Bea Fraenkel-Conrat and Gene Roh for school board

This newspaper, like some others in the Berkeley, has been displeased for some time with the drift of the Berkeley Unified School District. As a $164 million per year operation involved in the education of 50,000 children and adults, we believe it is still far from the men and women in providing quality education in an integrated setting.

We are aware that many of the problems the district faces are not necessarily of its own making, and we do not hold it accountable for all the ills in society at large.

But among the things for which we do criticize the district and its board, in general, are:

Too much, politics, too many gimmicks and too little education in basic skills.

We are also strongly critical of the new role approach taken by the district in the move toward the frequent curation of breakdowns in discipline.

In other words, as far as we are concerned, there needs to be something on the order of new directions on the school board.

There are no strong candidates running for anything like a general board position, but there are two candidates (the former school board president, Mrs. Bea Fraenkel-Conrat, and the former president of the Berkeley League of Women Voters, Mr. James Roh) on the board.

One of them — Alameda County Juvenile Probation Officer Gene Roh, would-at least bring an Asian perspective to a board which has, in our view, dealt with the Issues of American social change, concerned, integration, cultural pluralism and ethnic separation.

We do not believe in ethnic quotas, but we are supportive of the basic concept of cultural pluralism, particularly in heterogeneous, multicultural Berkeley, as long as such a concept does NOT interfere with the most important dimension of educational activity, basic skills.

There simply is no Oriental representation on the school board or in city council, the two primary policy- making boards in a city with a considerable Oriental component.

It is not. However, Gene Roh's Korean extraction which makes him a qualified candidate for the Berkeley Unified School Board of Directors.

The young county probation officer is making education in basic skills his primary campaign thrust, quite a feat in a world of cultural pluralism. He brings a background of years of work both with students and teachers and is intimately aware of what both feel.

Mrs. Bea Fraenkel-Conrat, a former president of the Berkeley League of Women Voters, has a lengthy and distinguished record of community service and involvement.

A University of California faculty member, scientist, and active researcher, she has been a member of the BUSD's Citizens Budget and Finance Committee and chairman of its subcommittee for special fiscal analysis.

Mrs. Fraenkel-Conrat offers emphasis on basic skills, solving the problems of low-achieving children and sound financial policies as her central platform plank.

We believe her presence on the board would bring some fiscal air to the decision-making body of Berkeley's major taxing jurisdiction.

A broad base of citizens supports the candidates of both Mrs. Fraenkel-Conrat and Gene Roh.

We believe these candidates represent an excellent blend of thinking and concerns needed by the school district as it faces a difficult four years.

We therefore recommend for school board Bea Fraenkel-Conrat and Gene Roh.