

August 30, 2017

Trustees  
Alum Rock Union School District  
2930 Gay Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95127

Board President Tran, Trustees Herrera, Marquez, Martinez and Quintero,

As you know, this is the first week back for our school community. Teachers, staff and administrators have been diligently preparing to welcome our students. Parents dropped off their children with excitement and great hope for what this new school year has in store for them. But, rather than focusing on what should be our single and greatest shared priority, **our students**, we are all scrambling to respond to your last minute call for yet another Special Board Meeting focused on: 1) Approval of Job Description for a Deputy Superintendent, 2) Superintendent Performance Evaluation, 3) Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release. Placing such critical items on a Special Board Meeting agenda with barely 24-hour notice, during the first week of school, is egregious and disrespectful to us all. It is clear that you have no regard for creating a stable and effective school district environment in our community, and makes us question your motives for such actions.

This agenda also demonstrates that you do not have any respect for the voice and will of the community. Over the past few months, many of us have shown up at regularly scheduled and special Board meetings repeatedly to publically support Superintendent Dr. Hilaria Bauer. The community's broad support is based on:

1) **Progress & Performance:** There has been progress in student achievement, collaborations and increased resources during her tenure thus far. Under her leadership and with teachers, parents and community partners working together, ARUSD has been able to advance a renewed vision and focus, especially for English Language Learners, middle school students and parents/families.

Notable successes include:

- Increased cohort proficiency in ELA by a range of 5%-13% in third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades (2015).
- Increased cohort proficiency in Math by a range of 7%-16% in fifth and sixth grades (2015).
- Eighteen percent of English Learners were reclassified to Fluent English Proficient in 2017; a 10% increase from 2014-15.
- Progress towards creating Universal Preschool has resulted in transitional kindergarten and one and preschool classroom in every elementary school thus far, with more growth, collaboration and alignment on the horizon.
- All middle schools completed innovative re-design processes, creating District-wide choices for College and Career Pathways.
- L.U.C.H.A, Adelante I, Renaissance Academy at Fischer and Renaissance Academy at Mathson have all been selected as Gold Ribbon Schools by the California Department of Education.
- Twice as many parents (700) participated in Parent University.
- Hiring of Parent Liaisons on every school site has fostered stronger family engagement.
- New collaborations with City of San Jose & San Jose Public Library, Code to the Future, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Grail Family Services, Kidango, Santa Clara County Office

of Education, Spring Board Collaborative, SOMOS Mayfair and others have yielded increased resources, educational and enrichment programming, investments and opportunities for students and families, including the new Chavez Family Resource Center and approval for a Community Bridge Library.

Up until this past winter, the Board majority has had a vote of confidence in Dr. Bauer, allowing for this vision and these various initiative efforts to take root. We have demonstrated that we can rise as one community. *Why should we stop such progress now? How is this in the best interest of our students and the ARUSD community?*

2) **Need for Consistency & Stability:** Our community deserves consistent and stable leadership in the Superintendent role. Students, families, teachers and staff cannot build upon progress and thrive when there is constant turnover in the Administration. Every time there is a new superintendent, students and the community experience starts and stops of instructional initiatives, programs and partnerships. Shamefully there have been 16 superintendent transitions since 1989, as compared to the three superintendent transitions from the inception of ARUSD to 1987.

3) **Cost of Dismissing & Replacing Superintendent:** For far too long, the District and our community tax payers have taken on the burden of constant superintendent turnover at the direction of the Board. In an under resourced school district with many challenges and great needs, it is irresponsible to consistently use our students' funds on unnecessary turnover. Expenses have historically included severance packages, legal fees, and costs associated with recruiting, hiring and training new Superintendents and cabinet members. On average, this has cost our community more than \$200,000 per transition. We should not have to take on another financial burden to dismiss a fully capable and well performing Superintendent. Additionally, we believe that the District is at risk for potential lawsuits for this potential dismissal, as the motives are not transparent.

As parents and guardians, property owners and renters, business owners and employees, educators and students, we all know that this community deserves quality, local public schools that are safe, academically rigorous, consistent, and stable. We know that this is only possible with strong leadership at all levels of the organization. We also know that there continues to be a lot of work ahead to collectively achieve our vision for a quality education in the Alum Rock Union School District. We are committed to being engaged parents and community members, positively contributing to this vision. **We ask you to do the same.**

We believe that Superintendent Dr. Bauer's progress over the last three years demonstrates her ability to move us in this direction. We ask that you approve her contract and we also stand firmly against the approval of the Deputy Director Job Description with this person directly reporting to the Board.

As the community that has elected each of you into public office, **we demand that you heed our call to continue to support her in this role and work with us (not against us) to advance our collective goals.** We ask you to practice the stated District values in your decision-making and actions.

We will only support Board members who listen to the people and who are deeply committed to our students, families and workers. We ask you to be District trustees who are courageous enough to take action, defend, serve, and put every student, parent and worker first. **Anything less is unacceptable.**

You must be mindful of the Alum Rock Union School District philosophy:

*“Accountability for the district's programs and operations is shared by the entire educational community, with the ultimate accountability resting with the Board as the basic embodiment of representative government.”*

As you enter tonight's Special Board Meeting, know that the ARUSD community is united, engaged, and mobilized. Together, we are ready to hold each of you accountable to the decisions and actions you take this evening.

-The Alum Rock Community

### **Organizations**

Alum Rock Educators Association

School of Arts and Culture

SOMOS Mayfair

### **Individuals**

40 parent and community leaders signed on 8/30/17 (submitted to Board Trustee Khan Tran)