City of Asheville

BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Application Form

Applicants are strongly urged to attend several meetings of a board prior to applying

Name of board or commission: Board of Education

Your name: Joyce Brown Home Phone #: 828-337-1876

Street address: 65 Ridgelawn Rd City: Asheville Zip Code: ~~28801~~ 28806

Mailing address (if different): _____

Employer: Equinox Environmental Consultation & Design, Inc.

Your position: Operations Manager Office Phone #: 8282536856

Resident of City Asheville County Buncombe Race W * Sex M___ F ✓ * Age 57 *

Are you a Homeowner or a Renter? * Homeowner

Residence location (check one): Central _____ North _____ South _____ East _____ West ✓

Are you aware of any potential conflicts of interest that may arise during your service on this board (i.e., property interest, business interest, etc.)? If so, please explain: _____. Potential conflicts of interest do not preclude appointments.

Please indicate the area(s) of expertise that you can bring to the above board(s), and then in detail list education, experience, reasons for your interest, and other factors that support your interest in serving **Applicants are encouraged to provide a cover letter and/or a brief resume. Please use additional sheets if necessary.**

I am an experienced member of this board. I understand the depth of the needs of the school system and the procedures that must be followed to achieve results. I have experience in leadership on numerous boards. I have expertise/experience in human resources management, fiscal oversight, racial equity, and strategic planning. I have a Master of Science in Human Resources Management and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology. I have worked for 20 years as the Operations Manager for Equinox, a local firm in Asheville.

I believe in Asheville City Schools. I know it to be an excellent school district. I also know that there is significant work to be done. I feel that my role is not yet complete. I have much love for this community, our district schools, and especially our students and teachers. I think that consistent leadership is important and something that we have not had for a while in Asheville City Schools. My dedication to reducing the opportunity gap for our most vulnerable students has not yet been realized, and I would like to see this through.

Return to:

Sarah Terwilliger, Deputy City Clerk
Post Office Box 7148
Asheville, N.C. 28802-7148

E-Mail: sterwilliger@ashevillenc.gov
Telephone: 259-5839
Fax #: 259-5499

Signed via SecureDocs.com
Sarah Joyce Keithley Brown
Key: df7872...

Signature: _____

Date: 1/23/21

E-Mail: joyce.brown@acsgmail.net

Fax #: _____

* This information is requested for the sole purpose of assuring that a cross section of the community is appointed.

Joyce Brown
65 Ridgelawn Road
Asheville, NC 28806
828-337-1876
joyce.brown@acsgmail.net

Dear Esteemed Members of Asheville City Council:

I am humbled by the opportunity to seek reappointment to serve on the Board of Education for the Asheville City Schools. I believe in Asheville City Schools. I know it to be an excellent school district. I also know that there is significant work to be done. I feel that my role is not yet complete. I have much love for this community, our district schools, and especially our students and teachers. I think that consistent leadership is important and something that we have not had for a while in Asheville City Schools. My dedication to reducing the opportunity gap for our most vulnerable students has not yet been realized, and I would like to see this through.

As a board member, I strive to be slow to judgment and listen carefully to all pertinent views regarding the circumstance at hand. The needs of the Asheville City Schools district are numerous and complicated. Serving on a board of education is vastly different than serving on any other board. Over the last four years, I have gained a great deal of knowledge about our district and its needs; knowledge that an inexperienced board member cannot have.

I want to support Asheville City Schools in its endeavor to provide an excellent education to all the children of Asheville. I am willing to continue the hard tasks of serving on this board. I am prepared to serve as a representative, a leader, and an advocate for the children and staff of ACS. In addition to experience on this Board of Education, below I highlight some of my past experience that supports my skills and abilities.

Board Experience

I served as president of the board of a non-profit childcare center during an important time of transition, helping to transform the struggling Child Care Center of First Presbyterian Church into the 5-star organization that it is today. As president of the Hall Fletcher Elementary PTO, I gained valuable insight about the struggles faced by a school that primarily serves students of color and those with economic disadvantage. In my tenure on the board of the Asheville City Schools Foundation (ACSF), I served both as treasurer and president. While there, I learned a great deal about the challenges and opportunities faced by the Asheville City Schools and by schools and educators across the country. I also served on the Session (governing body) of First Presbyterian Church concurrently as chair of its property committee, and on its personnel committee for many years.

Human Resource Management

I received my Master of Science in Human Resources from Western Carolina University in 2010. I pursued this degree because I saw a real need for greater understanding of human resource management on the boards that I served. I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to use my master level education in human resources to strategically partner with the management at Equinox, the company for whom I have worked for the last 20 years. In this position, I am responsible for all

aspects of development and implementation of our human resource initiatives. I have come to realize through my education, and this experience, the value of strategic human resources, the importance of aligning human resource functions with an organization's culture, goals, and practices, as well as the critical role an organization's human capital plays in its success.

Fiscal Oversight

Having served as treasurer for the ACSF, I understand and take most seriously the responsibility of fiscal oversight by any board of directors, even more so for the Board of Education. While financial assets are not the only assets requiring board oversight, board members have a responsibility to understand an organization's finances. Accounting management is part of my responsibility at Equinox. I am comfortable with and know my way around various financial statements.

Racial Equity

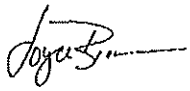
A unique experience provided to me by the ACSF was the work that the board did on Racial Equity. We began by learning about structural racism and identifying that we, as a board, could approach all that we did through a racial equity lens. This translated into the racial equity grant opportunities that we created for the Asheville City Schools. I was proud of the racial equity work that we did as a board at the ACS Foundation. I have had the opportunity to participate in the Racial Equity Institute's Two-day Phase 1 training while on the ACS BOE. This excellent training has been attended by most of ACS's leadership and many of its staff. I am gratified by the gains we in Asheville have made in racial equity in our schools and in our community, and we still have a lot of work to do.

Strategic Planning

In my role at Equinox, and as the president/chairperson of two non-profit organizations in Asheville, I have significant experience developing and implementing strategic plans for organizations. It will be necessary for the Asheville City Schools to develop a strategic plan in the months ahead, I will encourage our district leaders to include voices of students, teachers, school staff, parents, and community members in this process.

I look forward to the opportunity for continued dialogue about my unique perspective.

Sincerely,



Joyce Brown

65 Ridgelawn Road
Asheville, NC 28806
828-337-1876
joycekeathleybrown@gmail.com

JOYCE BROWN

An organization is only as good as its people. Engaged and happy employees are productive employees. People should enjoy their job and be passionate about their work. My passion is creating systems and processes that support and engage employees and are the foundation of business. How can I be of service to you?

*Well Organized * Critical Thinker * Dedicated to Hospitality & Customer Service*
*Detail Oriented * Problem Solver * Adaptable * Team Oriented * Great Sense of Humor*
Able to See the Big Picture & the Details Needed to Get There

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SKILLS

Staff Recruitment, Onboarding, Training & Development
Employee Relations & Engagement
Policy & Legal Compliance
Job Analysis and Competency Modeling
Leadership Development & Succession
Risk Management
Organizational Systems Development & Management
Information Technology & Software Management
Bookkeeping & Accounting
Invoicing & Expense Management
Benefits Management and Administration
Marketing & Public Relations
Customer Service
Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint; QuickBooks; BillQuick

WORK HISTORY

OPERATIONS MANAGER, EQUINOX ENVIRONMENTAL, ASHEVILLE, NC
September 2000 – Present
Responsibilities: Development, execution and management of policy, systems, and processes to facilitate smooth operations of various business components including strategic human resources, benefits management, risk management, purchasing, invoicing, accounting, facilities, computer and information technology, marketing and public relations

HUMAN RESOURCES INTERN, BILTMORE COMPANY, ASHEVILLE, NC Fall 2009

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENT, BUNCOMBE COUNTY DHS, ASHEVILLE, NC
February 1998 – August 2000

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT AGENT, WILSON COUNTY DSS, ASHEVILLE, NC
January 1995 – January 1998

EDUCATION	**MASTER OF SCIENCE; HUMAN RESOURCES; 2010** Western Carolina University; Cullowhee, NC **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE; PSYCHOLOGY; 1987** Concentration – Experimental Psychology Minor – Biology, Chemistry; Honors: Chapter President Psi Chi National Honor Society
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	**BOARD OF EDUCATION – ASHEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS** Board Member – 2017-Present **ASHEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS FOUNDATION** Board President – 2014-2015 Treasurer – 2012-2014 Board Development Committee – 2011-2012 **CHILD CARE CENTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** Board Chair **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ASHEVILLE** Elder, Personnel Committee, Property Committee Chair
PASSION	**ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS** **CUSTOMER SERVICE & HOSPITALITY** **SUSTAINABILITY**
REFERENCES	**AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST**

Board of Education Essay Questions 2021
Joyce Brown
Joyce.brown@acsgmail.com
828-337-1876

1. **Please describe specific experience you have had at a board of director's level and in oversight of a CEO, executive director, or organizational head. In doing so, please describe your views as to the roles and duties of board members versus senior staff.**
    a. I served on the board of directors of The Child Care Center of First Presbyterian Church. This was a non-profit organization separate from but supported by the church. During my tenure I served as Vice-Chair and Chair of the Board. I also served on the Board of the Asheville City Schools Foundation. During my tenure there, I served as Treasurer, Vice-President, and President of the Board. On both boards, I was responsible, along with the rest of the board, for oversight of the Executive Director (ED).
    b. It is the responsibility of the CEO, ED, or organizational head to run and lead the organization, and to oversee the day-to-day and organizational working of the organization. The primary purpose of the board is to ensure accountability from the CEO (Superintendent), this includes giving direction as well as hiring and terminating when necessary. The board should also participate with the Superintendent on strategic and long-range planning. Additionally, the board needs to develop goals for the Superintendent and evaluate him/her/them annually (or semiannually) on those goals. It is not the responsibility of the board to insert itself into the day-to-day decisions of the organization. This is the responsibility of the Superintendent and senior staff. Involvement of board members can occur in committees of the board that may include staff, but these committees should report to the entire board for approval.
    c. I would like to note here that there are some differences between serving on a non-profit board or a board of a corporation vs. serving on a school board. Boards of Education are highly regulated by state and federal laws. This adds a level of complexity that the other two do not have. My experience from previous boards gives me understanding of how a strong board can bring about the success of an organization. My experience from serving on the ACS BOE gives me the understanding of how to successfully work on this board.

2. **In what ways can Asheville City Schools effectively innovate?**
    The BOE should set goals that encourage innovation in a district. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to lead that innovation. It is not the responsibility of the BOE to drive that innovation, but to recognize it when it is presented. However, with that caveat here are some of my thoughts on how ACS can innovate, and through proper goal setting, the board can encourage.

    a. I think we should shift, at least some of, our budgetary spending toward improving opportunities for our most vulnerable students who are not achieving at the level of their counterparts.
    b. We need to work with our community (city council, businesses, non-profit organizations, and citizens) to find solutions to our greatest issue which is the achievement gap. I strongly believe that it is a result of an opportunity gap in our community. Our educators are important to solving this, however, it is not their responsibility alone. All

of us in Asheville need to take responsibility for our part in the system that has perpetuated this gap.

c. As a human resource professional, I believe that empowering the staff to develop creative solutions is a particularly good way to innovate. Then have our most successful educators share their expertise with their coworkers. In HR there is an understanding of a 'learning organization'. This ironically is not about schools, but about organizations in which all staff of all levels, from the top down, are encouraged and excited about their own learning to improve the success of the organization.

3. **What is your capacity for understanding and guiding on financial oversight, real estate assets, facility maintenance, and long-range planning?**
   a. My formal education is in psychology and human resources, however, I have been responsible for the accounting at Equinox, the company where I work, since its inception 21 years ago. In my roles on the boards of both the day care, and at ACS Foundation I was ultimately responsible for their financial well-being. At both Equinox and the Foundation, I encouraged and helped facilitate growing the organization's reserves that are necessary for an organization to have for the long-term well-being of the organization.
   b. I am responsible for facility maintenance at Equinox and I served as chair of the property committee for First Presbyterian Church for many years.
   c. Over 20 years ago, I was one of the founders of Equinox, a highly successful planning and design firm here in Asheville. Long-range and strategic planning is part of my contribution to that organization. While on the boards of both the day care and the Foundation, I played a key role in developing and executing strategic plans for both the near and long-range goals of the organization.
   d. I am a homeowner in Asheville. My husband and I have also purchased property in Mitchell County that we are developing into a Christmas Tree Farm. We intentionally invested in west Asheville with the belief that property values would increase with time, but also knowing that we wanted to be in this community. We still live in the same house that we purchased in 1998. It has been a fantastic investment. We could sell it and make a tidy profit, however, having property in the City of Asheville is an asset that we do not want to give up. I am confident that property in Asheville will continue to increase in value. Although, I do not have a great deal of expertise in the real estate market, I think that I have a solid understanding of real estate assets in Asheville and the surrounding region.

4. **Many school districts face continuity of leadership, especially at the level of superintendency. What would you do to promote continuity of leadership? And what do you see as your role working with the superintendent to build a strong partnership?**

   I learned at the last NC School Boards Association Conference that I attended that the average tenure of most superintendents in the state of NC is about 3 years. So yes, many school districts face issues with continuity. There are some elements of ACS that make this extra challenging. We are not a big district and many superintendents are working their way

up to larger, better paying positions. We will always run the risk of hiring a superintendent that leaves for greener pastures.

It is important for the BOE to provide leadership, direction, and support for the superintendent, this includes constructive feedback if necessary. There may be times when a superintendent needs more direction from the board. It is the responsibility of the board to hold the superintendent accountable, but also to give them the tools that they need to do their job effectively (an example might be training or coaching). A superintendent (like any CEO) is hired for their expertise. Each superintendent is going to approach his or her position through the lens of their own experiences. It is not the job of the board to micromanage that, but to hold the superintendent accountable for their leadership. Superintendents need some latitude to make the decisions that they think are important to the success of the district and its students. A strong partnership between a board and a superintendent is built upon honest, transparent communication and respect. I like to look people in the eye when communicating. COVID 19 has made that difficult. However, it is my intention, should I be reappointed to the board to have as many heart to heart, eye to eye, honest conversations with our Superintendent as possible. I will respect his expertise and hope that he will respect mine.

5. **In your opinion, as a school board member, what is your role in representing our community when making a decision that would be unpopular with a large number of your constituents?**

It is always important for a school board member to listen to the concerns of their constituents. In Asheville City Schools, every member of the community is my constituent, including the staff that work in our schools (many of whom do not live in the district). In addition to listening to the voices of those who traditionally have been heard, I must also listen to those who are marginalized and do not have the ability to advocate for their perspective. The primary constituents for any School Board Member are the children in the district. These include children whose parents, for whatever reason, may be unable to advocate for them.

In every issue there are multiple perspectives. I have found that often it is only the angry that speak out, and they may often be the minority of the people that are affected. When people are happy with a decision, they generally remain quiet. It is important to listen to and hear constituents that are unhappy with a given decision. It is important for the school board to also listen to the experts in the schools and central office that have been hired to educate our students. It is the responsibility of the school board to weigh all the information presented and try to make the best decision possible for the welfare of all the district's students.