



# ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

® Accelerate Progress for Students

## Albuquerque Public Schools

### 2017 Questionnaire for Board of Education Applicants

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.

Applicants are required to return the questionnaire to the Board of Education Services Office, by 5:00 p.m., on Thursday, November 2, 2017.

- Mailed questionnaires must be received by Thursday, November 2, 2017.  
Send to Albuquerque Public Schools, Alice and Bruce King Educational Complex, Board of Education Services Office, 2017 Board of Education Applications, 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 of Education Services Office at [boarded@aps.edu](mailto:boarded@aps.edu).

### Personal Information

[Please Print, Type or Use Digital Form]

Name: Claudia Alvarez Benavidez  
First Middle Last

Residence Address: [REDACTED]

Length of Residency in School District: 17 years

(Check Preferred)

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  Office: \_\_\_\_\_  Cell: [REDACTED]

Fax Number: [REDACTED] Primary Email address: [REDACTED]

Occupation: Site Director

Employer: PB & J Family Services

Business Address: [REDACTED]

Business Telephone: [REDACTED]

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 X No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what are your affiliations? Parent \_\_\_\_\_

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, five board committees 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?

I am a parent with children enrolled in APS middle and high schools now. I believe in public education, I believe it is the cornerstone of our democracy. I would like to help build collaboration and bring different sectors together in my District to increase student success. I want to be sure that my children and the children in my community are going to have the tools to be successful in all areas of development. Finally, I want to contribute to moving policies to help make equitable educational opportunities available to all children in the District.

2. What is your interest in education?

I am a product of public education, and I believe in public education. I am a parent and an educator – experienced in both public and non-profit educational settings. Through my years of working with families in the state of NM and in Albuquerque, I have been exposed to and become aware of the services that families and children need to be successful. I know about the reality that children and families face every day. In my work, I confront every possible gap that a family needs to overcome to be able to meet the needs of their children. Education is key to connecting families and communities, and to supporting success.

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

I look forward to working with the families, staff, other Board members and the superintendent collaboratively to help students succeed. I will do this by reading, researching, visiting schools in my district, talking with my constituents (families and educators) on a daily basis. In my role as a Board member I will support policy-making, planning, evaluation, and budgeting that is informed by the reality of District 1 students and families' lives. I will advocate for District children and for the APS vision and goals. I will make Board service a priority.

4. How will you work with the superintendent?

I will review and assess the Superintendent's reports, ask questions to understand her management of the District and the District budget, do my part to assure honest 2-way communication between Superintendent and Board members, and share what I learn from District 1 families about their strengths and needs. I will help hold the Superintendent accountable, and be accountable to the Superintendent and to our community for Board actions.

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

Current Involvement: I have 2 wonderful children in APS schools – including a daughter enrolled at Atrisco Heritage Academy in District 1. I volunteer periodically at my daughter's schools. Through my work at PB&J supporting early intervention, I visit APS schools to assure that families are familiar with the school settings after their children are placed. I am constantly being invited and am attending open houses to support families. For example, this semester I have attended open houses at Valle Vista, Edward Gonzales, Ernie Pyle, Atrisco, Emerson, La Mesa, Jefferson and Van Buren. I also work on transition planning with Child Find and APS through my work.

Past Involvement: PB&J had the opportunity to work with APS on the ACA/Medicaid enrollment effort in 2014. I personally helped enroll students and families at enrollment fairs throughout the district during the first year of open enrollment.

6. What should be the relationship between the superintendent and Board of Education?
  - Clear and open communications
  - Presentation, review, discussion and analysis of Superintendent reports to inform Board policy making and budget decisions
  - Mutual responsibility and accountability toward our shared vision and goals
  
7. What qualities and skills would you bring to the Board of Education?
  - I am a community person with extensive experience and knowledge of APS community
  - I have a passion for children and families, and helping them succeed
  - I am a doer and a person who makes things happen
  - I am Bilingual
  - I have experience as a Board member and as a Director, understand the roles and relationships
  - I am a critical thinker
  - I have experience working with budgets (preparing and interpreting)
  
8. What school or community volunteer activities have you participated in related to the community?
  - Volunteer at my daughter's schools.
  - Tutor elementary school children
  - Serve on the Board at Casa de Salud
  - Teach ESL with refugee families
  - Distribute food once a month
  - Clothing bank for homeless children once a month
  - Street Outreach to advocate for homeless families to obtain medical and emotional care
  
9. How do you plan to work with constituents?
  - I plan to have monthly meetings and open conversations to meet constituents face to face, understand what is happening in the community and learn their vision for education, and how we as School Board can help them, make them a priority
  - I am committed to responding to constituent communications with me
  - I will periodically visit all District 1 schools during the school year

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

- At present, there are unequal opportunities for students depending on their school district of residence: I will work to provide equal opportunities across districts – regarding academic quality, teachers, infrastructure, and student and family supports
- The size of the district is challenging, especially for students in rural parts of the district (including some of South Valley District 1). I see an opportunity to learn from other states with rural populations, and apply/adapt appropriately to APS / NM
- The level of poverty among our students and families is a challenge and presents an opportunity to do more – we know the stressors in the district and among our families. We can create additional community schools and support families through programs that benefit families and communities to help students achieve full development.
- There is an opportunity to increase resources and the amount of bilingual services and culturally appropriate services to meet community needs and support family success and student educational achievement
- The District and Board commitment to restorative practices presents an opportunity for school culture change and an opportunity over time to disrupt the school-prison pipeline
- There is an opportunity to use what we have learned from successful APS charters/schools like AIMS to use with other APS schools to increase student success
- Required Testing presents challenges and stress on teachers and students, and reduction in educational / classroom time

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.

It is essential to provide opportunities to families to understand what early education means, and the positive influence in the community when these early childhood resources are in place. Early childhood education and program resources will help improve neighborhood environment, decrease parent stress, and create safe spaces for children. Early learning that moves beyond the ABCs and focuses on the social development capacity of children to be in society increases relationships, attunement to peers, and develops positive attachment. To reach the early learning goal, APS needs to re-think early learning focus on ABCs and develop programs that fit the community.

- b. **College and Career Readiness** – Students acquire skills that 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.

Technology and trades options should be implemented district-wide beginning in middle school. APS should provide opportunities for different things: auto shop, mechanics, coding / digital design, cooking/culinary arts, etc for students at all schools. Give students the opportunity to learn different trades (electrical, plumbing, cosmetology, etc) in addition to academic courses. This will help keep students in schools, reduce drop-out, and improve career readiness.

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

To develop the Whole Child, a Holistic approach for the whole family must be provided for student success and to help the entire family to grow naturally. APS needs to create more community schools with sustainable funding sources. Community schools should include food and clothing banks, medical and behavioral health for whole families, GED, ESL, and tutoring. Community schools should maximize collaborations with community agencies to support families.

Finally, Physical Education every day is important for the health and well-being of students, to development of the whole child at each developmental stage, and to increase student retention and reduce drop-out.

12. If appointed, how will you work collaboratively with your fellow board members to put the needs of students first, regardless of your personal or political preferences?

- Focus on the mission and our shared goals and purpose, commit to respectful and honest communication, and to coming prepared to all Board and committee meetings
- I will keep APS purpose and intentions in front of me, and be positive about the policy changes we can make happen for students and families together

**The person appointed must be at least 18 years of age, a registered voter in New Mexico, a resident of the Board of Education District 1, not a convicted felon and not an employee of Albuquerque Public Schools.**

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

  
Candidate Signature

11-1-2017  
Date