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: Margie B. Luczak

School Board District: 1A

Home Address 5362 N. Neva Chicago, IL 60656

Employer/Your Title Retired Chicago Police Officer

Phone Email 773-206-0805 margie4.1a@gmail.com

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

Date Print Signature ***[Please feel free to attach primary campaign literature, bio or vita]***

Campaign Information

Campaign Manager

Phone Email

Website www.margiefor1a.com

a. Have you held or run for public office before, and if so, what office[s] with what results? Never

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 served my community for 27yrs as a Chicago Police Officer city wide. Helping, listening and encouraging community members.

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
Chicago John Dineen Lodge #7	$2500.00
Alderman Anthony Napolitano	$1000.00
Alderman Nicholas Sposato	$1000.00

d. Who has endorsed you and what are your political/stakeholder alliances (if any)?
Fraternal Order of Police lodge#7, Local 150 Operators, Local 130 Plumbers, Local 2 Fire Fighters,
Illinois Network of Charter Schools, Urban Center, Alderman Anthony Napolitano 41st ward, Alderman Nicholas Spasato 38th ward, Alderman Jim Gardiner

<u>Candidate's Plans and Goals for the School Board</u>

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 care about my community, parents, teachers and children. I spent 27years working as a Chicago Police Officer serving people in many different neighborhoods and socioeconomic backgrounds. That taught me the importance of listening, accountability and treating the community fairly. I want to bring the same approach to the school board. Teachers deserve support, parents deserve choices, children deserve a high quality education from CPS schools and taxpayers deserve transparency and responsible financial management.

f. Please describe your Educational agenda.

My agenda first and foremost is student focused. Improved learning for all students no matter their race, socioeconomic status or geographic location. Make sure CPS is using only instructional materials aligned with research proven methods, science, math and reading. There should be a clear curriculum standard that focuses on critical thinking abilities that children need to succeed in the future. Make schools safe.

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) YES
Keeping the district school principals, teachers and parents informed on a monthly basis is a great idea. Having social media is a great tool for everyone to get informed about updates within CPS and at the same time I can receive feedback.

2) What measures do you want to put in place to promote transparency in the school board system? I want a school board where important decisions are explained, financial information is accessible to the public and most important independent oversight and audits.

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) Listen directly to the constituents of my district, 1A because the parents know what their kids need, the teachers know what they need in their classrooms. I will exercise independent decision making and strongly committed to evidence.**

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? Full transparency around major decisions, independent oversight to make sure CPS is using resources responsibly.

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?) YES. For further transparency and accountability

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? Listening is a big portion of being a board member. That's the only way to know

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? Make sure the Chief of Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) has a great working relationship

8) What are your ideas to address the School District's consistent $500-$700 million budget gap? We need more transparency and accountability, every dollar spent needs to be accounted for. CPS IGA needs to establish good working relationships with Springfield and purse appropriate state and federal resources.

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?
Transparent budgets, regular public reporting. Funding based on student needs.

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

Make resources a core part of CPS budget and ensure these funds follow students and staff needs.

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? African American students in CPS have tremendous talent and potential. The data shows that achievement gaps have persisted for too long. I would support strong reading and math foundations, early identification and intervention, provide tutoring, mentoring and get parents involved. Schools should work closely with families. All students should have the opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential.

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? Closing the opportunity gap means making sure African American students have genuine access to programs. Make sure they know about Career and Technical education, apprenticeships, internships. Make sure students have access to college counseling, financial aid guidance if they are going the college route.

13) What are your thoughts and/or ideas on **policies** to address the mental health needs of students, faculty, and staff? Ensure students have reasonable access to counselors, social workers, psychologists and outside behavioral-health providers. Establish consistent procedures for recognizing students who may need support, protocols for responding to emergencies like, trauma and behavioral crises.

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? I believe every CPS student should have access to a well rounded education. First the greatest gaps need to be identified and make sure resources are directed toward schools that need them most. Partner with community organizations, NFP's, and unions to expand opportunities without placing the entire financial burden on individual schools.

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, the community must have a strong voice. The committee should include people with knowledge of educational challenges facing African American students and demonstrate commitment to improving student outcomes. At the same time, Illinois School Code places formal appointment authority with the President of the Board. As a board member I would advocate for a transparent selection process. I would also expect the committee to use data to establish measurable goals, identify achievement gaps, track progress and report results to the Board and public.

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? I believe AI, CTE, Computer Science and other technologies have an important role in preparing our students for the future. I also believe technology should be a tool for learning (with guardrails), not a replacement for teachers or critical thinking. I also want to expand opportunities in CTE and work with our Labor partners to provide hands on learning in the trades. Our goal should be to prepare students not just for jobs that exist today, but for a rapidly changing workforce.

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. No. LSC gives parents, teachers, community, principals a voice in decision making. However board oversight is necessary when an LSC decision conflicts with state law, board policy, student rights, and financial requirements. In these circumstances they have the authority to intervene but should also be transparent about the reason why.

18) LSCs are responsible for principal selection; should CPS be required to obtain LSC review to remove a principal? **YES NO (and why?)** Yes. CPS should be required to obtain LSC review before removal except in the urgent circumstances involving student or staff safety, serious misconduct, legal violations or other situations requiring other immediate action.

19) What are your thoughts on establishing an independent review board for terminations within CPS? I think we need to lean into and trust the CEO and LSC's.

OPERATIONS / POLICY / PERFORMANCE

20) What is one challenge or area of growth you see within CPS? What are your solutions for addressing this challenge? Challenge is with communication and transparency with the community, students, teachers, taxpayers. We need to be more accountable and transparent with the public making reports more accessible and user friendly to find.

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? I believe every parent has the fundamental right to choose the best school possible for their child. These schools whether they are traditional, charter or selective they need to show accountability for school performance, academic achievement and financial responsibility.

22) What are your thoughts on school closings and consolidation? First I would want to find out why the school is struggling, look at evidence, hear from leadership and ask, is there an improvement plan. Does the school have the resources for the children attending and are they getting a quality education to move forward in life. Ultimately we have to put the children first. If a school consistently fails then there has to be accountability.

23) What criteria should be used to identify which schools should be considered for closure/consolidation? We should first look at data showing attendance, enrollment and academic achievement. Does the school offer sport programs, the arts, does it make it a joyful experience for the students.

24) What existing CPS policies would you like to change, or what new policies would you like implement? I would like to implement School Resource Officers. Every child should feel safe, respected and supported while they are in school. I support SRO's in school where they are needed, with a focus on building positive relationships with students and school staff. They can get to know the students, listen to their concerns and help guide them through difficult situations.

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?)** Yes. We should ask why families are choosing Charter schools. Parents should have the fundamental right to send their children to whatever school they see fit. What works for one student may not for another. Charter schools give educators and school leaders autonomy to the needs of students instead of having decisions dictated by the district. But at the same time we need measurable goals and accountability for results. Funding is important to both district and charters schools to have the resources necessary to educate the children they serve. Every child deserves a high quality public school education.

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.)** Funding should follow the student and be based on individual and school level needs, special Ed, mental health, english language service and other supports. Public funding comes with public responsibility. If a school accepts public dollars to educate a student it should be accountable for providing that student for the full school year while attending that school. We need to put the needs of the child first.

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 am in support of charter schools because they have autonomy and they are an important public school system to every family. Flexibility is important in education because it's not a one fits all classroom.

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? For families that choose charter schools rely on renewals. With that being said these decisions should be based on student evidence, growth, school quality, financial responsibility and always the needs of students. It should not be a political 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? Yes, they are both public schools using public funding. If schools receive public dollars, families and taxpayers deserve the same level of transparency and accountability. Charter schools differ by having greater operational autonomy so their accountability can include contract specific requirements. District operated schools are governed directly by CPS policies.

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? I would want them to have a relationship based on accountability, transparency, collaboration and a shared responsibility for students. I don't want to predetermine what the relationship should/will look like in five years from now. The education system needs to respond to student needs, enrollment and measurable results. My policy would focus on what should remain consistent across all public schools, high academic expectations, student safety and well being, responsible use of public dollars, resources and transparency. Over the next several years I would evaluate policies based on results.

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.