridge and the Head Start programs to reach local families when I ran the Kindergarten Forum for the then Coastside Mother's Club. In-person contact and physically getting out into the community is the best way to hear from those hard to reach. For the students I teach, sending an email might not reach their parents. But if I call them with my limited Spanish, or enlist a more trusted Spanish speaker to call with me, I'm able to set up times to meet in person, working around their schedule and childcare needs. If we establish real relationships, either through making connections through sports or activities (connecting through the BGCC or Juan Maestu's soccer program), attending community events, or working with the library or local businesses, we can build a sense of connection and more clear avenues for gathering input from the whole community. ELAC (English Language Advisory Committee) currently works with the PTOs at each school, but I think that bond can be stronger, and I think ELAC/DELAC is one of our best resources for connecting to all families.

Also, connections are made when we invite families to celebrate culture either through school celebrations, or fundraisers. The turnout at the Fiesta performance at Hatch is magnificent. At the school where I work we have a Grupo Folklórico club that has about four performances throughout the year, and brings many parents to the school. It's a great time to make connections, and offer opportunities for input.

Lastly, I just attended Cunha's back-to-school night, and I was able to watch my son, who is in the Spanish immersion program and Leadership, help families with directions and questions, using the Spanish he has learned at our schools. It made me think about how we could harness the power of our students for outreach. It would help in building their citizenship and community service.

13. What is your approach to school safety, including your views on topics like campus security, immigration enforcement on campus, and emergency preparedness? *

Quick Summary:

- Prevention through building a strong, respectful, and inclusive community.
- Inform and support families with regard to immigration rights.
- Have swift, calm, and clear communication in emergency situations.
- SROs can be valuable when they are well trained in working with youth, but are not always necessary.

Full Response:

School safety starts with prevention and community. I have a personal connection to Sandy Hook Promise, which promotes early identification and intervention for students struggling with mental health. Creating a sense of belonging, through inclusion practices, education, and building respectful relationships, is most important. Also, promoting the use of our anonymous reporting app, SaySomething, and taking those reports seriously, can save students from bullying and other harmful situations.

We also need to continue to educate and support all families in regard to their rights as they pertain to immigration. Cabrillo's BP 5145.13 as well as their Immigrant Support Plan from Feb, 2026 are strong, and address the needs of our students and their families well. Additionally, although all schools will uphold their legal obligations, at schools in our area we are taught that masked ICE agents on campus should be treated as violent intruders, and we should lockdown accordingly. Our responsibility lies in protecting our students.

Emergency preparedness drills are state mandated. Every school already completes monthly Big 5 Drills, because practice is essential to being prepared. But we need to be diligent about keeping our facilities safe and our communication to parents during emergencies swift, accurate, and clear. The tsunami warning a year and a half ago showed us how messy things can get when emergencies happen. It takes cool-headed leadership to keep things efficient and safe.

I have worked with various SROs (School Resource Officers) over the years. They have all been absolutely lovely and well-trained individuals who have been well liked by the students. They have provided a great deal of support in many situations, but their presence isn't always required. I understand that SROs on campus can be viewed as too much enforcement, or a waste of money. I sometimes agree. I don't think they are always necessary, so it really depends on the school and the situation. I also know that no two SROs are the same, so my experience may be very different from that of other schools.

14. What do you see as the key opportunities for improvement in our local public schools? *

What do you believe is going well?

Quick Summary:

Going Well:

-Facilities updates

-Caring staff and faculty

Improvements:

-Compensate teachers and improve their working conditions.

-Decrease trustee stipends and reserve minimum.

-Combat chronic absenteeism

Full Response:

If elected, I do not plan to change the whole system. I don't think that's a recipe for success. I think it's more about using my knowledge to help my fellow board members in decision-making, as well as my common language with our educators to communicate with ease. The updates to the facilities that have been underway are wonderful. I love seeing the students enjoy their new spaces, and I'm looking forward to the upgrades at the high school. I think we have a very caring staff and faculty that is trying their best with what they have. I would like to make sure we are always looking at spending with an eye on what we can do for the teachers. For example, the board voted in March to give themselves a stipend increase from \$240 per month up to \$1200 per month depending on longevity. I would like to see that decrease again, or have a way of funneling that money back to the district. There is also a current BP in place to try to maintain a 16% reserve, which I believe is much too high over the recommended reserve. It interferes with the teachers' ability to negotiate higher compensation. But I think, since we cannot afford to give the compensation packages to the teachers that would be more competitive to the greater Bay Area, we need to work to give them the working conditions that will make them love their jobs and want to stay. Making teachers feel truly trusted and valued is incredibly important. We can work to not waste their planning time with unnecessary meetings, and we can support them with materials they need, advocacy, and scheduling that doesn't overwhelm them. I was told by teachers that this year's scheduling was messy, and they were not well prepared for the start of the year. We need to do better for them, so that they can do better for our students.

Additionally, I know the district is struggling with chronic absenteeism. They have added an additional position to the district administration to help address that issue, so I'm curious to see the outcomes from that initiative.

15. What is the plan for the school district property in El Granada? What do you think the district should do with it? *

My understanding is that there is currently no plan to do anything with that site, even though the county planning department rezoned it for multi-family use. The district has a lot of projects in progress currently, especially with the high school just getting started, so I don't see anything happening very soon with the site (although selling it is an option now that the value of the property has increased). Before any decisions are made, I would hope whoever is on the board would be thoughtful and humble in researching options and obtaining input from the community. We have an obligation to try to do what is best for the community. I understand that the property contains an overwintering grove for monarch butterflies. I believe that before anything could be built on the site an EIR would need to be completed, stating requirements for mitigation, such as buffer zones around the grove, but, even though I have taken city planning courses as part of my environmental studies major in grad school, I am definitely no expert. I wouldn't be so cavalier as to give a definitive response for what should happen on that site without much more input (I'm only one person). However, I do think it would be wonderful if there was a reality where we could build something educational on the site, that would protect and celebrate the wildlife on the land, but would also bring in more revenue for the district. We're really not in a position to leave a lot of money on the table.

16. As a school board member, do you think it is important to visit district schools on a regular basis? Please explain why or why not. *

I feel very strongly about being more than just simply available for input. Board members need to actively get themselves in the room with the people whose lives are affected by the decisions they make, and ask for input in person when they can. It's also valuable to really see what the school day looks like for our students, but I do trust the teachers and staff to accurately communicate what things are looking like as well. I found the time to consistently volunteer at Hatch for 8 years (minus the distance learning time), and found so much value in seeing my children's classes in action. I think it's also important to be part of the community events during and after school to support and celebrate our students as well as check in with parents and grandparents.

Submit When Finished

Click Back to return to a previous question. Click Submit when you are done.

Feel free to contact demclubcoastside@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Final results will be posted on <https://coastsidedems.org>

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