



Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats: 2021 CD39 Candidate Questionnaire

Send to ericacbid@gmail.com

Candidate Name: Briget Rein **Office Sought:** City Council Member of the 39th District
Candidate Email Address: briget.rein@icloud.com **Candidate Phone Number:** 917-825-2353
Campaign Contact Name: Jesse Conrad **Campaign Contact Phone:** 484-769-8596
Campaign Contact Email: jesse@theadvancegroup.com
Name of person filling out this questionnaire: Kanika Mirchandani, Junior Associate at The Advance Group (kanika@theadvancegroup.com)

Please answer each of the following questions to the best of your ability:

1) If elected, what would be your top priority in your first term?

- My top priority in my first term would be improving the state of the New York Public Education system. Along with that, I would enact COVID-19 relief legislation.

2) What personal and/or professional experiences do you believe make you uniquely qualified to run for Borough President? Attach resume or CV if desired.

Teacher (Pre-K, Special Ed, Cluster)

Chapter Leader PS 109K

PM staffer for UFT Cancer Hotline

PM Staffer Political Action UFT

Aide to President Weingarten

Assistant to the Political Action Director UFT

City Hall Liaison UFT

Manhattan Special Rep/Manhattan Political Action Coordinator UFT

Assistant to the Staff Director UFT

I am qualified to be the next City Council member for the 39th Council District, please take a chance on me. I want to support my community as I supported my students, educators, union and my leadership.

3) List all of your endorsements, including but not limited to elected officials, unions, political clubs and community-based organizations.

- Organization of Staff Analysts
- United Fire Officers Association
- Supreme Court Officers
- RWDSU Local 338
- IBEW Local 3
- United Federation of Teachers



- Seafarers Union
- AFT President Randi Weingarten
- Former Public Advocate Mark Green
- Congress Member Maloney
- CM Dromm
- Senator Savino
- Senator Luis Sepulvada
- Senator John Liu
- Councilmember Mark Treyger
- Councilmember Ben Kallos
- Senator Robert Jackson
- State Senator Leroy Comrie

4) What, if any, groups or industries will you not accept campaign contributions from? If any, please note specifically whose money you will not accept.

- I will not accept campaign contributions from the PBA and Charter Schools.

5) How do you propose helping NYC recover from the COVID pandemic and resulting economic recession, particularly given the projected shortfall in city revenue?

- NYC needs all the help they can get to recover from the COVID pandemic and the resulting economic recession. I would look for cost-savings within government offices and tax the rich to bring in more funds to raise up our communities.

6) What measures would you take to improve educational opportunities for all students in NYC? How do you plan to ensure that all NYC children are able to attend high-quality, integrated schools? Do you support D15's integration plan as it has been implemented? What changes, if any, would you make to the current D15 integration plan?

- Public education is the foundation of every community and in acknowledgement of that, we need to ensure our students are prepared to compete in an increasingly competitive world. As a City Council member, I will build a high school at the borders between Gowanus and 7th Ave-Park Slope, build a second high school at Carroll Gardens and Columbia Waterfront in partnership with Presbyterian Hospital, Install Dial-A-Teacher and Anti-Bullying Hotline, Implement health & social services in local schools, and create pod learning opportunities and 50/50 remote & in-person learning. I am a strong supporter of D15's integration plan as it has been implemented. Diversity is essential in a schooling environment.

7) How would you have handled the reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 academic year? How will you prepare for a second wave of this pandemic? How would you propose to ensure that the needs of highly vulnerable children with special needs, who are homeless, come from poor families, and/or live in households without adults who could aid their learning are not left further behind when remote learning has



to be relied on?

- The reopening of schools were problematic due to poor planning on behalf of the city and the DOE. There was no ability for voices to be heard, plans to be made, and supports to be given out to students. My wish is that the city would take a history lesson from this past reopening debacle. I would make sure that schools would have sufficient amounts of PPE equipment and that students, educators, and parents are given an updated inventory. There should also be ample technical supports for remote learning. I would also make sure that there is a clear understanding of CDC guidelines and ensure that all members of the school community adhere to the rules and regulations given to us. With that said, the re-opening of schools must be done with the idea of safety. This safety extends to all students, parents, and educators.

8) Do you support allowing non-citizen New York City residents to vote in City-based elections? Why or why not?

- I support allowing non-citizen New York City residents to vote in City-based elections because all the people who work and live in our cities must be able to vote in our elections. That is the way we enhance our democratic process. Along with this, we must provide support to our immigrant communities to establish their pathways to citizenship.

9) Do you support any campaign finance reforms for NYC? If so, please describe.

- As someone who is working with the CFB and following the guidelines of the CFB, we must allow citizen voice in our campaigns. Through the reformed programs of the CFB, those voices are heard.

10) Now that the State government has passed the Reproductive Health Act, what steps would you have the Council and City Hall take to increase reproductive healthcare access, including maternal healthcare, and to do so equitably?

- As a candidate, I am an active supporter of Reproductive Healthcare and Women's healthcare. I deeply support access to a safe abortion and access to birth control options. The Council and City Hall can cooperate closely with NYC organizations that provide healthcare to all, without discrimination, to increase reproductive healthcare access and make sure it is done equitably.

11) The MTA is facing a significant revenue shortfall and many parts of the city lack access to reliable public transportation. What measures would you implement and/or enforce, to promote safe, efficient, and accessible transportation options for mass transit users, pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers in Brooklyn?

- The need for better and more efficient transportation is a priority for not only myself, but our community as a hold. I plan on closing Union Street to provide more streamlined transportation. This plan will allow buses to pass through other streets, like 14th street, to get to their destinations in a timely manner. Also, we need more protected bike lines that separate bicyclists from traffic and real penaltie for people who injure or kill cyclists. Drivers need to pay attention to the road and look out for



cyclists and pedestrians. Also, I plan to increase the number of trains running and refurbish our train stations to make them ADA compliant.

12) How would you ensure fairness in employment, salary, workplace conditions, and promotion? What is your position on strengthening and increasing access to union membership? What do you think about the unionization push by City Council Staff?

- I support the labor movement and the labor force wholeheartedly.

13) How would you ensure that underserved communities receive fair and equitable treatment from city government? What policies do you support that would level the playing field for historically marginalized groups?

- I would enhance programs, such as NYCHA, Homeless Shelter systems, underprivileged youth communities, senior education, and others. Through funding and investing in these programs, we can level the playing field for historically marginalized groups in terms of income disparity. We must ensure fair and equitable treatment from city government by tolerating no discrimination/racism in our legislation and offering policies that enhance everyone's lives, instead of being exclusionary.

14) What policy and practice changes are needed for NYC government to ensure sufficient quality housing that actually is affordable for existing residents in Brooklyn neighborhoods?

- We have to assist developers to create more affordable housing units in all city-approved buildings. We must also make sure that we provide the community with listings of affordable housing units that our neighbors can apply for. We also need to tackle rent spikes. Landlords need to be able to provide affordable rent rates for folks that live in our communities.

15) What policies would you pass or enforce to ensure public housing/NYCHA repair, upkeep and security, and access to alternate housing and services when lacking essentials such as heat, gas and hot water? What is your position on "privatization" of public housing/NYCHA, and on City government sale of public housing "open areas" (outdoor seating & recreation plots) and air rights to private developers?

- We have a serious problem with NYCHA. As someone who has toured Wyckoff Gardens and Gowanus Houses, improvements must be made to the residents that live there such as the ability to have light, gas, heat, and a safe environment to live in. We must fully invest in these developments. It is also imperative that we provide voice to the residents by implementing an active, tenant program. This will allow tenants to be a part of the decision-making process in regard to their homes. We also must have definite community services provided to all NYCHA developments. That is the only way that we can give them all the best life that they deserve.

16) Given the City's Covid and post-Covid economic crisis, how would you approach your role in addressing the city's carceral system, including the plan to close Rikers?



- I would improve the mental health care system in NYC and provide support for our youth through restorative justice programs. That is the beginning of approaching the very problem of incarceration in this country. Upon the institution of these programs, we will see a reduction in the school-to-prison pipeline. We also need to provide our incarcerated community with the ability to receive higher education/GED so that they can return to society as a fully-functioning citizen. Reducing prisons, such as Rikers Island, will only benefit the good people of NYC. Overall, we need a serious reevaluation of how we handle our laws and penalties. We must do better by everyone in NYC.

16) Describe your vision for public safety in New York City? What, if any, functions would you like to see removed from the police department? What agencies assume the functions removed from the NYPD?

- We need to handle domestic disputes through appropriate social services. We need to also handle school safety through similar means (inc. restorative justice programs). If our goal is to improve the socio-emotional health of all citizens of NYC, we need to remove those functions of the NYPD and transport them to able and adequate organizations ready to take on those matters. We must provide our police with an understanding of mental health and education on how to support our citizens, without racism, bias, or discrimination, through non-violent means. Acts of violent crimes remain within police jurisdiction. We cannot have an unsafe city.

17) Do you support changes to the ULURP process and to other NYC zoning mechanisms? If so, what specific changes do you support?

- The ULURP process must include community voice. As I am facing issues with the Gowanus rezoning, a Zoom meeting does not qualify for community voice. We need to provide an education to every member of the community on what it means to accept land-use changes and improvements to our community.

18) Do you have a plan to reduce and prevent homelessness in Brooklyn and NYC? Explain your plan.

- We need to look to good examples such as WINN. WINN provides homeless children the ability to reemerge into society. This includes job training, education supports, resume building workshops, etc. Also, we must be able to assist the homeless community to find affordable housing units for them and their families. Through research and study of organizations like WINN, the city can discover new ideas of how to support our homeless community and prevent further homelessness. Opening up additional shelters does not fix the problem of homelessness, but just offers a band-aid.