



**Albuquerque Public Schools
Questionnaire for Board of Education Candidates**

The Board of Education is an elected body created according to the laws of the state of New Mexico to serve as the governing board of the school district for the purpose of organizing, maintaining, and locating schools and for providing educational opportunities and services for all citizens residing within the school district.

Candidates are requested to return their questionnaire to the Board Services Office, by 5 p.m. on Friday, January 7, 2011. Mailed questionnaires must be received by Friday, January 7, 2011. Address to: Board Services Office, 2011 Board Election, APS Administration Building, 6400 Uptown Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, N.M. 88110. Questionnaires may also be faxed to 880-2575 by the deadline above. Please call the Board Services Office at 880-3737 to confirm fax arrivals, or for other information.

Personal Information

Name: Cheryl Ann Harris

[REDACTED]

Length of Residency in School District: 13 ½ years

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

cheryl4schoolboard@comcast.net (temporary for the campaign period)

Occupation: retired Area Manager, Real Estate Operations and Administrative Services, also worked four years as an Architect (not registered, completed IDP Intern program with NCARB, National Council of Arch Reg Boards)

Employer: USWEST 1966-1996 (now Qwest). Mullen Heller Architecture 2002-2006

Business Telephone: none

Business Address: na

Do you currently hold other public office?

Yes ___ No X

If yes, list office: _____

Do you have any affiliations with the Albuquerque Public Schools? Yes No _____
If yes, what are your affiliations? **I volunteer in the Whittier Elementary School 2 to 4 hours per week helping the librarian**

Are you available to attend Board meetings the first and third Wednesday nights of the month at 5 p.m.? Yes No _____

Additionally, there are four board committees that meet twice a month at 7:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. or 5 p.m. Are you available to attend committee meetings? Yes No _____
If no, please explain why: _____

Periodically, the Board must meet during daytime hours for Board meetings, budget hearings, and luncheons. Are you available during daytime hours for these activities?
Yes No _____
If no, please explain why: _____

In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, the Board requires approximately ten hours a week in reading, researching, miscellaneous meetings, school visits, telephone calls, and e-mail correspondence. Can your schedule accommodate the extra time involved in serving as a Board member? Yes No _____

Experience

Answers should be brief and concise.

1. Why do you want to be a board member for Albuquerque Public Schools?

I believe in public service and volunteer work, and I believe in public education as the great opportunity and equalizer for young people. We must all contribute our talents, and I believe working as a leader on the school board is the best use of my talents at this time.

2. What is your interest in education? **I have always supported learning, life-long**

learning, youth activities, and public education. I come from a family of teachers- my mother and daughter were APS teachers, my uncle, aunt, brother-in-law and sister-in-law were also career teachers. I have taught, not as a professional teacher, but in many different ways, both children and adults.

3. How would you support the mission of the district?

I believe the mission and the eight related goals are good. However, I believe there is much more work to be done to achieve those goals. The board has an oversight

or involvement role in all of them. In particular, the perception of APS needs improvement. We have a public relations opportunity on our hands. Timely, quality decisions, shared with the community, will help.

4. What is your past and current involvement with Albuquerque Public Schools?

I attended APS schools for all 12 years of my public education, I substituted for 2 years, and I tutored, substituted, and volunteered at NACA (Native American Community Academy). I currently volunteer in the Whittier Elementary School library a few hours a week.

5. What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of Albuquerque Public Schools?

The strengths are the teachers and EA's, their commitment, energy, and expertise in teaching and supporting students. Increased use of technology also seems to be a strength. Weaknesses seem to me to be in collaboration and communication with the community, including the community of teachers. APS has been reactive to problems rather than pro-active in seeking solutions with the community.

6. What is the role of the Board of Education?

By statute, of course, the role is quite limited to policy-making, hiring and firing the superintendent, and approving the budget. Over and above that, I believe the Board has a role to actively promote educational goals with the community, open up dialogue, and inspire more parents and community members to be involved in the improvement of our schools. With the budget deficits facing the state of New Mexico, the Board also needs to work in a lobbying role, partnering with the APS staff lobbyists, to make sure we receive adequate funding.

7. What is the role of individual board members?

The board members must work together as a team to represent the community-voters, parents, etc. and their interests to the Administration. The board should support the Administration, when appropriate, in its activities, and provide a professional counter-voice when not in agreement. The board members should seek complete and adequate information before making decisions. Each board member must promote honest, open, and complete dialogue on issues, in a public setting.

8. What should be the relationship between the superintendent and Board of Education?

It should always remain professional and respectful, but there may be issues where the board must support the community values and points of view to the Superintendent.

9. What unique qualities would you bring to the Board of Education?

I'm a good listener, I base my decisions on facts, not emotions, I have a high need for sharing information, credit, and responsibility, and I have an ability to work with all kinds of people. I'm a hard worker and believe in competency of work.

10. Other school/community volunteer activities related to the community:

Over the years in SLC and Albuquerque I have worked in many youth activities. Primary among these was 13 years in Girl Scouts, with awards received at a local and national level. I have also worked with Habitat for Humanity, United Way, City of Albuquerque Library, and Parkland Hills Neighborhood Association. I was the Vice-Chair of the Democratic Party of Bernalillo County from 2007-2009.

11. What are your thoughts about:

- a. No Child Left Behind- The idea to measure a child's progress is acceptable, but the standardized testing now in use is expensive, time consuming, and does not appear to accurately measure many children's abilities. The teacher is the best person to evaluate a child's progress, and there should be a testing strategy that fits an individual child's needs.
- b. Closing the achievement gap- We must improve attitudes toward education with some parents, provide learning and engagement opportunities for parents, improve attendance, and use best practices from successful schools in failing schools. APS must partner with early childhood education providers to promote literacy and reading from infancy to pre-K. Teachers must be allowed flexibility in their teaching approaches to individual children, and some of the reporting/other work burdens must be removed from their day to allow more time to teach.
- c. Parental involvement and community engagement- See above. In addition, APS schools must provide a consistent, welcoming environment for parents, to encourage their increased involvement. I believe our schools should be community resource centers for parents and others to come and learn.

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