

# Answers to Board Member Questions

Regarding March 1, 2023, Regular Meeting

## Agenda Item V.A.1: Consideration for Approval of Revisions to Board Policy: AI Academic Goals

**Question/Comment:** How can APS close the opportunity gap? Be specific about what the means are to get the opportunity gap closed.

Darling-Hammond says, "Achievement gaps have been reframed as academic opportunity gaps." Perhaps we should say, "Albuquerque Public Schools shall implement a strategic plan and instructional framework aimed at improving outcomes for all students with an intense focus on closing the academic opportunity gaps."

Having read many articles on 'Closing the Opportunity Gap' it has been found that it has much to do with what goes on in homes not schools, like but not limited to: helping families prepare their children for school, getting families to send their kids to school (school attendance), having access to books in the home helps decrease the 'summer slide' and the largest effects were for economically disadvantaged students, having family support and parent education classes, having 'enriched home learning environments', parent engagement, eating "family dinners" together, participating in "extracurricular activities", more middle class and affluent kids have parents who read to them (called in this article, "Goodnight Moon Time", which powerfully affects children's brain development & school readiness") 45 minutes a day as compared to their more economically disadvantaged peers (from the Saguaro Seminar: Civic Engagement in America), kids living in poverty will still not have the same 'life experiences' or 'opportunities' as their mid/upper income classmates.

The opportunity gap is "heavily influenced by factors outside of school...poor health, lack of medical care, food & housing, lead poisoning, iron deficiency, etc."

In my humble opinion, changing "opportunity gaps" to academic opportunity gaps would align more to what the school district should be doing.

## Agenda Item V.A.2: Consideration for Approval of Revisions to Board Policy: IG Curriculum Development, Adoption and Review (page 15 in the digital packet)

**Comment:** The second paragraph is missing an edit discussed in the Policy Committee meeting. It should read: "The superintendent, or designee, will develop a process -- to include opportunity for staff input -- for the review and adoption of district curriculum." The additional text was added around min 1:07 in the meeting.

Additionally, the final sentence of this paragraph reads "The superintendent, or designee, will present the curriculum for review by the board of education," and I'm wondering if it should be

"... will present the **curriculum adoption process and decision** for **approval** by the Board of Education." Because the Board is not reviewing the curriculum, but rather the decision. And we're not *reviewing*, but approving.

**Response:** The edits have been made. The updated paragraphs read as follows:

*The superintendent, or designee, will provide district curriculum that is consistent and aligned with state requirements, New Mexico Content Standards, New Mexico Instructional Scopes, and district goals. Schools and teachers will organize and deliver instruction that implements all district-adopted, standards-aligned, and scoped and sequenced high-quality instructional materials that are culturally and linguistically responsive.*

*The superintendent, or designee, will develop a process to include opportunity for staff input for the review and adoption of district curriculum. The superintendent, or designee, will present the curriculum adoption process and decision for approval by the Board of Education.*

**Additional comments:**

How will this language be interpreted? Does it mean same day, same page? How does it allow for differentiation? Specifics will be in the procedural directive for curriculum adoption and implementation, but I think it is important for the policy to reflect what the actual intention is.

Agenda Item V.A.3: Consideration for Approval of Revisions to Board Policy: IH Instructional Program (page 17 of the digital packet)

**Comment:** During the meeting, the first paragraph was edited to read "at least quarterly, the superintendent will report to the Board of Education on the academic program and strategies for improvement." This is at about minute 1:10 in the meeting.

**Response:** The edits have been made. The updated paragraph reads as follows:

*Instruction in Albuquerque Public Schools will provide equitable opportunity for student learning. At least quarterly, the superintendent will report to the Board of Education on the academic program and strategies for improvement.*

**Question:** Last paragraph question: Are all elective courses regularly assessed through district interim assessments?

**Response:** Elective courses are not assessed through our district interim assessments. We only assess math and ELA/reading with interim assessments.

**Additional comments:**

- "At least quarterly, the superintendent will report to the APS Board on different aspects of the instructional program and possible strategies for program improvement."

- Second paragraph: "Learning activities will be appropriate to individual student needs and developmental levels."

#### Agenda Item V.A.4: Consideration for Approval of Revisions to Board Policy: IH4 Establishment of Magnet Schools (page 20 of the digital packet)

**Comment:** The second to last sentence was edited during the meeting to read: "Albuquerque Public Schools will strive to collaborate with community partners, **practitioners in non-magnet schools**, and education stakeholders in the ..." This was added at around minute 1:13 in the Policy Committee meeting.

**Response:** The edits have been made. The updated paragraph reads as follows:

*The superintendent may establish magnet schools after review and input from the Board of Education. The education and instructional program objectives established for magnet programs will be consistent with the goals, policies, and the district administrative procedural directive. Magnet schools will be established to foster innovation, specialization, community need and choice. The superintendent, or designee, will direct the formal process for planning, developing, and implementing magnet programs. Albuquerque Public Schools will strive to collaborate with community partners, practitioners in non-magnet schools, and education stakeholders in the development and establishment of magnet schools. APS will strive to ensure the demographics of the magnet schools reflect the demographics of the district-wide population and the needs of the community.*

#### Agenda Item V.A.6: Consideration for Approval of Revisions to Board Policy: IK Academic Accountability (page 24 in the digital packet)

**Comment:** The third sentence in the first paragraph was edited during the meeting to read: "The superintendent will report **to the Board of Education on the district's progress in achieving goals, as required by Policy IA.**" This change was made at 1:47 in the meeting.

**Response:** The edits have been made. The paragraph now reads as follows:

*Albuquerque Public Schools will comply with all state and federally mandated student assessments. The superintendent, or designee, will establish a districtwide assessment strategy to be followed by all schools. The superintendent will report to the Board of Education on the district's progress in achieving goals, as required by Policy IA. Albuquerque Public Schools will provide rigorous academic programs for all students.*

**Additional comment on this policy:** I would also recommend that we move this one off of consent to discuss accountability. The title of the policy is accountability, but there is no language on accountability, just assessment. To wit, I would suggest we add a purpose for assessment, amending the second sentence to read: "The superintendent or designee, will establish a district wide assessment strategy to be followed by all schools **to ensure student learning and equity.**" Further I would suggest we add a final paragraph that reads: "**The**

superintendent, or designee, will establish a district wide school accountability system or performance framework to be followed by all schools, to ensure transparency of outcomes and effective allocation of district resources."

## Policy IH8: Community Schools

**Question:** What happened to IH8 Community Schools? I don't see it on this agenda, but it was on the Feb. 6 Policy Committee meeting agenda.

**Response:** We are asking the ABC Community School Partnership to review this policy, as requested by the board. We will bring it back to the board at an upcoming Policy Committee meeting.

## Agenda Items VI.A and VI.B:

- Consideration for Approval of the Charter Renewal with a Term of Five Years for Albuquerque Talent and Development Academy
- Consideration for Approval of the Charter Renewal with a Term of Five Years for El Camino Real Academy

**Question:** As it concerns both charter renewals VI. A & B-If the charters are renewed for 5 years when is the soonest (if there is a breach of the contract or that APS finds there is not satisfactory progress being made academically or financially) that the schools' charters can be revoked or suspended? And how much time is mandated by law that they be given to find another chartering authority or close down, once they are notified of revocation or suspension?

**Response:** The schools' revocation could occur anytime after we issue a notice of unsatisfactory performance and give them time to respond. We will be reviewing their performance each semester, so the soonest for a new contract would be the spring after. This could happen in May 2024 if there were no progress or concerns.