



## **PFT Candidate Questionnaire**

The following information was submitted to the PFT by the following candidate running for office in the May 2019 Primary Election




**Candidate Name:** Darrell Clarke

**Party Affiliation:** Democrat

**Office Sought:** City Council, 5th District, incumbent

## Legislative Priorities

PFT Members have recently participated in a survey of their legislative priorities. We used the survey to formulate our legislative agenda for 2019. Please respond to areas of concern for PFT members, and comment on your experience/abilities addressing some of top issues.

On a 1-5 scale (5 being the most important), how important are the following issues to you as a candidate? In the comments, please identify any/all legislative solutions that you believe would address the issue. 

### Investment in School Facilities Funding \*

How significant do you believe the \$5B in deferred maintenance for school facilities is? How central of a part of your candidacy/position in office will this issue be?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Strongly agree and commit

### Comments on Facilities Funding:

I have worked with state and local legislatures to secure funding increases for the School District of Philadelphia since 2012 as Council President. I have also tasked the Philadelphia Energy Authority, which was created following a resolution I introduced, to work with SDP officials on energy efficiency upgrades using outside financing, so that SDP's capital funds may be used for priority projects.

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### Do you support a City moratorium on charter schools? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Strongly agree and commit

## Comment on city wide ability to implement increased charter oversight and/or ability to implement a charter school moratorium:

I encourage the Board of Education to exercise discretion in support of the District's long-term solvency. Reducing the number of charter schools and reforming the state charter laws are absolutely necessary to this effort.

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## Are you in favor of modifying the 10 year tax abatement? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
No, should stay as is	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Yes, absolutely needs to be modified

## Comments on your vision for the 10 year tax abatement:

I have previously worked on legislation to reform the property tax abatement. Failure to secure sufficient votes for final passage is among my biggest disappointments in my time on Council. No other big city offers such a generous subsidy to developers and wealthy homebuyers, and the data are clear that the City of Philadelphia should not continue to do so.

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## Are you in favor of modifying the corporate tax structure so that wealthier businesses and individuals increase their contributions? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
No, should stay as is	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Yes, absolutely needs to be modified

## Comments on your vision for taxes:

The City has limited authority over state and corporate tax structure, but I absolutely support reform at those levels, in addition to supporting whatever municipal tax reforms may be enacted within the bound of the law. Ultimately, the need for a progressive tax structure is a national one, and municipal leaders should advocate forcefully for reform.

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How important is it for you to find ways to reduce class size? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Critical

Comments:

I generally defer to school leaders and educators on classroom matters. If this ultimately is about staffing and resources, I am aware that the District requires far more to accomplish its goals than it currently anticipates over the next five years, and I take responsibility as a city legislator for helping to secure those resources.

How important is it for you to find ways to increase support personnel? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

Comments:

I am particularly concerned about violence and disruptive behaviors in less resourced schools in the 5th district. Principals tell me they need more behavioral health personnel and I believe them. I called on universities and colleges in Philadelphia to find ways to support public schools with staffing, which several, including Temple University, are doing through community schools. However, I continue to believe that our colleges, universities, and hospitals can do more to support public schools.

How important is it for you to improve access to services for students with special needs? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

### Comments:

Every child should have the ability to receive an education tailored to their needs. I believe that our Congressional delegation could play a bigger role, as it is my understanding that there are a number of cases in which our schools are not meeting federal requirements for serving students with special needs.

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How important is it for you to improve access to services for students who are English Language Learners? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

### Comments:

If the city is going to welcome people from all over the world, as we should, we must ensure there are opportunities for them to become successful, including through the SDP. I am impressed by the ESL programs being offered to adults as well in community schools, and would encourage the District to scale up when feasible.

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How important is it for you to increase access to school counselors? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

### Comments:

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How important is it for you to increase access to certified school nurses? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

Comments:

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How important is it for you to increase access to social services in schools? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

Comments:

We should be doing this through community schools, which should be scaled up. I am personally frustrated by the progress being made here by the Administration.

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How important is it for you to increase access to funding for CTE programs in schools? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

Comments:

I have always believed that college is not for everyone, and that non-college graduates have a great deal to offer our communities. CTE is key to ensuring that all students are able to find a path that works for them in our schools.

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How important is it for you to increase the number of African American teachers and educators of color in our schools? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

Comments:

The falling number of black educators in our school systems is a crisis. The federal government can do a great deal to support young black educators through loan forgiveness programs. I believe the District is taking this matter seriously through recruiting efforts, and if there is a role that is appropriate for Council to play I would be eager to hear it out.

How important is it for you to protect the rights of workers to collectively bargain and for educators to have a fair contract? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

Comments:

I am proud to have worked with the PFT and to have supported their demands for a fair contract and for the return of local control. Were it not for the advocacy of PFT members the public and City Council would not be aware of the true nature of conditions in many of our schools. Obviously having the ability to speak frankly, which is protected by contract, is critical.

How important is it for you to expand the Community Schools model in Philadelphia? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Critical

## Comments:

I first proposed Community Schools for Philadelphia in 2014 and have visited the city of Cincinnati to learn from their model. I believe this the most efficient way to leverage limited resources, and I would like for the District and Administration to be more aggressive about expansion.

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**What is your vision for public education in Philadelphia, and how have you worked (either currently in office or your current position) to promote an equity agenda in Philadelphia's schools?**

When I was growing up in North Philadelphia, schools were central to the entire community -- not just students and parents. I believe that our city and neighborhoods should be centered around schools again. Our public education systems have been weakened by charters and privatizers, and there is now a caste system in American public education. Either you stand for equality and equity or you don't, in my opinion. Your neighborhood school tells the story of your neighborhood, and in too many of our neighborhoods that story isn't good. All city policies should be informed by the desire to fix that.

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**What are other legislative issues of top priority for you?**

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**Is there anything else you would like to share with PFT members about your candidacy? What are ways you see yourself working with the PFT in office? Are there other items on our platform that you believe will be significant in your work?**

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