



Solidarity and Sustainability

Preamble to the Platform of the Democratic Party of Santa Barbara County

“In our personal ambitions we are individualists. But in our seeking for economic and political progress as a nation, we all go up or else all go down as one people.”

- *Franklin Delano Roosevelt*

“Nobody is free unless everybody’s free.”

- *Fannie-Lou Hamer*

As Democrats, we believe in a society and community based on **solidarity and sustainability**. We hope for a society and community united by shared values and common purpose. We believe, quite simply that our country does better when everyone does better, and that we need to live in harmony with our environment. These basic principles guide our actions as a political organization, and as a gathering of citizens engaged in community life.

Our aim is to empower, educate and organize citizens and residents of our county. First and foremost, this means mobilizing voters to get to the polls and elect Democrats at all levels of government. However, we know that simply electing Democrats is only a beginning. We must work to hold elected officials accountable to the values and principles of our party, through public advocacy, coalition work, as well as through our endorsement process, which asks candidates seeking our support to pledge to put our shared values into practice.

As an organization, we are committed to being open and accessible. Ours is a big-tent Party, and seeks to be a political home for concerned citizens from all walks of life, including traditional Democrats, marginalized communities, issue-oriented activists and progressive social movements. We believe that the Party must be not just a coalition of interests or an electoral operation, but also an independent, democratic tool for real people to create real change in their communities and their environment. We will advocate for this vision both here in Santa Barbara County and within the California Democratic Party.

We work at all levels, organizing for change at the international, national, state and local levels. However, as a County Party organization, we have a special responsibility to focus on the local political arena. We reject the idea that local politics is merely a technical operation. We believe strongly that local decisions are informed by values, that local budgets are moral documents and that local institutions are the most significant point of interaction between the people and their government. County and municipal-level decisions have a tremendous impact on employment, land use, environmental protection, social welfare, as well as gender, sexual and racial equality. Our goal is to foster sustainability and social justice at all levels.

This platform embodies the values and principles of the Democratic Party of Santa Barbara County. It was adopted by the Party's Central Committee on July 2nd, 2009, after discussion by the general membership of the Party.



An Environmentally Sustainable Community

The modern environmental movement began on the beaches of Santa Barbara in 1969, and we have a special responsibility as a county, to be an environmental leader and a role model for cities and counties across the country. **Environmental justice, restoration and enhancement** must be integral components of our environmental policy. We believe that government must do more than maintain the status quo. Sustainability must be our guiding principle. We seek ways to live which allow future generations to live here, too. We must sustain, not squander our resources.

Although much has been done to restore and enhance the environment under Democratic leadership in Sacramento, significant environmental degradation continues to occur locally and the environment is further threatened with continued abuses. Environmental degradation jeopardizes the beauty of our landscape, the health of our people, the vitality, and even the safety and security of our nation. We must revamp tax policies that provide direct and indirect subsidies to the most polluting and extractive industries, and we must further encourage governmental and industrial support for environmental education programs at all academic levels, including urban, low-income schools.

We strongly reconfirm our commitment to prevent any new drilling off our coasts. Santa Barbara County Democrats reject the idea that economic growth and environmental protection are opposing interests, and believe instead that we must adopt a sound and progressive energy policy that will create jobs now and into the future through research and industrial development of non-fossil fuels, including the adoption of sustained yield approaches to the development of agricultural resources.

To that end, we call for the following policies and principles:

- **Clean Energy & Energy Independence** - We support initiatives for environmental enhancement that promote clean energy based on a foundation of non-petroleum, renewable, sustainable sources, with a goal of energy independence. This may be achieved by providing tax incentives and subsidies for alternative energies such as solar, wind, tidal, and geothermal, establishing a renewable energy portfolio standard for local private utilities, and establishing a public renewable energy utility. We encourage the reduction of energy consumption and the use of energy efficient products and practices.

- **California Coast** – We support strengthening California's pioneering coastal protection program by revising outdated local coastal programs, implementing the State's polluted runoff protection plan, and preserving the integrity of the coastal act by defending the California Coastal Commission and the process for appointment of coastal commissioners. We call for the phasing out all offshore oil and gas drilling along the California Coast. We must establish and enforce marine protected areas to restore and protect coastal fish species. Coastal public access and recreational opportunities should be expanded by additional funding to develop, open, operate and maintain new coastal public access, the acquisition of coastal parklands and development of the California Coastal trail. We must protect and restore coastal wetlands, rivers, streams and other environmentally sensitive habitat areas. The County should continue to support the work of BEACON (Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment) in focusing on coastal erosion, beach nourishment, and clean oceans. We must also support the clean up of toxic hot spots.
- **Natural Resources.** - The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is the major legal tool for protecting California's environment. We support full implementation and enforcement of CEQA principles, in order to protect the state's natural and cultural resources, including historical and archaeological sites, and strongly oppose efforts to undermine it through legislation or regulation.
- **Ecology and Industry** – We encourage industry to develop life enhancing, rather than life destroying, products that do not deplete our resources. In order to reduce the use of water, land and fertilizers, we support the development of alternative methods for producing paper, clothing, food and building supplies. We must also encourage the replacement of environmentally and occupationally harmful technologies with clean production systems. Situate high voltage transformers and high voltage power lines far away from schools, libraries, public playgrounds and residential neighborhoods.
- **Plastic Bag Ordinance** – In order to reduce negative environmental impacts, litter problems and recycling issues related to plastic bags, we call for a Plastic Bag Ordinance banning the distribution of non-biodegradable plastic carryout bags, and encouraging supermarkets, retail pharmacy chains, and other retailers to provide their customers with either biodegradable carryout bags or reusable bags made from cloth or from durable plastic.
- **Open Space Preservation-** Overdevelopment threatens not only our quality of life, but also the irreplaceable natural treasures which make our area among the most geologically and biologically diverse in the nation. Urban growth boundaries, infill, transfers of development rights and the inclusion of open space within population centers must be guiding principles of all levels of local planning.
- **Agriculture** - Agricultural production is a main economic engine of SB County. In addition to its economic importance, agriculture represents, in some ways, “the highest and best use of our land,” producing food for our population. Changing the use of agricultural land for other purposes should be done only with the utmost caution and after maximum public debate.



Housing, Transportation and Community Development

Santa Barbara County Democrats believe that the common search for shelter, home, and a broader human community is a universal drive that should remind us that this question cannot be left to the whims of the real estate market. **Housing, transportation, and community development form a nexus** at which every major issue of economic inequality, educational disparity, racial and class segregation, and environmentally-friendly development come together.

When housing values rise so high that working people and their families cannot afford to live close to where they work, the demand for transportation resources and the resulting strain on our transportation network increases; as a result, the environment is degraded by ever-expanding sprawl and increased emissions from commuters, the high cost of gasoline and the hours lost to commuting exact a further burden on working people and their families, and the outward search for affordable housing continues to spiral outwards, until the fabric of our communities can no longer stretch. When there is affordable housing close to where people work, communities become more economically and racially diverse, the forces that lead to sprawl are counter-acted, open spaces are preserved, emissions decrease, and people have more time to build stronger families and stronger communities.

Housing

In order to build a pathway to a more socially and environmentally sustainable community, we need more affordable housing in Santa Barbara County. Affordable housing development should respect our County's environmental and agricultural resources. Planning should be comprehensive and geared toward providing housing linked with transportation so as to minimize both pollution and sprawl, and "green building" should be required.

We believe that government should be proactive in keeping people housed. This can be done through:

- Preventing predatory lending.
- Providing protections for renters and encouraging the building of rental housing.
- Providing emergency shelter that rapidly re-houses all people losing their housing or who are homeless and want permanent housing.
- Providing very low-income housing with supportive services necessary to address homelessness in our community.
- Encouraging building with materials that are fireproof and earthquake-proof.
- Enabling people to live and work in the same community.
- Promoting the use of mixed-use buildings with businesses and affordable housing.
- Ensuring that in-lieu fees are used specifically to develop affordable housing instead of general fund support.
- Supporting the work of the City and County Housing Authorities in providing public and non-profit housing.
- Supporting experiments in cooperatively-financed housing, and exploring state and federal funding for such initiatives.
- Developing programs to make foreclosed homes available to low and moderate income residents.
- Encouraging housing developments which include recreational areas on or very near the project.
- The exploration, by cities and the county, of establishing rental assistance programs to help offset the high cost of housing in Santa Barbara County.

Transportation

Transportation infrastructure must serve pedestrians, transit-riders, bicyclists, and drivers. However, sound transportation planning should reduce automobile dependence, congestion, pollution and the use of non-renewable energy. This means focusing resources on mass transit, pedestrian and bike travel.

Public transit should be affordable, accessible, and convenient. We believe:

- Local governments should be encouraged and supported in working together to find regional solutions to transportation issues.

- Bus service must be expanded in Santa Barbara County for both transit-dependent people and choice ridership. This means constructing more express services between large population centers, and more local services to give residents alternatives to car travel in their own communities.
- Public transportation works best when fees are affordable for all members of the community. To that end, we support capping general ridership fees at the cost of inflation, and the establishment of a program of free bus passes to support seniors on limited incomes (with or without health concerns), disabled residents and the working poor and their families, in order to enhance their ability to travel freely and enjoy a quality lifestyle.
- Every new housing development must have a transportation element in it and when possible, housing should be built along transportation corridors.
- People should be able to walk safely in neighborhoods. Planning should emphasize complete streets that include dedicated bike paths with adequate lighting.
- Employers should be encouraged to provide incentives for employees using public transportation.
- Local government should work hard for a system of affordable high-speed rail linked with commuter trains, including routes from Santa Barbara to Ventura, LA to San Francisco, and from Santa Barbara to LAX Airport. Parking and buses should be available to rail passengers.

Community Development

If we focus solely on the bricks and mortar questions of housing and transportation, we will only move half-way towards our goal of a high-road strategy for development. We must do more than building houses and transportation facilities; we must work to build the human resources that are the foundations of healthy communities. To that end, the Democratic Party of Santa Barbara County supports increased funding for Human Services Programs and Community Development Grants. These funds support important services that provide housing, health, transportation, education, employment, employment training and recreation to our community.



A Socially Just Local Economy

As Democrats, we believe that economic policy should be driven by the principle of solidarity- the understanding that **we are all in the same boat**. We believe that economic policy should be driven by the understanding that we have a shared responsibility and interest in protecting and increasing the economic well being and vitality of all segments of our society. While Santa Barbara is famous for its high-profile wealth, we know that ours is a middle-class community, and is dependent on the hard work of thousands of low-wage workers who are grossly underrepresented in policy and government. Local economic policy should reflect this reality, and focus on supporting the economy from the ground up.

This means adopting policies which promote decent wages, rights on the job, investment in public services, a strong social safety net and high employment rates. For too long we have suffered under the orthodoxy of low wages, artificially low taxes and a fiscal and tax policy which shelters the ultra-wealthy and overburdens the middle class. We believe fundamentally that prosperity begets prosperity, but only when it is broadly shared. This idea is good for working people and good for business. We believe in a **diverse local economy** that encourages economic growth in all sectors-including agriculture and industry, aerospace and information technology, entertainment and education, in addition to the traditionally strong service and hospitality industries. A diverse economy is more secure and sustainable over the long run, and attracts and retains a more vibrant and varied population.

Together with sound economic policy, **unions are the most effective tools for ensuring a fair share for working people**, and for democratizing the workplace. We support the right of any worker to organize and join unions, and view the labor movement and its allies as crucial partners in building the just local economy we envision. Contrary to decades of anti-union rhetoric, the labor movement is not a “special interest”, and we reject cynical attempts to pit one group of workers against another.

This shared vision of a high-road economy includes the following:

- Tax and zoning policy that spurs the creation of high-wage, environmentally responsible jobs.
- Living wage laws at the city and county levels.
- Efficient, affordable public transportation, and well maintained infrastructure.
- Education and social policy that opens doors of opportunity to marginalized youth to gain skills and access to jobs.
- Elected officials who work in good faith with public employee unions to secure fair contracts.
- The broad use of Project Labor Agreements on construction projects.
- Policies and practices that favor local businesses and good employers over low-wage, corporate chains.
- Ongoing dialog and cooperation with partners like the Tri-Counties Central Labor Council, PUEBLO and SBCAN to advocate for working people.
- Policies that attract and support members of the “creative class”, a crucial economic and cultural engine.
- The elimination of exploitation of immigrant workers, and an end to the use of local agencies in Federal immigration law enforcement.
- Balanced budgets and fiscal responsibility via progressive revenue enhancement and increased efficiency, not regressive taxation or recessionary job cuts.



Effective and Accountable Government

As Democrats, we believe in the responsibility of government to, in the words of Robert F. Kennedy, "to tame the savageness of man and to make gentle the life of this world." Our commitment to the cause of public activism brings with it a special responsibility to ensure that government remains the possession of the sovereign people. To that end, we believe that government must be **open, accountable, responsive, and transparent** at all levels. In order to be open, **government must be especially attentive to the voices of the least powerful** and most disenfranchised communities, actively seeking out their opinion and empowering them to take action on their own.

In order to be accountable, **all communities in Santa Barbara County should have local as well as countywide elected offices responsible for basic government.** Without the power of the franchise to reward or punish public officials for their performance, certain unincorporated communities in Santa Barbara County have no direct means of making their will known on important issues of community development, public amenities, and access to vitally important services and utilities.

In order to be transparent, **we must embrace not merely the form but also the spirit of clean elections.** To that end, we must ensure that local and county-wide elections have public funding for all elected offices.

To achieve these ends, we call for the following reforms:

- We support efforts toward enfranchisement of residents in unincorporated areas, including Isla Vista, by developing some form of elected local government, either as incorporated cities or towns, planning districts, or neighborhood councils.
- City councils in incorporated areas should be expanded, in order to achieve a better ratio of voters per representative, so that people can know and be familiar with their local representatives. City council elections should be designed to empower neighborhoods and increase levels of diversity.
- A clean elections fund should be established for county-wide and local elections, so that the impact of small donations can be multiplied with public matching funds, freeing up candidates to spend more time campaigning and less time raising money.

- In order to increase voter turnout and participation in the political process, Santa Barbara County should move towards a system that embraces same-day registration, early voting, and vote-by-mail. Given the wide swings in voter turnout between presidential and off-year elections, city elections should be consolidated with statewide or county elections whenever possible.



Health Care and Social Welfare At the Local Level

Health Care

As Democrats, we believe that health care is a right, not a privilege. Health care belongs to all of us, not solely as citizens of a commonwealth, but also as common members of humanity. When people are in need of healing, it is our responsibility to see that they have it - regardless of ability to pay.

In that spirit, we call upon all members of the Santa Barbara County Democratic Party to dedicate themselves to the cause of universal health care for all. Our fight must be both on the federal and state levels, and in our own community. The necessity of fighting locally as well as nationally stems from the reality that our health care system stands or falls on local networks of care. When people seek healing, the first place they turn to are the local hospitals, health clinics, and doctor's offices throughout Santa Barbara County.

The need for health care is dire and Santa Barbara County's record is worse. Even before the recent downturn, Santa Barbara County already exceeded the statewide average with 29.5% of our people uninsured, shamefully including 16% of all children. As Democrats, we pledge ourselves to fulfill our common obligation to the sick: first, to see that no harm is done, by defeating attempts to cut holes in the safety net; and second, to reform our local health care system so that Santa Barbara County's record on health care can be a source of pride, not shame.

To this end, we call for the following

- Health Care Reserve Budgeting – in devising future budgets, the Board of Supervisors and City Councils (as appropriate) should designate a reserve fund to prevent declines in health care and mental health services funding in recessions, when demand increases as people lose coverage.
- Local Health Care Ordinance – a County-wide ordinance should be established, along the lines of San Francisco's Health Security Ordinance, empowering the County Health Author-

ity to provide comprehensive health services and insurance to the uninsured, and requiring local businesses with 20 or more workers to either provide health insurance to their workers or pay into a health care fund that would finance the CHA's efforts .

- Expanded Health Care Clinics – local health care clinics provide medical care to underserved communities and community residents with limited mobility throughout the county. The health care reserve should be used to protect funds during recessions, lower the caseload for doctors, nurses, technicians, physical therapists, and other health care workers, expand the number of clinics to serve locations currently without clinics, extend hours of business, and improve pay for medical service and home care workers.

Social Welfare

As the heirs of Franklin Roosevelt, Santa Barbara Democrats hold true to the proposition that “*the test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have little.*” Yet for a generation, California has failed to live up to this challenge. Even before the recession, Santa Barbara County was already a community divided by disturbingly high levels of economic inequality: in a county with nearly twenty thousand million-dollar houses, 14.3% of Santa Barbara County residents live in poverty, and a full third of us occupy the ranks of the near poor. As the current recession worsens, the gap between the rich and the rest will only grow.

As people across our community feel the effects of a recession, their first and last line of defense against destitution are our local social services. It is precisely at times like the present, when recession forces mass layoffs and the resulting loss of benefits and salaries that the need for an active and caring government is most clear. What is needed now is more spending, to provide adequate support for all who need it, pump purchasing power back into our local economies, and to put the unemployed back to work.

As Democrats, we pledge ourselves to fight back against social service cuts that target the poor, the unemployed, the elderly, the disabled, and children in need. To go beyond this defensive aim, we call for the following:

- Social Welfare & Job Bank Reserve Budgeting – in devising future budgets, the County Board of Supervisors and city councils should designate a reserve fund, similar to the health care fund proposed above, to prevent declines in social services, and to fund public works and job programs during recessions, when the need for social services and jobs expands.



Organizing for Democratic Victories Countywide

As Democrats, we believe that politics is not a spectator sport. The majority of our work is on-the-ground grassroots organizing throughout Santa Barbara County. This work is important for electing Democratic candidates, but also for fostering a vibrant, energetic civil society. Precinct-level organizing is a basic element of the democratic process: encouraging neighbors to talk with one another about issues of importance is a progressive goal in-and-of itself. We help to deepen our democracy by creating an organization that can train, motivate and materially support citizens who decide to run for public office. At the local level, such organizations provide access to the political arena for ordinary people. Without them, local politics tends to be dominated by the well-connected and the affluent.

Organization also allows activists the ability to be more than foot soldiers for candidates and elected officials. We believe that the relationship between activists and the candidates they help elect should be one of mutuality. The grassroots must have a role in the formation and implementation of policy. Political parties, rather than candidate-based election organizations foster this two-way relationship.

Our goal is to build a sustainable, accessible organization from the neighborhood level up. In order to further these goals, our organizing strategy has four basic components:

- Establishing a full program of candidate recruitment & development.
- Maintaining ongoing effort for voter registration & education.
- Encouraging the growth of strong Democratic clubs.
- Enacting a robust field plan led by the Democratic Party.

Candidate Recruitment & Development

- The Party will encourage and recruit experienced, respected, qualified Democrats to apply for appointments to County and City Boards, Commissions and Committees.

- We will also research makeup of local governmental bodies, and strategically plan to elect Democrats to a certain number of seats.
- We will also identify and develop Democratic candidates to potentially serve on Board of Supervisors, City Councils, School Boards and Special Districts.
- The Party will make it a priority to provide training for prospective candidates far before election season, explaining the ins and outs of campaign finance, fundraising, etc.
- We will also identify opportunities for Democrats to get involved in local non-political organizations, such as PTA's, non-profit boards, and community groups.
- The Party will also provide additional support for candidates and elected officials.

Voter Registration & Education

- It shall be the policy of the Party to engage in voter registration drives, year round.
- We will identify citizenship classes, new citizen ceremonies, new residents to the area, and other target groups to register as first-time Democrats.
- The Party will systematically target geographic areas that are heavily Republican or Decline to State to increase Democratic registration especially among non-registered population.
- Furthermore, we will identify registration barriers in low voter registration areas and create a plan to break down barriers and implement action to increase voter registration.
- We will also Increase and maintain visibility in the community with participation in community festivals and events.
- The Party will produce and distribute informational materials on the party's policy positions and activities and materials that explain the difference between a measure, candidate, etc.

Strong Democratic Clubs

- The Party will research what areas or communities in our county could benefit from a Democratic club, and encourage their development, making sure that clubs have a clear sense of their mission and whom they serve.
- The Party will also support existing clubs, and persuade loosely affiliated groups, with trainings and resources.
- The Party will also provide clubs with databases of their membership target groups. (i.e. all Santa Maria Valley Democrats to Santa Maria club, all voters 35 and under for Young Democrats chapter).

- We will also support and encourage clubs to engage in policy debate and advocacy, host forums and programs in the community.

Robust Field Plan Led by Democratic Party

- The Party will maintain and grow a database of Democratic volunteers, who we can engage at all times, not just in election seasons.
- Furthermore, we will update and maintain county voter file with information acquired in the course of precinct walks, phone banking, and other contacts.
- The Party will build and sustain precinct captain operation in all precincts in the county.
- The Party will also produce campaign materials, flyers and leaflets for every election.
- While candidates must run their individual campaigns on their own terms, the Santa Barbara County Democratic Party will act as the coordinating organization in election seasons for united Democratic field campaigns, with the goal of electing our endorsed candidates.
- The Party will execute GOTV plans with focuses on vote-by-mail voters, targeted precincts, targeted door hangers and phone calls, and Election Day door knocking operation.
- The Party is committed to continuing to ensure fair elections. To that end, we support the CDP's "Promote, Protect the Vote" program and other programs intended to ensure that every eligible voter is given the opportunity to vote, and that all eligible votes are counted.



Civil Rights and Equality

As Democrats, we believe in the protection of civil rights and equality for all in our community. In particular we see far too many segments of our population who continue to suffer second class status and suffer a violation of basic rights. We must do better in providing equal justice before the law, equal access to vital services, equal opportunity in education, housing, and employment, and equal treatment by our government of all people, including women and LGBTQIA individuals, undocumented workers and people caught in our criminal justice system. People and women have the right to full access to reproductive health information and the legal right to seek to terminate a pregnancy if they so choose. We stand firmly behind *Roe v. Wade* as one of the cornerstones to women's equality in our nation and our county. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual people have the right to live their lives in peace and with dignity, and to be treated fairly and equally before the law, in a community where discrimination based on sexual orientation, identity, and expression is not tolerated.

The method in which laws are unfairly enforced contributes to institutional racism and the warehousing of men, and in increasing numbers, women of color. The system is broken on so many levels that we must seek out alternatives that truly promote justice and fairness for all involved. As an extremely vulnerable population, undocumented workers must be treated humanely, as the law dictates, and their families protected from harassment.

To achieve these goals, we support the following policies and initiatives:

Woman's Right to Choose

- No Local government agency will express formal opposition to a woman's right to choose or express formal opposition to organizations that provide comprehensive family planning services.
- Crimes committed against women and healthcare providers must be treated as hate crimes when appropriate and prosecuted as such.

- Public educational institutions provide the names of such agencies such as Planned Parenthood when teaching sex education or whenever family planning organizations are listed as resources for young women.
- Educational and preventative programs to protect women from sexual and domestic violence.
- Educational support services to women with dependent children in order to increase parenting and job skills.
- Expanded workplace rights associated with pregnancy, childcare, and emergency family leave.
- Unrestricted access to affordable, quality, and culturally appropriate health and reproductive services without requiring guardian, judicial, parental, or spousal consent or notification.

LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual) Rights

- Local school boards should work to ensure that schools should be accessible and safe environments for gay, lesbian and gender-non-conforming youth.
- County and local law enforcement must make action against violent hate crimes, be they motivated by homophobia or racism, a priority for prevention and enforcement efforts.
- The unqualified right to legal marriage for the LGBTQIA community.

Criminal Justice

- The establishment of programs such as restorative justice programs which help the accused face up to the consequences of their actions without being caught up in the legal system. This is especially important in juvenile cases.
- Educational services to be provided to victims so they understand the part they would play in the restorative justice plan.
- Law enforcement agencies to provide ongoing training to eliminate profiling and tagging which only exacerbates the problem of mass criminalization.
- Law enforcement personnel to become familiar with restorative justice programs and begin the training necessary for their successful implementation.
- An end to the sentencing of children as adults in our county in all cases.
- An end to the use of mandatory minimums in sentencing, and the abolition of overly punitive prison sentences for minor drug convictions.

- The strict enforcement of handgun and automatic weapons control laws.
- The expansion of drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, counseling, and job placement programs that are free and freely available to assist released individuals in their transition back to public life.
- Increased funding for the Public Defender's Office.

Immigrants Rights

- An end to the use of Santa Barbara County and local law enforcement as agents of the Federal government in immigration cases.
- No government support for vigilante groups, which encourages them to participate in the enforcement of immigration laws.
- Firm enforcement of the legal procedures regarding warrants and due process, which will prevent the wholesale round up of workers in our county and guard against discrimination against both citizens and legal residents.
- All local human rights organizations should provide information on immigrant rights and recommended procedures as specified by the National Immigration Law Center.
- Local agencies and/or governments must develop emergency procedures for those left behind when raids do occur. Children's welfare should be a top priority.

Native American Treaties and Tribes

- We believe in building a society in which people of all heritages enjoy respect, health and economic security. We will support the constitutional right of Native Americans and the sovereign rights of Indian nations as well as the tribal sovereignty and well-established rights and jurisdictions of California Native/Indian nations.



High Quality Education for All

As Democrats, we believe that free, universal, high-quality public education is a human right, as well as a necessary condition for democracy. We know that we are far from this crucial goal. Our public schools are drastically underfunded, our teachers are undervalued, and the dream of an integrated education system continues to lie just beyond reach.

The national policy of “No Child Left Behind” has deformed curricula, while state and local budget crises have drastically undermined the quality of education at all levels. Teachers are the cornerstone of our education system. We reject the characterization of teachers in general and teacher’s unions specifically as a “special interest”, and are proud to stand alongside the Santa Barbara Teacher’s Association in working to improve and expand education for all.

Our vision of education starts with **free universal pre-school for all Santa Barbara County children**. It continues with elementary education that focuses on well-rounded curricula, including art, music and experiential learning in every County school district. High school education should include opportunities for both academic and vocational training and should emphasize a commitment to community service. All of this means **keeping student-to-teacher ratios low and ensuring educational opportunities** that decrease the achievement gap for English language learners and other students with special needs.

While we are supportive of innovative experiments in educational strategies and support local control, we believe that schools should be integrated economically and ethnically and provide a quality education for all. The issue of inter-district and intra-district transfers should be approached carefully, as we are in danger of continuing the educational segregation we have worked hard as a society to overcome. The goal of integrated education is also threatened by rigid English-only policies, and we call for the return of bilingual education.

Schools themselves must be built around progressive values. Green design guidelines should be followed in all school construction, and we should ensure that schools are safe environments, free of

physical and health threats. Socially, schools should be accessible and safe environments for all students, including gay, lesbian and gender-non-conforming youth. School food should be healthy and nutritious, and, where possible, locally-grown. Corporate advertisement of all kinds must be eliminated from our schools.

Education does not end with K-12. Community Colleges play a crucial role in preparing young people for University, providing vocational training as well as serving as a major source of life-long learning and cultural development. Santa Barbara County is blessed with two fantastic Community Colleges, and we support their continued success and expansion. To accomplish these goals, we call on Santa Barbara County school districts to:

- Provide educational opportunities of the highest caliber at minimal personal expense that enables members of the Santa Barbara County community to participate in the global economy.
- Ensure that students with exceptional needs be educated in the most appropriate placement with full funding provided.
- Offer high school graduation requirements that are well-balanced and broad-based, including programs that include both academic and vocational programs that complement each other;
- Provide schools that are safe environments that are free of physical and health risks, and free from toxins and carcinogens.
- Establish and extend age-appropriate, non-discriminatory sex education.
- Promote community participation as in mentoring and adult literacy programs.
- Ensure that decision making policies are open to the public.
- Work to develop policies that more equitably distribute community funds raised by schools to supplement public support.
- Subsidize the cost of AP testing at high schools for students in need.
- Expand transitional programs for community entry when special education students reach adulthood.