

Charmaine Lindsay Response to questions from the Board

1. *Once you are in this seat, you are required to represent all of your constituents, not just those that agree with you. Share a couple sentences on how you'll manage being open minded to hear opinions different from yours and representing those from your Board seat to ensure our students' needs are met.*

As a DPS Board member, I would always listen to the opinions of my constituents, do as much research as possible and make a decision that is in the best interest of the students. I would operate under the assumption that parents, students, and staff in schools within District 5 and throughout the city would have the best possible understanding of how specific issues would impact students. Since I have no desire to run for political office, I will not be a candidate for this position in 2023 and am applying for this opportunity solely to serve the best interests of District 5 and throughout DPS.

2. *Serving also requires a large time commitment. Please share how you expect to juggle the demands of meetings, readings, and preparing.*

I am aware of the time commitment involved in serving on the School Board and will be able to manage the time demands within my schedule. As family law lawyer and General Counsel for MBSK Colorado over the years I have learned to manage complicated schedules and intense prep work for hearings and meetings.

3. *I have attached the Board DiSC plot from December 2021 so you can see where the current Board lands. As you can see, we have 4 Ds, 2 Is, and Dr. Olson is the lone S. Share your thoughts on how your profile will compliment the current board to enhance our work together for the students, families, and staff of DPS.*

According to my DiSC assessment, my shading “stretches to include Collaboration and Support, which isn’t characteristic of the D style.” I have been a Board member of My Brother’s and Sister’s Keepers of Colorado for 9 years. Other members of the Board often call upon me to settle disagreements on policy and implementation of the Boards goals and agenda. I consider one of my strongest attributes to be my ability to listen to all sides and focus on an outcome that is in alignment with the overall objective of the Boards mission. The overall objective of MBSKCO mission is to “disrupt and dismantle the cumulative adverse child and young adulthood experiences that have had intergenerational effects for African Americans and Hispanics in Colorado,” which aligns with the objectives of the Denver School Board. I am also perfectly happy to take a secondary role in instances where other Board members have better skills and/or more expertise.

4. *I acknowledge the strengths each of you would bring to the role of the Board and I know how important it is to consider the areas that might be challenging in this role. Please read the portion of your DiSC report from page 6, "What is stressful for you?" Instead of asking each of you individual questions, share some ways you'll work to overcome some of the areas that might become more pronounced by serving on the Board. For example, my DiSC report states that I have a hard time arguing for my point of view. To that end, I have been working on raising my thoughts and point of view even though it is uncomfortable for me by getting coaching, writing things out ahead of time, and talking through my thoughts with trusted friends. I also value building relationships with my board colleagues where we can build trust and will look forward to doing the same with whomever is appointed.*

The two stress factors that I would say present the biggest challenge to me are "getting bogged down in inefficient procedures and meetings," and "giving people negative feedback." The other stress factors listed on page 6 are areas that I believe I have been able to manage throughout my professional career. As far as getting bogged down in inefficient proceedings, I believe that it is more of a cause of anxiety for me than something that would hinder my ability to interact and be productive among the other Board Members and the community. The second one is more difficult. I have no problem giving negative feedback when there are positive things I can say to diffuse the negative. The problem I have is in sounding sincere when I have nothing positive to say and being too blunt in my criticism. I am aware of my deficiencies in this area and therefore I try to be sensitive in my language choices. In my role as a family law attorney, I believe that often the best solution is satisfactory to no one involved. Family law is not an area of a winner or a loser it is an area that focuses on the best interest of the child. I often must negotiate compromised solutions, deal with angry and emotional participants, and convince one side that they are not necessarily acting in the best interest of the children without offending them and alienating them from further discussion.

5. *What role do you think DCTA, DAEOP, FMA, and ABGW should have within DPS?*

As a lawyer and an advocate, I understand the importance of labor rights and collective bargaining, and paras making only \$15 an hour is simply not a living wage. As can be seen in the following table, even single people without any kids require nearly \$20 an hour for a living wage.

<https://livingwage.mit.edu/metros/19740>

Also, it should be noted that while I certainly was happy that teachers received over an 11% raise three years ago, other school level employees then received less than 3% raises, begging questions of equity and progressiveness. I have heard some would like to have all school level employees negotiate with DPS as a single entity, and I believe this should be explored.

6. Do you believe that DPS should be transparent with public taxpayer dollars? How can DPS be transparent and accountable to the public on how taxpayer AND private grant funding are spent?

Financial transparency is with the public taxpayers is a key principle of installing trust in the community. DPS's current Financial Transparency page needs improvement, and some national best practices include Boston's system <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/cms/lib/MA01906464/Centricity/domain/184/budgetvisualization/index.html#/>.

From talking with school finance people, I have been made aware of the school level finance data that is now required under ESSA and I hope DPS can become a national example for financial transparency.