



## Mayoral Candidates Respond to The Kids Agenda

### How will you, as Mayor, make Philadelphia the prime destination for the best teachers in the country?

#### HELEN GYM

Teachers deserve to be treated as experts in creating safe, healthy school environments – whether it’s modernizing schools district-wide to make every classroom a safe place to learn or guaranteeing safe passage to and from school. I will ensure that my administration works with teachers to fix hard problems, treating them as assets – not adversaries. My long history of working with teacher and dedication to ensuring that they have a voice at the table in the next mayoral administration is why she earned the endorsement of the city’s teachers’ union.

I am the only mayoral candidate with a real plan to fully remediate, renovate, and modernize our school buildings so that teachers have a safe place to work. I will ensure the District dedicates \$4 billion for a Green New Deal to transform Philadelphia schools over her first term. It will be a transformative start to bringing Philadelphia’s school facilities into the 21st Century. For far too long, the School District’s facilities planning process has been developed behind closed doors, with little oversight and input. Rather than allowing leaders to work in silos, I will bring together leaders who will forge a path through open communication, and joint planning and leadership. This coalition will include the Mayor, City Council, Superintendent of Schools, School District Chief Operating Officer, City Department of Planning and Development, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Public Property, building trades leaders, environmental leaders, teachers, principals, maintenance workers, parents, caregivers, and community leaders.

I will ensure that working with communities and having authentic dialogues with families about their needs is essential to the project of leading a healthy, vibrant, and thriving Philadelphia. I believe that engaging teachers and communities is not just about more than just soliciting one-time feedback on already-crafted plans. It’s about who we are as a city and whether we shut the doors on families that bear the brunt of broken systems—or whether we bring everyone to the table to lift our young people up and make Philly the city that it can and should be.

#### CHERELLE PARKER

From early childhood learning to high school instruction, we will have a chance to re-examine and fund how our kids learn to better prepare them for their lives after high school: whether that is learning a trade, going into a specialty field, or to college.

Philadelphia students need to be prepared for a modern economy, but Philadelphia’s public school system is stuck in the past. Elementary schools are open for 6 hours and 39 minutes a day – sometimes not beginning until 9 am. The short school day means that kids miss out on extra curricular activities like language, art, music, sports, coding, and the kinds of enrichment that lead to a strong educational foundation, college scholarships, and a better future. Schools should also be places where children learn the fundamentals like cooking and balancing a checkbook, and also topics such as getting an introduction to entrepreneurship – all without taking time away from the necessary basics of education.

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# How will you, as Mayor, make Philadelphia the prime destination for the best teachers in the country?

The Parker Plan for Education will transform how we think about public schooling, and will be paid for by leveraging existing funding, with new state and city funding, Cherelle will make Philadelphia a national leader in public education.

## **REBECCA RHYNHART**

Teachers want good benefits, fair wages, and sustainable working conditions. I will appoint a school board that respects teachers, will ensure their contract is honored and will negotiate the most rewarding contract that is affordable to the School District of Philadelphia. I hear complaints from teachers and school-based staff of waste, especially in purchasing ineffective "programs" and consultants. They also complain that excessive paperwork leaves them frustrated and exhausted but does not foster learning for their students or make them more effective teachers.

I will direct my school board to make sure teachers can focus on planning and executing lessons. That will attract the best candidates – either homegrown or from other states. Also, I will expand opportunities for Paraprofessionals to become teachers. In the SDP, most Paras are Black and brown women from Philadelphia neighborhoods. These women will make some of the best teachers for our kids. Research shows that all students benefit from having a Black teacher, and kids deserve to see someone who looks like them leading classrooms. Hard-working Paras who choose to become teachers have earned our respect and deserve assistance in quickly getting their degrees and certifications. The solution to the teacher crisis is right here in Philly.

**A Note from The Kids Campaign:** Responses are as of March 27, 2023. Warren Bloom Sr., Amen Brown, Jeff Brown, Allan Domb, and David Oh did not respond to the candidate questionnaire. James DeLeon responded late and did not directly respond to each and every question.