

From: Courtney <courtneymegan1@gmail.com>
Sent: 3/3/2021 4:09:04 PM
To: esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com, sheneikasmith@avlcouncil.com, sandrakilgore@avlcouncil.com, antanettesmosley@avlcouncil.com, Kim Roney <kimroney@avlcouncil.com>, sagerturner@avlcouncil.com, gwenwisler@avlcouncil.com
Cc:
Subject: Asheville City Board of Education

Dear Mayor Manheimer, Vice Mayor Smith, and esteemed Councilmembers,

As we near the date for decisions to be made regarding the appointment of 3 members to the Asheville City Board of Education, I am reaching out to you once more to implore you to consider the impact of your choice.

It is clear that the current Board is not working. Our school district continues to fail to close the achievement gap, and struggles to properly manage funds. We have an alarming turnover rate of school Principals and district Superintendents. And the district seemingly operates without a unified long-term plan, instead turning abruptly again and again, thus stunting progress over time. An example of this can currently be seen in the closure of the Asheville Primary School just a few years after its conception, as well as the total restructuring of the Asheville City Preschool program. If the Board was working, stakeholders wouldn't be reaching out to you begging for our voices to be heard, for our children to be put first, and for a change to be made. Frankly, if the Board was working, your job would be that much easier.

In a telling example of their refusal to communicate transparently with the community, the three incumbent members seeking reappointment apparently chose not to participate in the endorsement process offered by the Asheville City Association of Educators and the Buncombe County Association of Educators, while other applicants took the time to thoughtfully consider and respond to the questions posed.

I sincerely hope you will consider the three applicants endorsed by the ACAE to fill these positions. Jackie Carr McHargue also made it onto your short list and with this additional endorsement should be appointed to the Board without hesitation. In addition, parents and teachers have been advocating for Pepi Acebo and Libby Kyles, both of whom have now been endorsed by the ACAE.

Please hear our voices. The current system is not working. Until our BOE is an elected one, we depend on you, our elected representatives, to make thoughtful choices that put our students, teachers, and community first. You will continue to hear from us until you start hearing us. Please do not take these appointments lightly. We are asking for a positive change. The success of our children depends on it.

Thank you,
Courtney Sullivan