COAL COALITION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
for the
General Election - November 3, 2026

The purpose of this candidate questionnaire is to ascertain each candidate's qualifications and preparedness for, and commitment to, participating as a member of the Chicago Board of Education and for President of the Board.

The Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL) encourages an informed community towards casting an informed vote. The goal is to seat a professional, qualified, independent and engaged school board, responsible to the community, that has a laser focus on providing the best K - 12 educational experience for all of the children of Chicago, regardless of family income or zip code; the high quality educational system our children deserve.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please complete and return this fillable pdf candidate questionnaire for the position of Chicago Board of Education member and president, responding to all questions. There are a few yes/no questions which include space to expound on your response. Once completed, please return via email to: publicpolicy@coalchicago.com. **This questionnaire should be returned no later than end of day on September 21, 2026.**

We welcome any query regarding this questionnaire or individual question(s) which will help you provide your best response. Please contact Education Committee co-chairs:

Dr. Kimberly Dulaney at 312.287.4571 / readme4000@aol.com
or
Principal Gerald Morrow at 773.593.5428 / gjmorrow86@gmail.com

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

Candidate Information

Name on Ballot: Angel Gutierrez

School Board District: 8A

Home Address 5828 South Newcastle Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60638

Employer/Your Title Chief Institutional Advancement Officer

Phone 3123394715 **Email** angelforcps8@gmail.com

Candidate signature attesting to the truthfulness, accuracy, and authorship of this Questionnaire.

09/16/2026	Angel Gutierrez	
Date	**Print**	**Signature**

[Please feel free to attach primary campaign literature, bio or vita]

Campaign Information

Campaign Manager

Phone **Email**

Website www.angel-gutierrez.org

a. Have you held or run for public office before, and if so, what office[s] with what results?

Yes. I am an elected member of the Chicago Board of Education representing District 8A and the Southwest Side communities of Garfield Ridge, Clearing, West Lawn, Chicago Lawn, West Englewood, West Elsdon, and Ashburn. I was elected in Chicago ' s historic first school board election and have served during one of the most consequential governance transitions in CPS history. My work has included fighting for balanced budgets and prudent fiscal decisions, participating in the hiring of a Superintendent/CEO,

b. COMMUNITY. In what community roles do you currently serve? Or in what capacity have you served the community in the past? Have you been appointed to any public committees, commissions, task forces?

I bring more than 25 years of executive, nonprofit, civic, and community leadership experience. I currently serve in executive leadership at Enlace Chicago and previously served as Chief Advancement Officer at Chicago Hope Academy and Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. I have served as Chairman of the Board of St. Daniel the Prophet School and completed a six-year term as Co-Chair of Nuestro Futuro at The Chicago Community Trust. I have also served on boards, commissions, committees, and working groups in Illinois and Colorado addressing education, public safety, childcare, hunger, violence prevention, immigration services, and access to services for low-income families.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

c. Please list your top three contributors who have donated $1,000 or more, and include the corresponding amounts as reported on your D-3 form (if applicable):

Contributor	Amount
Paul Finnegan	$7300
Mary Finnegan	$7300
Seiu Illinois	$5000

d. Who has endorsed you and what are your political/stakeholder alliances (if any)?

I have been endorsed by Aldermen Marty Quinn and Derrick Curtis, Alderwoman Silvana Tabares, State Senators Mike Porfirio and Willie Preston, State Representative Angelica Guerrero-Cuellar, SEIU Illinois State Council, IUOE Local 150, Chicago John Dineen Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 7, Illinois Network of Charter School and Common Ground Collective. I appreciate every endorsement, but my north star remains students, parents, and taxpayers. No endorsement, donor, union, organization, or elected official buys my vote.

Candidate's Plans and Goals for the School Board

e. Why are you running for *this position*? What expertise do you bring to the board? What makes you the best candidate for *the School Board*?

I am running to help bring long-term financial stability to CPS, strengthen student outcomes, and reimagine a district that must better meet the needs of today's students and families. I bring more than 25 years of executive leadership, governance, finance, fundraising, operations, policy, and program development experience. I have managed complex organizations, raised substantial resources, served in C-suite positions, and now have direct experience governing CPS. I am willing to ask difficult questions, make prudent fiscal decisions, and work collaboratively without surrendering my independence.

f. Please describe your Educational agenda.

My educational agenda begins with getting back to the fundamentals of reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking, and strong instruction. But we must also rethink what success looks like after graduation. CPS should provide multiple pathways—college, CTE, trades, apprenticeships, military service, entrepreneurship, and careers of today and tomorrow. We must reduce chronic absenteeism, strengthen early childhood education and special education, expand student and family supports, responsibly right-size the district, and create schools that families actively choose.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

ACCOUNTABILITY / TRANSPARENCY

1) We believe that it will be important for you to communicate with District constituents on a monthly basis. Communications should include, but not be limited to, updates to inform and receive feedback on upcoming CPS votes and initiatives, as well as progress monitoring. Will you commit to implementing some form of monthly communications for your constituents?

YES ☑ **NO** ☐ **(Please provide an example)**

Accountability starts with communication. I support regular newsletters, community meetings, school visits, advisory councils, social media updates, and opportunities for constituents to provide feedback before major decisions. Communication should not simply tell people what the Board has done; it should help residents understand upcoming decisions and provide meaningful ways to influence them. I started a newsletter called The North Star that provides almost 2,500 people with information of what I am doing on a monthly basis.

2) What measures do you want to put in place to promote transparency in the school board system?

The Board should conduct more substantive work publicly through its standing committees, publish understandable financial and performance information, clearly explain major proposals before votes, and provide enough time for public review. I am hopeful that the implementation of three standing committees will allow Board members to conduct deeper work, improve oversight, incorporate expert and community input, and make better-informed decisions before matters reach the full Board.

3) What methods will you put in place to understand the interests / positions of your constituents, to ensure your Board votes align with your constituents, and not political funders or special interests? **(Please be specific)**

My north star is students, parents, and taxpayers—not donors or special interests. Since January 15, 2025, I have evaluated issues on their merits, disclosed conflicts when they arise, recused myself when appropriate, and made decisions based on what I believe is best for CPS students and the district ' s long-term health. I will continue meeting with parents, students, LSCs, principals, community organizations, educators, and residents throughout District 8A before major decisions.

4) What measures do you suggest the school board implement to ensure that CPS is held accountable and is responsive and transparent to school stakeholders?

The Board must establish clear goals, measurable outcomes, timelines, and regular public reporting. Programs should not continue indefinitely simply because they have always existed. We should know what is working, what is not, what it costs, and what outcomes students are receiving. Standing committees can strengthen this oversight by allowing deeper examination of finances, academics, operations, and performance.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

5) Will you support a third-party independent audit of Chicago Public Schools? **YES** ☑ **NO** ☐
(and why?)

CPS manages billions of taxpayer dollars and should welcome appropriate independent financial and operational scrutiny. An independent audit can identify risk, inefficiencies, weaknesses in internal controls, and opportunities for improvement. Audits should be designed to strengthen the district—not become political exercises—and findings should be made transparent along with corrective action plans.

6) Recognizing that parents of CPS students are a critical portion of your constituency, what will you do to build and nurture a relationship with parents in the District?

Parents must be treated as partners. I will continue visiting schools, meeting with LSCs and parent groups, holding community conversations, communicating regularly, and creating opportunities for families to raise concerns directly. One of the most important things an elected Board member can do is show up, listen, follow through, and explain what happened after an issue was raised.

BUDGET / FINANCE

7) In what ways should the school district engage Springfield for funding? In what ways will you engage external partners to assist with funding CPS initiatives?

CPS must continue advocating aggressively in Springfield for more equitable funding, stronger categorical reimbursements, improved Medicaid reimbursement, and a serious discussion around pension parity. We must also continue advocating in Washington for the federal government to meet its obligations, particularly around special education. At the same time, philanthropy, corporations, universities, and community partners can help fund innovation and pilot programs—but private dollars should complement, not replace, sustainable public investment.

8) What are your ideas to address the School District's consistent $500-$700 million budget gap?

We cannot solve a structural deficit with one-time money. CPS must right-size its operations, align staffing and facilities with enrollment, control costs, scrutinize programs and contracts, and build a credible multi-year financial plan. Labor partners must be at the table to identify sustainable savings and reforms. We must also pursue equitable state funding, stronger reimbursements, and pension parity. TIF or other one-time resources may serve as a bridge, but they are not a permanent solution.

9) How will you hold CPS accountable for ensuring equitable funding for all schools? And how should the Board / CPS prioritize to ensure funds are allocated where needed?

Equity does not mean every school receives exactly the same amount; it means resources reflect student needs. The Board should use transparent formulas that consider poverty, disability, English-language learning, homelessness, academic needs, enrollment, facility conditions, and other factors. We must also monitor outcomes to ensure additional resources are actually reaching students and producing results.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

10) What are your ideas for **funding** the mental health needs of students, faculty, and staff?

We should maximize Medicaid reimbursements, advocate for increased state and federal behavioral-health funding, strategically use public health partnerships, and leverage community-based providers and philanthropy where appropriate. CPS should not build every service internally when high-quality community partners may already have the expertise and infrastructure to serve students effectively.

EDUCATION / STUDENTS

11) Achievement Gap: The data show persistent disparities in measures of educational performance among subgroups of students, especially groups defined by socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity and gender. How do you plan to address/close the intransigent achievement gap for African American students?

We should begin with urgency around literacy and mathematics and study what is working in schools and districts that are successfully accelerating achievement. CPS must provide strong curriculum, effective instruction, quality professional development, early intervention, tutoring, attendance supports, and access to rigorous coursework. We should disaggregate results, establish measurable goals, and hold ourselves accountable for progress—not simply continue describing the gap year after year.

12) Opportunity Gap: The disparities in providing access points and multiple pathways to position students for post-secondary success. How do you plan to address/close the opportunity gap for African American students?

Every student should have meaningful access to advanced coursework, dual credit, CTE, trades, apprenticeships, computer science, arts, extracurricular activities, college preparation, and career-connected learning regardless of ZIP code. We must identify where those opportunities are missing and intentionally expand them. Students should graduate prepared to learn, earn, and succeed along whichever pathway is right for them.

13) What are your thoughts and/or ideas on **policies** to address the mental health needs of students, faculty, and staff?

Mental health must be part of how we think about student success and school climate. CPS should strengthen school-based mental health supports, partnerships with community providers, early identification and referral systems, trauma-informed practices, and supports for employees. We should also evaluate outcomes to ensure resources are accessible, culturally responsive, and reaching the students and staff who need them.

14) How will you work towards all schools providing recess and physical education equipment, healthy food offerings, and classes in the arts, shop, and technologies, as well as foreign languages?

A quality education must be broader than test scores. Students deserve physical activity, healthy meals, arts, trades, technology, languages, and enrichment. The Board should establish clear expectations for access, identify disparities by school, and develop a multi-year plan to close gaps in staffing, facilities, equipment, and programming. Partnerships can supplement this work, but core educational opportunities should not depend on a school's ability to privately fundraise.

15) The elected representative school board legislation includes the establishment of a board-level *Black Student Achievement Committee*, to develop actionable strategies to close the achievement gap for Black students. What actions will you take to ensure that this committee is staffed appropriately to give it its best chance of achieving measurable improvements in the education of Black students, system-wide? And, importantly, will you commit to the African American community having a strong voice / autonomy in the selection of Black Student Achievement committee members? **YES** ☑ **NO** ☐ **(and why?)**

YES to strong community voice.
Yes. If this committee is expected to produce meaningful results, it needs appropriate staffing, access to data, expertise, resources, and clear authority to make actionable recommendations. The African American community must have a meaningful voice in the committee's membership and agenda. Success should ultimately be measured through improved academic achievement, access to opportunities, attendance, graduation, post-secondary outcomes, and student experience.

GOVERNANCE

16) What are your thoughts on the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Career and Technical Education (CTE), Computer Science (CS), and other emerging technologies in education for students, faculty, and staff?

AI is here to stay, and CPS has a responsibility to prepare students to use it thoughtfully, ethically, and effectively. We should integrate emerging technology without weakening reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking, creativity, or human interaction. I support bringing educators, students, parents, technology experts, and academic leaders together to establish guardrails around privacy, age-appropriate use, academic integrity, bias, accuracy, and teacher oversight. At the same time, CPS should aggressively expand CTE, computer science, trades, apprenticeships, and career-connected learning.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

17) Do you think the school board should have autonomy to override LSC decisions that are made at the local level? **YES** ☑ **NO** ☐ Please explain your answer with an example.

Only in limited circumstances. Local School Councils exist because school communities should have meaningful authority over local decisions. The Board should generally respect that authority. However, there may be extraordinary circumstances involving law, safety, civil rights, fiscal responsibility, or districtwide policy where intervention is necessary. Any override should meet a high threshold and be transparent.
26. 19. Independent review board for terminations.

18) LSCs are responsible for principal selection; should CPS be required to obtain LSC review to remove a principal? **YES** ☑ **NO** ☐ **(and why?)**

LSCs play an important role in principal selection and school governance, and their perspective should be meaningfully considered. At the same time, CPS has a responsibility to intervene when there are serious legal, safety, performance, or personnel concerns. I support a process that respects local governance while maintaining appropriate district oversight and due process.

19) What are your thoughts on establishing an independent review board for terminations within CPS?

I am open to studying an independent review process if it can strengthen fairness, consistency, and due process without creating another layer of bureaucracy that unnecessarily delays legitimate personnel decisions. Any proposal should clearly define jurisdiction, standards of review, timelines, and how it interacts with existing collective bargaining and appeal processes.

OPERATIONS / POLICY / PERFORMANCE

20) What is one challenge or area of growth you see within CPS? What are your solutions for addressing this challenge?

Beyond the budget, the biggest challenge is whether CPS is willing to reimagine itself. We must right-size the district to reflect enrollment while redesigning teaching and learning around what students need today and in the future. That includes addressing chronic absenteeism, improving academic outcomes, expanding pathways, modernizing facilities, and creating schools designed around students and families rather than expecting families to fit into a system built for another era.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

21) What are your thoughts on the financial and academic oversight of school choice, and do you believe guardrails should be put in place? If so, why?

Every publicly funded school should face strong financial, academic, operational, and student-outcome accountability. Families deserve choices, but those choices must be high quality. Guardrails should protect students, taxpayers, and educational quality while allowing different school models to innovate. The focus should be on outcomes and responsible stewardship, not ideology about school type.

22) What are your thoughts on school closings and consolidation?

Possibly—but only through a serious, transparent process. School closures should never be used simply as a short-term budget solution. CPS must confront declining enrollment and its physical footprint, but decisions must be connected to a larger effort to reimagine the district and improve opportunities for students. I support establishing a Blue Ribbon Commission of educators, families, students, labor, community leaders, and independent experts to study the issue and make long-term recommendations.

23) What criteria should be used to identify which schools should be considered for closure/consolidation?

The Blue Ribbon Commission should examine enrollment trends, building utilization, facility condition, academic performance, student needs, neighborhood demographics, transportation, special education, safety, future programming, capital needs, and the quality of educational opportunities students would receive following any consolidation. No single measure should determine a school ' s future. The central question must be whether a change will produce stronger educational opportunities for students.

24) What existing CPS policies would you like to change, or what new policies would you like implement?

I would like to see policies that strengthen long-term fiscal planning, modernize LSC governance, create greater Board committee oversight, expand accountability for program outcomes, and support a comprehensive reimagining of teaching and learning. We also need clear districtwide policies for emerging technologies such as AI and a more strategic approach to facilities and capital planning based on enrollment and educational need.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

CHARTER SCHOOLS

25) Funding Equity: Chicago Public Schools provides funding to both district-operated and charter public schools. Do you support funding parity between charter public schools and district-operated schools? **YES** ☑ **NO** ☐ **(and why?)**

Students should not receive fewer public resources simply because their families selected a charter public school. Funding should follow students fairly and transparently. With public funding, however, comes public accountability. Charter and district-operated schools should be held to rigorous standards for academics, finances, operations, student services, transparency, and outcomes.

26) Equitable Access to Resources: Do you believe funding for student support services should be allocated equitably to all students, regardless of whether they attend a district operated or charter school? Yes or No If a school accepts public funding for a student should it also be responsible for continuing to serve that student the entirety of the year? **YES** ☑ **NO** ☐ **(Please explain in detail.)**

Students deserve appropriate support regardless of whether they attend a district-operated or charter public school. Public dollars should be tied to responsibility for serving students, including students with disabilities and students requiring additional supports. Schools receiving public funding should not be able to benefit from enrollment-based funding while avoiding responsibility for serving students throughout the school year.

27) Parent Choice and Educational Options: Well-to-do families have the resources to afford the type of education they want for their children. Many Black and Brown families who may be unable to afford private or parochial schools, choose charter schools because they believe those schools best meet the educational, social, emotional, or cultural needs of their children. What role do you believe charter schools should play within the Chicago Public Schools system, and how would you ensure families continue to have meaningful educational choices?

I support families having access to a range of quality public education options, including neighborhood, magnet, selective enrollment, charter, CTE, and other specialized models. Families with financial means have always exercised educational choice; public policy should not reserve meaningful choice only for those who can afford private tuition or move to another neighborhood. Our responsibility is to ensure every option receiving public dollars is high quality, transparent, accountable, and accessible.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

28) Charter Renewal Stability: School board meetings can involve lengthy discussions on charter renewals. What are your thoughts on charter school renewals, including multi-year renewals?

Renewals should be predictable, evidence-based, and tied to performance. High-performing charter schools with strong academic, financial, and operational records should be eligible for meaningful multi-year renewals so students, families, and staff have stability. Schools with significant concerns may warrant shorter terms and additional oversight. Renewal should not become an annual political fight when objective performance standards can guide the decision.

29) Accountability and Student Outcomes: Should charter schools and district-operated schools be evaluated using the same academic, financial, operational, and student-outcome standards?

YES ☑ **NO** ☐ Where might they differ?

Both should be evaluated on academic performance, finances, operations, student outcomes, compliance, and the quality of services provided to students. Some measures may differ because charters and district schools operate under different governance structures, but expectations for responsible use of public funds and strong student outcomes should be comparable.

30) Long-Term Vision: What is your vision for the relationship between Chicago Public Schools and public charter schools over the next five years, and how would your policies support improved outcomes for all Chicago public school students?

My vision is a public education system in which district-operated and charter schools are judged less by labels and more by whether they deliver strong opportunities and outcomes for students. CPS should support successful models, intervene when schools consistently fail students, share effective practices across school types, and ensure equitable accountability and funding. Families should have meaningful choices, while the Board remains responsible for ensuring every publicly funded school contributes to a stronger overall public education system.

Chicago Board of Education
Candidate Questionnaire
General Election - November 3, 2026

Thank You

for your response

COAL COALITION
OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS

About COAL
COAL is an umbrella organization founded by 13 of Chicago's historic African American mens clubs. COAL's overarching mission is to identify, examine, illuminate and find resolution to issues impacting the greater community. We strive to use our collective experience, expertise and resources to improve the quality of opportunity, quality of preparedness and the quality of outcomes (expressed as 'quality of life') for our community.

What We Believe
The Coalition of African American Leaders believes that it is important to examine the critical issues confronting the African American community where injustice, inequality and the absence of access and opportunity continue to prevail, thereby negatively impacting us as a people. COAL is an assemblage that advocates and organizes for appropriate and responsible public policy change, system behavior change and equality of opportunity. We aim to achieve for all of our people the fullness of the life experience without any form of racism or exclusion as a deterrent. We believe we must prepare ourselves for the opportunity of this full participation, thereby achieving the necessary education and training to participate.

Founding Member Organizations
100 Black Men Of Chicago ■ Chicago Assembly ■ Chicago Connection ■ Druids Club ■ Frogs Club ■ Lunch Bunch ■ New Committee ■ Original 40 Club Of Chicago ■ Rat Pack ■ Royal Coterie Of Snakes ■ Saints ■ Sigma Pi Phi Beta-Boule ■ UIC Male Forum / Chicago Good Health Group

WWW.COALCHICAGO.COM publicpolicy@coalchicago.com
COAL is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization incorporated in Illinois, USA.
Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by U.S. law.