

Question 1 Why are you seeking this public office? (Please be brief)	
Ted Gordon	I am seeking office to address educational disparities based in race/ethnic and socio-economic status among our students as well as the under compensation of successful teachers in AISD. I seek the fundamental restructuring of the District's allocation of human and financial resources towards these two priorities. To promote the future civic health of Austin and Texas I will pursue the Socio-economic and racial/ethnic desegregation of our hyper-segregated school district.
Zachary Price	I'm running because I think it's time for a different type of representation on the AISD Board.
Arati Singh	I am running for AISD At-Large trustee because I believe strong public schools are the foundation of our communities, democracy, and economy. Right now we face educational inequities and a financial crisis; I am ready to hit the ground running to make sure AISD's 79,000 students get and excellent education.
Carmen Tilton	I am running for the Austin ISD school board, because the District needs a leader who is committed to the entire Austin community and who has the legislative experience to defend the District's students and community from Dan Patrick and Greg Abbott. During the last Legislative Session, Austin ISD and the PTA stayed mostly silent and on the sidelines as the Texas Legislature attempted and successfully passed bills targeting our LGBTQIA community (SB 6, SB 89, HB 3859, SB 892, and others), immigrant community (SB 4), local ordinances (HB 7- 851, HB 100), and our teachers' health insurance policies (SB 788).

Question 2 Please tell us why you are seeking the endorsement of SDA. Do you consider yourself to be a Democrat? Do you have a history of involvement in Democratic politics and/or LGBTQ issues? If so please briefly describe this history.	
Ted Gordon	I have voted in Democratic primaries since I was eligible to vote. I was awarded the 2016 Distinguished Service Award by the Black Austin Democrats. I have been a committed ally at the University of Texas at Austin including forming the preeminent concentration of Black Queer studies scholars in the nation as inaugural chair of the African and African Studies Department.
Zachary Price	I am a proud Democrat – I've been endorsed by the Travis County Democratic Party and have worked for a number of Democratic campaigns and office holders. In addition, my opponent is a strong Republican.
Arati Singh	I have been endorsed by every Democratic club in Austin to date. I am seeking SDA's endorsement because the Democratic Party represents the people—rich, poor, black, white, gay, straight, and anything in-between. Right now, AISD is struggling to replace its antiquated sex ed curriculum to address LGBTQ families, consent, and other issues important to our society, and SDA's voice is important in this race.
Carmen Tilton	I am a lifelong Democrat with a demonstrated (and verifiable) history of subversively fighting against discriminatory legislation at the Texas Capitol. I have made a career working for Democratic members and Democratic causes.

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Question 3	Do you believe LGBTQ individuals should be protected against discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression?
Ted Gordon	Absolutely.
Zachary Price	I absolutely believe this is necessary.
Arati Singh	Yes, without exception.
Carmen Tilton	Absolutely and in all professions, from pre-k teacher to funeral director.
Question 4	What proposals would you suggest to make coming out on the job safer for LGBTQ employees?
Ted Gordon	LGBTQ training should be mandatory for all district administrators and employees.
Zachary Price	I'd like to see expansion of existing employee trainings to ensure all of our employees are aware of how important it is to foster a positive working environment for LGBTQ employees.
Arati Singh	I would work closely with Education Austin, our teacher/classified employees union (which has endorsed my campaign), to make sure the district is a safe space for LGBTQ+ employees. I would make sure that even if discriminatory state laws persist, that AISD employees are protected from discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
Carmen Tilton	In addition to a blanket non-discrimination ordinance, I'd fight to eliminate required disclosure of a spouse or significant other's information to the company's Human Resources department for the purposes of health and life insurance coverage. Employees should have the right to decide what they want to share, when, and to whom.
Question 5	Do you think AISD is doing enough to ensure equality for its LGBTQ employees? For example, how would you address organizational issues such as transgender employees transitioning on the job?
Ted Gordon	No not enough. Employees and supervisors need to receive training in these issues.
Zachary Price	No – these employees need specific resources to help accommodate them and the district should be doing more to create a welcoming community for LGBTQ employees.
Arati Singh	I would continue supporting same-sex benefits for employees and prohibition of harassment for transgender employees, as stated in the Employee Welfare policy. I would advocate expanding this policy to protect transitioning transgender employees if the LGBTQ+ community feels the current policy is not sufficient. Also, I am against any type of bathroom bill.

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Carmen Tilton	While I do not doubt that this administration truly believes it is being respectful toward its LGBTQ employees, the district could do more. From offering cultural competency training and professional development opportunities for all AISD staff to increasing partnerships with trained behavioral health professionals to help our staff, students, and families handle the complex social and emotional side of coming out and/or transitioning, the District should be more proactive in its efforts to create a safe and supportive environment.
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Question 6	Are you familiar with the organization Out Youth? If elected, what would you do to help this organization and others that provide services to LGBTQ youth?
Ted Gordon	Yes I would support the expansion of the relationship of Out Youth with Community in Schools to better serve our students.
Zachary Price	I'm a big fan of Out Youth and the work it does in the community. I'd like to see AISD implement more community partnerships to provide specific services for the LGBTQ community and improve funding for these services.
Arati Singh	Yes, I am familiar with Out Youth, and even made my first donation to them a few weeks ago after a friend mentioned it to me. I would continue supporting Out Youth and similar organizations by encouraging partnerships with, for example, Out Youth, Communities in Schools, and AISD to expand the reach of the Be YOU curriculum so that our LGBTQ+ students have a safe space.
Carmen Tilton	I am! Austin ISD should engage in space-sharing arrangements with organizations such as Out Youth to better utilize its under-enrolled schools and abundance of space located throughout the city of Austin.

Question 7	Describe a step you would take, or have taken, or a proposal you would make, or have made as a member of the Board of Trustees that would <u>specifically</u> benefit LGBTQ students.
Ted Gordon	I have been a strong supporter of providing gender neutral bathrooms on all our campuses.
Zachary Price	I'd like to see AISD stop contracting with outside groups that condemn our LGBTQ students and employees – especially given that LGBTQ students might have to work alongside these organizations.
Arati Singh	I would advocate and vote for a new science-based, comprehensive sex ed that addresses the needs of LGBTQ+ students. Inclusive sex ed is important for LGBTQ students so they don't feel excluded and shamed by abstinence-only messages that refer only to male/female marriage; moreover, kids should not feel shamed by their feelings, questions and curiosity. I would also try to change AISD facility rental policies, given the current situation of the anti-gay Celebration Church renting the district's Performing Arts Center.



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Carmen Tilton	The Texas Legislature passed a series of bills all aimed at allowing various professionals in different fields from local government offices to health care providers and school counselors to deny services, programs, and treatments for LGBTQ individuals. As a Board of Trustees member, I would have immediately pushed for the Board to adopt a policy for all current and potential employees and all contractors explaining that this type of discrimination will not be tolerated at AISD and that failure to serve any member of the Austin ISD community will result in termination.
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Question 8	Do you believe that public schools should institute rules and policies to prohibit harassment and discrimination against LGBTQ students?
Ted Gordon	Yes.
Zachary Price	I absolutely believe these types of protections are necessary.
Arati Singh	Yes, I was happy to see that last week Austin HS changed its discriminatory policy of allowing only 1 male homecoming king and 1 female homecoming queen after a lesbian couple was voted as the homecoming couple. We need to keep destroying discriminatory policies such as this to help LGBTQ+ students feel included in the school community, as they should be.
Carmen Tilton	Yes. Harassment and discrimination of any group or individual should not be passively accepted as a "normal part of growing up."

Question 9	In the 85th Texas Legislative Session, legislation was filed that would prohibit people from using bathrooms based on their preferred gender identity. Similar legislation is certain to be filed in the 86th Texas Legislative Session. Would you be willing to
Ted Gordon	Yes I would.
Zachary Price	Absolutely and unequivocally. I worked at the legislature last session and was disgusted to see our state government waste its time on such hateful and unnecessary legislation.
Arati Singh	I would be thrilled to testify against such discriminatory and useless legislation. I have testified several times against Dan Patrick's oppressive education policies (vouchers, school finance), and would be proud to add this to my list!
Carmen Tilton	Yes! I'm also planning to work with friendly legislators to draft amendments and exploit weaknesses in these hurtful bills.

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Question 10	If elected, how would you stay informed of the concerns and interests of your LGBTQ constituents?
Ted Gordon	Yes.
Zachary Price	By meeting with them and seeking out the opinions of the LGBTQ community on a regular basis. Representation is about amplifying others' voices, not just using your own.
Arati Singh	I will talk to friends in the LGBTQ+ community, including a friend (who has endorsed me) who founded the Austin ISD LGBTQ+ parent group, Informed Parents of Austin. I will attend the Student Health Advisory Committee meetings in AISD to advocate for more inclusive sex ed programming, and follow articles related to mental health and policy issues that impact the LGBTQ+ community.
Carmen Tilton	As a Board of Trustee member, I would like to set up regular meetings with LGBTQIA organizations, both those affiliated with certain campuses as well as those who are part of the broader Austin community. I am concerned that the traditional PTA system is not fully addressing the needs and concerns of our LGBTQIA parents, and I'd prioritize outreach to those parents.

Question 11	Have you attended functions in Austin's LGBTQ community and, if so, which?
Ted Gordon	I have attended a number of events at ALLGO.
Zachary Price	I've had the pleasure of attending the Austin Pride Parade on several occasions.
Arati Singh	I have been to informal social gatherings with LGBTQ+ friends, attend the PRIDE parade annually with my family, and attend community events such as the upcoming BRAVE Communities' Conversation on LBGTQ+ rights. It is important for my children to see the LGBTQ+ families have the same values, hopes, and dreams as we do.
Carmen Tilton	In addition to walking in the Austin Pride Parade, I have also been the primary policy analyst for Sen. Wendy Davis and Sen. Carlos Uresti to meet with Equality Texas and likeminded constituents during advocacy days at the Texas Capitol. When traumatizing, stigmatizing, or sensitive bills were being discussed in the Texas Capitol, I always made sure to communicate out that our office would be a safe and welcome space for anyone who needed a reprieve.