

To Whom it May Concern:

You should consider good Principals in the district for the job rather than out of state candidates, as APS has in the past. We need an Education Envisioner not a Career Manager in the Superintendent of schools.

For example, the former Principal of La Cueva, [REDACTED], was a very good Principal. He supported goals of enabling students to excel in a broad range of activities, and fostered enthusiasm for excellence.

Specifically, consider [REDACTED] for the position. We do not personally know him, we only saw him speak once at the 8th grade introduction, but my son and I were both impressed by his vision for the school, and the great school he created. We felt lucky to go to La Cueva. We were surprised he wasn't there this year.

Under the current leadership at La Cueva we have noticed a new emphasis on control, which is creating a atmosphere of constriction, at the school. One example of this is we are watching the gifted program slowly being dampened.

[REDACTED] is a new teacher implementing the latest technology and science of language instruction utilizing all of the senses rather than simply memorizing words out of a book. She is so exceptional that her first year students are nearly at the same level as the second year students, since last year they had an old school memorize and learn teacher. My son has been so excited about Language since being with her, he has been researching Epidemiology of root words throughout Germanic and Romance Languages and analyzing patterns of words and their change of over time. And he's chatting with kids in German at school and online in Germany after 3 months of instruction.

That is creating an environment of learning

Versus the unfortunate kids who had the memorize out of the book last year in her second year class, most memory of their first year evaporated out of their short term memory since then, who are now at the same place verbally as her entire first year class. My son is verbally gifted, however, I am quite sure if he was simply memorizing out of a book, he'd be bemoaning the difficulty of German, bored and discouraged. The entire first year class is speaking in German to each other, after only a few months, not just the gifted ones. This is what you need to look at in directing the district. How to teach, not what to teach. Information is everywhere, understanding and utilizing isn't.

[REDACTED] should be the model of language development throughout the district. I know there are other exceptional teachers that I don't personally know that are utilizing the latest approach to learning in their class rooms. Please find them and mold — How you teach after them — rather than just looking at what is taught.

APS needs to work with Teachers, like [REDACTED], and look to the latest psychology, technology and science of learning to determine the model of education. These methods foster excellence in thought -- not just memorization — which seems to be the current out-moded notion of learning.

APS's list above of qualities in a Superintendent seems to emphasize leadership and working with community. It doesn't speak to the way in which students are taught that actually engages creativity rather than memorizing lists which has been proven over and over is not effective educational model. Some times it seems like APS is more concerned with producing good test results to make themselves look good, rather than education for the sake of the students. And it over tests them to prove their own worth. Short term memorization is not education. We live in a world of google, all information is available, what's not -- is the desire to find it.

And education through simply memorizing long lists of terms — filling the short term memory storage and which in turn creates a short term vision of education, that is quickly forgotten and squelches the desire for knowing and exploring.

Please leave the old model behind which is more concerned about teaching to the test, instead of the mind.

Thanks,


APS mom to two boys 