



Questions for Candidates - D51 School Board, 2023

From moderator Michelle Boisvenue-Fox

Candidate Name and District: **Jose Luis Chavez, District A**

1. A variety of educators and studies indicate that an Arts education helps students with development of motor skills, language skills, social skills, decision-making, risk-taking, and inventiveness along with connecting them to cultures and the wider world. **What was your experience with the Arts as a student?**

When I was a student, in elementary school I was involved in choir and I participated in band from 5th grade to 12th. My experience in band was positive, it assisted me in gaining skills such as teamwork and collaboration. I wished I was able to draw, however unfortunately drawing stick figures is a challenge, however it causes me to have a greater appreciation of individuals who are able to draw and paint. In high school, I was also able to take machine shop and use the art of design and manufacturing items in class.

2. There is a term in the arts community and education called Arts Integration. In acknowledging students' different learning styles, education with arts integration has students demonstrate understanding through an art form no matter the subject. Examples include creating plays for a history lesson, commercial jingles to teach persuasive writing, or narrating creative stories through photographs. **What role do you see for the Arts in the education of a D51 student?**

I spoke with a youth regarding why does he like to draw and play a guitar? His answer was it helps him feel, understand what he is looking at and helps with his listening skills. Also, it is his way to express his feelings, he could be depressed, angry or happy it is all in his art. Applied arts help youth understand space and textures, this an important skill, which you are doing metal work, building a home. HGTV is all about the applied arts. Our world continues to change and we need individuals who developed their skills in computer programming as we are seeing an increase in employment in digital, media and robotics opportunities. I see the arts as an important aspect of our youth education.



3. As a community leader, I love this quote, "Because schools play a pivotal role in cultivating the next generation of citizens and leaders, it is imperative that we reflect on the fundamental purpose of a well-rounded education." It's easy to think of children as children but forget that they are an up-and-coming generation. **What do you see as the role of a D51 board member with regards to supporting curriculum beyond the core subjects of reading, writing, math, and the sciences to include an Arts Education?**

I believe our school district needs to educate the "whole child" and if we want to be an effective and competitive district then we need to provide our youth with the skills they need to find a career. We need to think outside the box. I believe the district supports the arts through programs like the Career Center and some students are able to attend CMU Tech and I have always felt this is an opportunity, which is not used as well as it could.

4. The Art Heritage Program was created in the 1980s for K-5 students after an economic downturn in Western Colorado -- the Oil Shale Bust -- led to major budget cuts. Today, parents and community volunteers in 25 D51 elementary schools, as well as private schools in the Grand Valley, offer six art units based upon well-known artists. Students learn about an artist's life and times, view presentations of the artist's work, then create their own art. **In order to effectively manage arts education in the 46 schools within the district, would you support a full-time director position for the Arts Heritage Program?**

I feel all of the art genres are important. I sit on the board of BAM, which is a youth mentorship program for the arts, I also wrote plays and ran youth Latino Teatro at one time. I would support a full-time director, if the budget allows for it.