



## 2022 MPS Board of Education Candidate Questionnaire

The Advancing Equity Coalition (AEC) has spent the last several months listening to and learning from MPS families, community leaders, teachers, and principals to help guide these questions. We invite you to fill out this candidate questionnaire to help inform voters about your plans to improve the quality of education for students of color and Indigenous students across MPS. Your responses will be shared with the Minneapolis community through our newsletter, website, and social media channels. AEC is a registered 501(c)3 organization. We will only use the information collected in this questionnaire for voter education purposes. We will not endorse candidates in this election.

### Candidate and Campaign Information

Name: Fathia Feerayarre

Pronouns: She, Her, Hers.

Which Seat Are You Running For?: District 3

Campaign Website: <https://ffeerayarre.com/>

Candidate Email Address: [fathiaforschoolboard@gmail.com](mailto:fathiaforschoolboard@gmail.com)

Candidate Social Media Channels:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FathiaFeerayarreforSchoolBoard>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Feerayarre>
- Instagram:
- Others:

### Candidate Questions:

#### 1. Why are you interested in serving on the Minneapolis Board of Education?

I am a mother of 5, which 3 of them will be attending at MPS this year. I am concerned the low graduation rate, low reading scores of children of color and the lack of funding in our Public schools. I am also concerned the lack of leadership and the racism and discrimination that led some parents of color leave our Minneapolis Public Schools.

#### 2. What skills, experience, and/or expertise do you bring to be an effective member of the Minneapolis Board of Education?

I am an MPS mom, a former TA and an experienced social worker. I also have community organization skills that will support me to be an effective MPS board member.

- 3. The last three years of interrupted learning has only exacerbated Minneapolis Public Schools' nation-leading racial disparities in academic outcomes, leading to an academic crisis. What would be your top 3 priorities to address this racial disparity and improve the academic outcomes and experience for students of color and Indigenous students? What data and information will guide your decision-making in academics?**

My three top priorities will be ...

- A. Building a curriculum that is not biased and works for all of our children.
- B. Hiring and recruiting for more educators of color and helping our under-represented ESPs to climb the ladder.
- C. Families of MPS will be respected and their voices will be heard. They will be part of the decision-making because parents know what is best for their children. In addition, to close the racial disparity gap, we need to build a curriculum that is based on the needs of our children. Invest in our public school districts that are serving a high proportion of students of color and adopt policies to address racial inequalities in our public schools.

- 4. One of the biggest assets of Minneapolis Public Schools is the diversity of families the district serves. However, students receiving English Language Learner services often have some of the worst academic outcomes in the district. What actions will you take to improve the academic quality and educational experience for students receiving ELL services?**

I am concerned the curriculum and one of my priorities is to build one that is not biased and have the best interest of all students, specifically ELL learners.

- 5. Given that we are in a child and adolescent mental health crisis, what key policy changes or investments would you make to support the wellbeing of MPS students?**

To promote the mental health and well-being of our children we have to make sure that we provide an environment where students and school staff feel psychologically and physically safe, and this requires access to mental health support professionals and safely guarded schools. We need to invest in our public schools to make this happen, and with the right leadership anything is possible.

- 6. Teachers of color and Indigenous teachers are severely under-represented in comparison to the student population, with approximately 80% of the MPS teacher population identifying as white. Teachers of color and Indigenous teachers in the district report feeling isolated, experiencing a challenging work environment, and a lack of support. What strategies would you support to rapidly increase the percentage of teachers of color and Indigenous teachers in the district? What strategies would you support to improve the work environment for teachers of color and Indigenous teachers?**

I will recruit for more teachers and ESPs of color and I will make sure that our staff, ESPs and teachers of color are being respected, valued and cared for. I will listen and learn from the educators of color, indigenous teachers and the school staff in general in order to address their concerns and solve the issues they are facing in our MPS schools.

**7. Despite nearly 20% of MPS students receiving special education services, the academic experience and opportunities for students receiving special education services is rarely discussed by the Minneapolis Board of Education. What key policy changes and investments would you support to improve the educational experience and quality for students receiving special education services?**

**8. For several years, the MPS Finance Department has said, “the current cost structure is unsustainable long term” and “enrollment increases alone are not the solution”. As a policymaker and financial steward for MPS, what changes would you consider to MPS’ cost structure to ensure MPS is financially sustainable into the future?**

**Please email your completed questionnaire to [kenneth@advancingequitycoalition.org](mailto:kenneth@advancingequitycoalition.org) along with a headshot by Sunday, July 31<sup>st</sup>.**

### **About Advancing Equity Coalition:**

The Advancing Equity Coalition (AEC) is a coalition of organizations, working closely with MPS parents, educators, and community members, who have come together to develop the political will to eliminate institutional racism in Minneapolis Public Schools. We are driven by a vision that every student in Minneapolis Public Schools can succeed and deserves a high-quality education. With that, we are focused on ensuring the policies and conditions are in place for high-quality academic experience and opportunities for students of color and Indigenous students.

If you would like to learn more, you can visit our website: [www.advancingequitycoalition.org](http://www.advancingequitycoalition.org)

You can also visit our social media channels:

- Facebook: [facebook.com/advancingequitymps](https://facebook.com/advancingequitymps)
- Twitter: [@EquityMPS](https://twitter.com/EquityMPS)
- Instagram: [advancingequitymps](https://www.instagram.com/advancingequitymps)
- Youtube: [Advancing Equity Coalition Minneapolis](https://www.youtube.com/AdvancingEquityCoalitionMinneapolis)