



Albuquerque Public Schools
2017 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 of Education Services Office, by 5:00 p.m., on Tuesday, January 3, 2017.

- Mailed questionnaires must be received by Tuesday, January 3, 2017. Address to: Board of Education Services Office, 2017 Board Election, Alice and Bruce King Educational Complex, P.O. Box 25704, Albuquerque, N.M. 87125-0704.
- Questionnaires may be faxed to 880-2575 by the deadline above. Please call the Board of Education Services Office at 880-3729 to confirm fax arrivals or for other information.
- Questionnaires may be emailed to the Board Services Office at boarded@aps.edu.

Personal Information
[Please Print, Type or Use Digital Form]

Name: Charles W. White

Residence Address: [REDACTED]

Length of Residency in School District: 8 years, 2008 to present; previously, 50 years

(Check Preferred)

[REDACTED]

Fax Number: ([REDACTED])

Primary Email address: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Occupation: Consultant in Education Management and Human Resources; Community Volunteer

Employer: Self

Business Address: [REDACTED]

Business Telephone: [REDACTED]

Do you currently hold other public office?

Yes ____ No X

Do you have any affiliations with the Albuquerque Public Schools? Yes X No ____

If yes, what are your affiliations?

I was employed by APS for 30 years. One of my daughters has been employed by APS for 14 years as a Speech/Language Pathologist.

Are you available to attend board meetings the first and third Wednesday nights of the month at 5:00 p.m. and special board meetings as needed? Yes X No ____

Additionally, there are five board committees that mostly meet once a month at 7:30 a.m., 4:00 p.m., 4:30 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. Are you available to attend committee meetings?

Yes X 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 X No ____

If no, please explain why: _____

In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, the board requires approximately 20-25 hours a week in reading, researching, miscellaneous meetings, school visits, telephone calls, and e-mail correspondence; many board members spend much more time than that. Can your schedule accommodate the extra time involved in serving as a member of the Board of Education?

Yes X No ____

Experience

Answers should be brief and concise.

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

The first reason I'm running for the Board of Education is that I think all of us should do our part to make our community a better place. Serving as a volunteer on the APS Board of Education is where I believe I can make a positive difference. My background in public education, my ability to listen and communicate, my experience in working with nonprofit boards, all contribute to making me the best candidate in the current contest to serve APS and the community.

Secondly, I am most dissatisfied with decisions that current Board members have made in their latest term, and I believe that changes need to be made. Specifically, in regard to Superintendent Brooks, he clearly did not meet the behavioral expectations our community sets for the leader of our school district. In 2013, his rudeness and failure to work constructively with the staff warranted his dismissal, without the huge bonus to leave that the Board gave him. Then there was Superintendent Valentino, in 2014, who hired a man who would have failed a background check had the Superintendent required it; and who also hired a woman who had been on the Search Committee that the Board employed (I think this was a conflict of interest on somebody's part). This superintendent only lasted three months, but was paid \$80,000 to leave. It's clear to me that the Board made a poor choice in that person.

Finally, there was the bond election in 2015, when many people I knew voted against the bonds as a means of protesting the Board's decisions. I was able to persuade several that they'd only hurt children; and the bonds did pass quite decisively. But then the public realized that a Health Clinic for employees was included in the bonds, which the Board had approved. There was a public outcry to the effect that such a clinic would not serve the students, for whom the community had voted.

Clearly, the Board has failed to communicate effectively with the public whose support they need. Their rationale in these decisions is unknown. If elected, I pledge to communicate fully with the public and to hold the Superintendent's feet to the fire when it comes to meeting the Board's expectations. I ask for the vote of the citizens in District 3 to make the changes needed on our Board of Education.

2. What is your interest in education?

I believe I have the necessary qualifications to be a strong and productive board member. I have worked with many nonprofit boards and understand the working relationship between board and staff. I know how to work with other board members in a transparent way.

I have spent 42 years in public education in New Mexico, 30 with the Albuquerque schools and 12 with the Las Cruces Public Schools. Most recently, I have visited the principals of all 25 public schools in District 3. In these visits I have learned of the concerns and issues with which they are dealing. I have assured each principal, as well as

the parents with whom I've met, that I will always be available to them, to the school staffs, and to the community.

In my years as a teacher, counselor, and principal, I became convinced that the lives of all our youth advance and are more successful when they have a solid education, regardless of their field of study or level of completion. Our young people must develop the necessary skills to be good citizens, be able to communicate clearly, either verbally or in writing, and skills to interact with others, whatever their choices in life.

Encouraging young people to set high standards for accomplishment and to be successful in their personal lives would be my specific desire for our District to achieve, for each and every student with whom we have the privilege of working.

3. In what ways will you support the mission and vision of the district?

I will actively support and explain the mission of the District to all our publics in the community. From students to parents to all the other stakeholders, I want each to understand that our mission is to serve the needs of all our students. Assisting the District to respond to the multiple needs in our ever-changing world will be one of my goals. As a former public-school administrator, I will be a continuous ambassador for the benefit of our youth, striving to help all students achieve success in life, while they also serve their community.

4. How will you work with the superintendent?

The relationship between the superintendent and the Board must be one of mutual trust and respect. The superintendent needs to be responsive to issues brought by the entire Board, but also responsive to the concerns within each board district, as expressed by individual board members.

I expect to create an open, honest, and trustworthy environment in working with the superintendent. I pledge to bring issues of importance from my constituents to the superintendent's attention. Also, I will be a sounding board for the superintendent on issues, policies, or employment matters that she might desire to discuss. Working in a supportive and collaborative way would be my goal. The more successful our superintendent, the more successful our District will be.

As one of the superintendent's evaluators, I would strive, with other members of the Board, to create my aforementioned atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. There must never be an occasion when the superintendent is surprised or embarrassed at a Board meeting. At the same time, I would want to point out areas or policies that need attention and resolution. Such matters must be addressed in a very professional way.

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

I was a student in APS, from first grade to my graduation from Valley High School. During high school and college I worked at the District warehouse, handling books, supplies, and equipment. After my graduation from UNM I became a teacher and counselor at Jackson Junior High, and then was principal of Wilson Junior High for seven years. I was the first Director of Employee Relation for APS and then served as Deputy Superintendent until my retirement. In all, I was a professional employee of APS for 30 years. In addition, I worked for the Las Cruces Public Schools for 12 years; so my commitment to public education is clearly apparent.

Our four children are all graduates of Albuquerque Public Schools; all achieving the solid education they needed to become college graduates and obtain advanced degrees.

Currently I support APS with lobbying our legislators on educational matters, with serving as a legislative liaison for the New Mexico Association of Educational Retirees, and with monthly contributions to the APS Educational Foundation.

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

The Board of Education should be very supportive of the superintendent, who has an incredibly difficult job. Their relationship must be built on trust and mutual respect. These eight people need to be on the same page when it comes to goals for our students. At the same time, there are bound to be differences in ways to achieve the goals. Here is where Board members need to listen to each other, communicate honestly and openly, and remember how to “disagree without being disagreeable.”

I am confident that I can establish this kind of working relationship with whoever our APS superintendent should be.

7. What qualities and skills would you bring to the Board of Education?

I believe that the experience I have acquired in working for the public schools in New Mexico over 42 years will help me to thoroughly examine the issues that would come before the Board. I've worked with many school boards in APS and Las Cruces, and also for numerous school boards throughout the State in the areas of collective bargaining and employee relations. I've also served on the boards of several nonprofit boards, including United Way and KNME Public Television. I was a founding board member and first board president for the Samaritan Counseling Center in Albuquerque. All these experiences mean that I know how effective boards work.

I have developed the skills of a good listener, a tolerance and patience with disagreements, the ability to mediate conflicts, and a sense of fairness and respect for all the people or groups I meet. As an Administrative Law Judge for the Idaho Department of Employment, I rendered decisions that immediately impacted individuals and

employers—the awarding of unemployment compensation. As a national guardsman, I learned to follow orders and respect a chain of command. In positions of authority in my church, I've certainly seen how devout and caring individuals can become very upset about issues that seem unimportant to some, but are extraordinarily important to others. Mediation is a vital skill at a time like that.

Respect for every individual, dedication to the education of young people, openness and transparency, are the most important qualities I can bring to the Board of Education.

8. What school or community volunteer activities have you participated in related to the community?

I have always believed in community involvement for everyone; it's an opportunity where one can be of assistance to others, while finding great personal satisfaction as well. I have served on numerous community boards in Albuquerque, including United Way, KNME Public Television, and as a founding member and first board chair of the Samaritan Counseling Center. In Boise I chaired the United Way campaign for the Idaho Department of Employment. My activities in Las Cruces included service on the Board of Advocates for the College of Education at New Mexico State University, and an opportunity for my wife and me to endow four scholarships at three universities, going to students pursuing degrees in education.

I've been active in the Episcopal Church wherever we've lived and have served as Senior or Junior Warden in all three communities. I was appointed by the church hierarchy to serve on the Search Committee as we sought a new bishop for the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande. Currently in Albuquerque I've worked on our Home Owners Association Board of Directors, been active in the Lobo Club and the Lettermen's Club at UNM, and am a volunteer for Meals on Wheels.

9. How do you plan to work with constituents?

I have visited with each principal at the 25 public schools in District 3. Every meeting was designed to solicit the principals' concerns or issues regarding their schools' interests in the District. If elected, I would be the Board member representing these schools, their students, staffs, parents, and their wider community. I assured each principal that I would be available to meet with them and their community at any time. I believe that constituents need to be a part of the education process, from the schools to the Board level.

At my meetings with parent organizations and PTAs, I learned that these groups often feel left out of the loop when it comes to Board actions. They are not solicited for their opinions, nor do they feel that they ever learn of the reasons behind Board decisions. I intend to communicate with my various constituencies by telephone, via g-mail and Facebook, and in face-to-face meetings, so that they do feel represented, informed, and become more likely to understand and support Board decisions.

10. What do you see as opportunities and challenges to the district?

The following issues identify a number of challenges the District faces. Opportunities exist as we face each challenge in a positive way:

- Low staff morale; recruitment, retention of staff
- Low parent and student engagement
- High absentee, tardy rate; truancies
- Low graduation rates; dropouts
- Low/declining enrollment in the schools
- Public distrust of the Board and the District
- Contentious relationship with the Public Education Department
- Insufficient technology resources
- High administrative costs
- Poverty, socio-economic factors, including mental-health challenges

11. What do you think is the best way for the district to accomplish the three academic goals?

- a. **Early learning** – Early learning begins with expecting parents, is nurtured as children develop language and number skills in elementary school, and grows with students as they mature in supportive classrooms becoming adept at using these skills in a variety of contexts.

We need to develop the following to address our goal of Early Learning:

- Expand our Pre-K through 3rd Grade programs
 - Provide parent education on how to assist their students
 - Develop highly-trained teachers who are engaged and caring
 - Foster constructive relationships between teachers and parents/families
 - Provide more hands-on time with students
 - Provide more adults, especially educational assistants, in the classroom
 - Nurture curiosity and exploration
 - Provide academic support for struggling students
 - Teach parenting skills to adults and to our own students who will become parents
- b. **College and Career Readiness** – Students acquire skills which support formal and informal life-long learning to adapt and remain productive through changing economic and job market landscapes. All students will be prepared for post-secondary opportunities (college and/or career) without the need for remediation.

We need to develop the following to address our goal of College and Career Readiness:

- Offer career-exploration opportunities and internships
 - Re-create vocational programs as part of career exploration
 - Teach critical thinking skills
 - Address daily living and interpersonal skills, including financial literacy and media literacy
 - Increase support and guidance at critical transition years (5th, 8th, and 11th grades)
 - Offer a rigorous grade-level curriculum
 - Teach reading and writing for success in any post-high school endeavor
 - Improve communication within the counselor/student/parent triad
 - Implement family engagement programs
- c. **Developing the Whole Child** – APS will ensure each child is safe, engaged, challenged and supported through programs and practices focused on removing social, emotional and physical barriers to learning and increased health literacy.
- Safe and welcoming environment
 - Whole Child includes... physical, mental, emotional, social, intellectual
 - Remove barriers to learning
 - Discover and develop individual gifts and talents
 - Use skills to better the community

We need to do the following to address our goal of Developing the Whole Child:

- Improve communication between school and home
- Employ a more diverse teaching staff
- Understand families from different cultures
- Expand support personnel, such as regular-education social workers and counselors
- Develop a better understanding of how poverty issues affect students and families
- Ensure that decision making regarding students is transparent, authentic, and fully understood by students and parents
- Ensure equitable access to all regular-education programs
- Address individual student needs
- Expand opportunities for success, and address the learning and comfort that can occur in situations of failure

12. If elected, how will you work with the current board?

My goal will be to always be respectful in working with each and every Board member. One can be respectful even when one disagrees with a fellow member. Supporting one

another and knowing that the Board must act as an entire body, will help us to address the needs of the District in a collegial manner.

It takes some time in getting to know a Board member's positions on various matters, but I will listen, avoid jumping to conclusions, and work to understand positions different from mine. I believe that my skills and training as a mediator may be useful when we have disagreements that call for compromise. I expect to promote and to act in a way that is transparent, trusting, and respectful.

By my signature, I affirm that I meet all requirements to become a member of the Board of Education.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Charles W. White". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Candidate Signature

January 2, 2017

Date