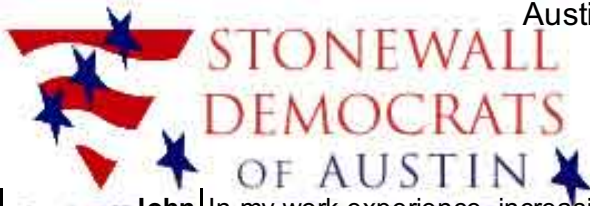


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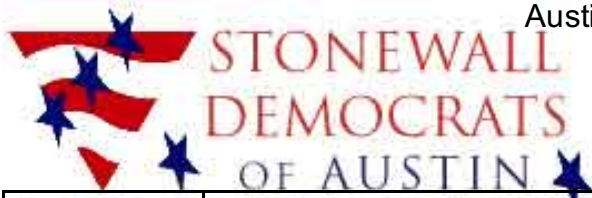
<p>Question 1</p>	<p>Please tell us why you are seeking the endorsement of SDA. Do you consider yourself to be a Democrat? Do you have a history of involvement in Democratic politics and/or LGBTQIA+ issues? If so please briefly describe this history.</p>
<p>John McKiernan-Gonzalez</p>	<p>As a kid who got moved from NY to Colombia to Mexico and then the U.S., you learn to look for communities that welcome you, that take an interest and stand up for others as well as themselves. My outlook on the world since starting college has been shaped by LGBTQ faculty and LGBTQ activism (I am an Oberlin grad, 1991). Inspired by ACT-Up, after graduation I committed to working in HIV in public health work in Chicago as THE social justice career, transitioning to the history of medicine for graduate school (paid less and less glamorous). I have voted and volunteered in all the presidential elections since 1988, especially Michigan and Florida. I attended the 1987 and 1991 National Gay Rights March in DC. I have supported gender-inclusive teaching and research and attended the first national gay history conference in Chicago. Deciding to run has connected me to a world of dedicated advocates, young and experienced, who have experienced hard-won victories, vast cultural shifts and the ongoing homophobia and discrimination people face everyday. Getting an endorsement from Stonewall Democrats would be a deep honor, as members and candidates endorsed by this organization have been pushing the Democratic Party to the left, to expand the politics of the possible on matters of sexuality, labor, family and the environment for decades.</p>
<p>Question 2</p>	<p>Do you believe LGBTQIA+ individuals should be protected against discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression?</p>



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<p>John McKiernan- Gonzalez</p>	<p>In my work experience, increasing access to some, increases access for all. According to Justice Gorsuch in Bostock v. Clayton County, the 1964 civil rights act also meant workplace decisions based on homophobia were subject to federal scrutiny because the act banned discrimination based on sex, because homophobic attitudes connected to gendered ideas about how men and women were meant to act. This means that people in the LGBTQIA community can receive the same protections against discrimination women have faced since 1964. I am glad that it “only” took a half a century to have the supreme court state that sex discrimination also includes LGBTQIA communities. Years of struggle, legal strategy and queer interventions in popular culture helped make this shift in the reading of the Civil Rights Act. Now, given that women have less control over their own bodies, Latinas only earn 59 cents on the dollar compared to cis white men, and the family-based homophobia has been marked as a triggering factor for the majority of homeless teens, it is time for our institutions to go beyond the language of the supreme court to demonstrate that wide varieties of gender expression and sexual orientation are and should be part of workplace norms. yes, institutions should not allow administrators or employees to use their hostile attitudes toward particular kinds of gender expression and sexual orientations to shape workplace conditions and promotion possibilities. LGBTQIA employees are and should be protected against racial discrimination, discrimination based on national origin and discrimination based on language, given that there LGBTQIA employees live their work and home lives in a variety of stigmatized communities across the United States.</p>
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<p>Question 3</p>	<p>Do you believe that public schools should institute rules and policies to prohibit harassment and discrimination against LGBTQIA+ students?</p>
<p>John McKiernan- Gonzalez</p>	<p>Staff at public schools - in order to include students whose gender expressions may challenge established gender norms – need to go beyond prohibiting harassment and start modeling a variety of queer-friendly ways of being in the world. Going beyond the mere prohibition of homophobic behavior, schools need to give staff the space to express and model a variety of ways of being adult in the world. So, yes, Austin ISD needs to establishing policies to prohibit harassment. They also need to establish a culture and a policy that encourages free expression and dissent and helps the district move away from the culture of retaliation that everyone I know who works and experiences Austin ISD has experienced. In all of these cases, providing policies that protect staff, substitutes, teachers and admins when they speak out will also help prohibit gender and sex-based discrimination.</p>

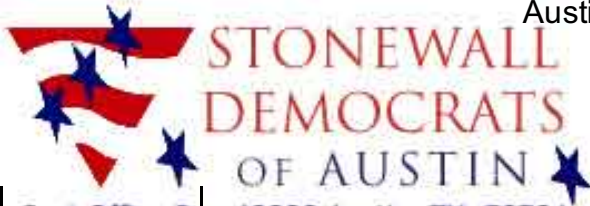


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<p>Question 4</p>	<p>Do you think the school district is doing enough to ensure equality for its LGBTQIA+ employees? For example, how would you address organizational issues such as transgender employees transitioning on the job?</p>
<p>John McKiernan-Gonzalez</p>	<p>No. I grew up under Bowers v. Hardwick, where supreme court justices like Antonin Scalia could happily make their rank bigotry part of the constitutional record. I became an adult with Don't ask, don't tell, that asked only certain people to silence their affective lives to keep their jobs. Even if Austin ISD has embraced human rights ordinances that spell out sexuality as a protected category. I will always expect heteronormative behavior and policies that will marginalize LGBTQIA communities. In general and in my experience, I have found that policies that increase access for some, increase access for all. If small things like giving staff keys to staff bathrooms, establishing a variety of semi-private intersex spaces and recognizing – when requested by specific employees undergoing transition – people's journey to their identities, these are small acts that help make an inclusive community. What is enough? I hope we can reach that day when we can all stop being watchful and programmatically inclusive.</p>

<p>Question 5</p>	<p>Are you familiar with the organization Out Youth? If elected, what would you do to help this organization and others that provide services to LGBTQIA+ youth?</p>
<p>John McKiernan-Gonzalez</p>	<p>I was 52 years old when I recall Wimberley ISD revoked the right of a PFLAG chapter to incorporate the Wimberley logo in their literature and publicity material – for the school they worked in. Today, the day after my 53rd birthday, the idea that student groups aiming to make a more inclusive atmosphere can be excluded based on uninformed perceptions of what a group does is abhorrent. Moreover, given that the vast majority of LGBTQIA youth suffer suicidal ideation, LGBTQIA teens are disproportionately represented among homeless and runaways, having a group that can help teens in this community learn forms of resilience and resistance would be really valuable to Out teens, questioning teens and other students. Of course, all groups involved in schools should pass through the kind of vetting and background checks that Austin Partners in Education provide. Other than that, yes, I would support Out Youth, Latinitas Black Lives Matter and others groups that are part of the marginalized part of the rainbow spectrum of our volatile zeitgeist.</p>

<p>Question 6</p>	<p>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 specifically benefit LGBTQIA+ students.</p>
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**John
McKiernan-
Gonzalez**

Las Vidas Trans Cuentan. That was the conclusion to my My first public statement at the Austin ISD board of trustees meeting. I went there to defend Dawson; my testimony overlapped with public testimony regarding the minimally more inclusive health education guidelines for the district. I asked for the district to be more fearless and less reticent in spending money for East of Lamar students, given their AAA credit rating. Before asking, I heard three hours of testimony by a multi-ethnic homophobic and conservative right-wing in opposition to the reforms. Most disturbing to me, many – in Spanish – claimed that the new curriculum was anti-Latino. I was the first person to stand up – in Spanish – to point out that my gay relatives were never allowed to bring their partners to dinner, that many of my teachers lived in fear that their private lives and partners might jeopardize their careers and that - in the end – Las vidas trans cuentan. As a teacher of the U.S. survey, I teach the AIDS crisis, and I am always surprised when I find out the vast majority of my 20th century history colleagues – first at UT and then in Texas State – forget to include HIV/AIDS (or the gay purges in WWII, the lavender scare in Cold War America, and only include Stonewall in their post-LBJ overview of the 1960s social movements. I ask my students consider the many varied ways people organized their sexual lives and household lives over the past 150 years, to get them to think about how recent monogamous heterosexuality became the established norm for middle-class life. I make similar moves in my Latina/o Studies classes. I like pointing out that the Briggs Initiative (Prop 6 against gay teachers in California Public schools) jumpstarted the electoral wing of Gay Pride in California. I would continue to support the expansion of pride week across the district. The organizational partnerships I have seen flourish in Dawson Elementary around Pride Week and the discussion of different family structures and ways to express love and affection are worth emulating and implementing – with buy in – across the district. Even if the Supreme Court driven by our current administration finds a way to overturn Bostock v. Clayton, I will keep reminding people that even conservative justices agreed that homophobia was caused by the same discrimination laws as the 1964