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June 12, 2016

Colorado Association of School Boards
Superintendent Search for Adams County
1200 Grant Street
Denver, Colorado 80203

Ms. Amber White,

I would like to be considered for the position of Superintendent for the Adams County School District #14. Following is information concerning my educational preparation and administrative experience.

My extensive background in educational administration includes curriculum development, community relations, department management, and personnel management and evaluation. My organizational skills and strong interpersonal communication abilities have been proven in diverse educational environments with heavy school board interaction.

My competitive strengths include the following:

• Administrative - For the past thirty years, I have worked closely with district management, educators, parents, and students to maintain and improve an environment that develops individual potential, task satisfaction, fosters productivity, and enhances the quality of education. Throughout this time, I have been exposed to all aspects of the education administration functions and actively interfaced with all levels of the education management process to ensure that policies and procedures are followed. This exposure has been in the elementary, junior high, high school, and central office environments.

• Teacher – I have experience as a Spanish and physical education teacher along with a coaching background. I also have experience in Bilingual and Structured English Immersion Education.

• Education Doctor of Philosophy – Educational Leadership, Administration & Foundations
  Education Specialist – Elementary & Secondary Curriculum & Instruction
  MS - Secondary Administration and Supervision
  MS - Spanish/Physical Education
  BA - Education

• Bilingual - I speak English and Spanish fluently, and some Navajo.

• Finance - I have extensive experience in this area of the education process during my tenure as a Principal, Director of Elementary Education, Associate Superintendent, and Superintendent. I have practical experience in preparing Impact Aid budget, At-Risk proposals, staff development workshops, computer technology presentations, gifted and talented programs, grants, school fundraisers, corporate sponsoring programs, and payroll, ensuring that all aspects of these items meet the Uniform System of Financial Recording requirements, school board policy, and legal and administrative regulations.

Dr. Javier Abrego
• **Curriculum** - My experience has been very positive in the enhancement of a strong curriculum at every educational level. My responsibilities included aligning the curriculum to the state standards, developing district quarterly assessments and curriculum maps. My skills and aptitude have allowed me to guide three Under Performing districts to a Performing Plus status or earning an “A District” rating implementing the Beyond Textbooks and TAP curriculum frameworks.

• **Negotiating Committee** - Member of the East Chicago Administrative negotiating team. Team members were required to complete a course at Harvard University on Labor Management Cooperation and developing administrative leadership skills.

• **Human Resources** - Involved in the hiring process at three school corporations. I have interviewed many high school, middle school, and elementary teachers. Member of an administrative team that formulated questions, and conducted interviews for assistant principals, principals, directors, and associate superintendents.

• **Grants/Funds** – I have written and obtained grants totaling millions of dollars for the East Chicago, Chinle, and Ganado Public Schools. The grants were continuous and served over 7000 students. I also monitored and approved millions of dollars of Title I, Title II, Title III, and Compensatory Grants for the Arizona Department of Education as a member of the Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS).

The enclosed resume, credentials, and transcripts will provide you with further information on my experience.

If you desire a Superintendent who is goal focused, has enthusiasm, and excels at problem solving, planning, implementation and administration, feel free to contact me at.

Respectfully yours,
Javier Abrego
Javier Abrego, Ph. D.
Dr. Javier Abrego

Education

Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana
Doctor of Philosophy
**Major:** Educational Leadership

**Credit Hours:** 45
Attended August 2001 to August 2004
Degree conferred August 2004

Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana
Educational Specialist
**Major:** School Administration, **Minor:** Curriculum Development

**Credit Hours:** 60
Attended June 1990 to August 1991
Degree conferred August 1991

Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana
Master of Science
**Major:** Secondary Administration & Supervision

**Credit Hours:** 30
Attended August 1983 to August 1985
Degree conferred August 1985

Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana
Master of Science
**Major:** Spanish, **Minor:** Physical Education

**Credit Hours:** 30
Attended June 1975 to June 1978
Degree conferred June 1978

Experience

Grand Canyon Unified School District
Athletic Director/Dean of students
Grand Canyon National Park
The district consisted of 300 students so I was responsible for a little of everything. Some of my responsibilities were:
Hire coaches and create athletic schedules
Student discipline
Evaluate teachers using the Charlotte Danielson model

Jul 2014 - Dec 2015
Implement the Beyond Textbooks Curriculum Framework
Recruit teachers for all areas and I was responsible for 50% of new hires
Ongoing professional development for math, reading, writing & technology

**Reason for leaving:** Retired from the Arizona Public School System to spend time with family

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**Morenci Unified School District**  
Superintendent  
Morenci Arizona  
Jul 2012 - Jun 2014  

I was hired because the HS was rated a "D" and the district had a "C" rating. In my first year the HS was elevated to a "B" and the elementary school improved from a "B" to an "A". The following year the HS moved up to an "A" rating and the elementary school also earned an "A" rating which allowed the district to earn an "A" rating from the Arizona Department of Education. The honor was earned because 90% of our students passed the state AIMS test (Arizona Instrument to Measure State Standards).

The district consisted of 1500 students with approximately 50% Caucasian and 50% Hispanic. We had an elementary school, a middle school, and a high school with 400 students. The town was home to the largest copper mine in the entire United States.

In the district we implemented the Beyond Textbooks Scientific Curriculum Framework. Teachers who helped elevated the school to an "A" or "B" rating were eligible for incentive pay.

**Reason for leaving:** Moved to the Chicago area

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**Ganado Unified School District**  
Superintendent  
Ganado Arizona  
Jul 2009 - Jun 2012  

The district consisted of 1500 students living on the Navajo Reservation. We had 100% of the students on the free and reduced lunch program and 100% of the students were Navajo. We had one high school, one middle school and two elementary schools. We moved the district from a failing rating to a "C" rating and our elementary school was recognized by the state for being a high achieving school. A five million dollar grant/partnership was developed with Arizona State University to Grow our Own Teachers and to implement the Teacher and Student Advancement Curriculum framework or (TAP). We also offered performance pay for teachers and administrators with using federal dollars.

**Reason for leaving:** Obtained a Superintendent's position with the Morenci USD.

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**Arizona Department of Education**  
Education Program Specialist  
Phoenix Arizona  
Jul 2007 - Jun 2009  

Dr. Javier Abrego
I worked for the Office of English Language Acquisition and Services (OELAS) and our main responsibility was to implement the new law which required all English language learners to take four hours of English language development each day.

We also monitored districts throughout Arizona for state and federal compliance with Title I, Title II and Title III. In addition we also helped districts with Compensatory Education Grants and then monitored their after school programs.

**Reason for leaving:** I obtained a Superintendent's position in Ganado

**Chinle Unified School District**
Superintendent
Chinle
The district is located on the Navajo Reservation in Chinle, Arizona. The student population is 99% Navajo and 100% of the students were on the free and reduced lunch program. The district served approximately 4,500 students in one HS, two middle schools, and four elementary schools. When I arrived all seven schools were labeled Underperforming by the Arizona Department of Education. We elevated all schools to a Performing Plus status within a three year period with the support of the Professional Development Leadership Academy provided by the Arizona Department of Education. We also built a 35 million dollars sports facility for our community and a new administration center as well as renovate four of our schools.

**Reason for leaving:** Moved from Reservation to Phoenix to work for Arizona Department of Education.

**School City of East Chicago**
HS and Elementary Principal
East Chicago
The district serves over 12,000 students and 49% of the students being Hispanic and 49% Black with the remaining 2% being Caucasian. Approximately 80% of the students are on the free and reduced lunch program and the HS served 2,000 students. I was the Vice Principal in charge of curriculum and instruction and I am proud to say that 60% of our senior attended college after graduation.

I also served as the principal of a failing elementary school and within two years the school earned Excelling Honors. The school was home to 800 students and 80% were minorities on the free and reduced lunch program.

I was later promoted to Director of Elementary Education for the district and was responsible for ten elementary schools and over 500 teachers. In 2005 I moved to Arizona a become a Superintendent.

**Reason for leaving:** I moved from Chicago to Arizona to become a school Superintendent as I had earned a Ph.D. and needed a new challenge.

Dr. Javier Abrego
Morenci Report Cards

The Morenci report cards indicate the progress that was made during a two year period by implementing the Beyond Textbooks Curriculum Framework with fidelity. The framework has proven to be very successful in Arizona, and seven of the top ten performing districts in Arizona achieved their success with this framework. The report cards can be found in the Attachment section of this application and I ask that you please review this important document to see what can be achieved when everyone understands a scientific curriculum framework and implements it with fidelity.
Application Questions

1. As superintendent, how would you develop and nurture a successful working relationship with the school board, staff and community members in our district?

I have ten years of experience working with school boards and I feel that I have grown greatly in this area. I understand that I am ultimately responsible for everything that takes place in our district and accept this great responsibility. My success comes by forming a partnership with the Department of Education and the School Boards Association. These two agencies have provided me with knowledge and guidance to become a successful superintendent. The two agencies provide ongoing professional development for school boards and superintendents on state and federal mandates, school law, curriculum and instruction and forming a positive superintendent and school board relationship. These vital hours of professional development improve the rapport and trust between board and superintendent and lay the foundation for a successful school year.

Successful working relationship with school board

The most important role of the governing board is to establish policies and regulations for the district and to hire a superintendent. The superintendent’s role will be to carry out the wishes of the governing board and put the policies and regulations into practice.

All board members are well versed on school district policies, but it is always a good practice to have a work study session at the beginning of each year with all board members to assure we all understand our roles and responsibilities. In Arizona districts, I included the assistance of the Arizona School Boards Association or the Arizona Department of Education to help me with this process. In Colorado, I also plan to utilize the help of these agencies. Throughout the year we will depend on these two departments to educate us on state and federal mandates that affect our district’s budget and academic rating. The key is for the superintendent and board to continue to grow as a team, so that we can give our constituents correct information and have the knowledge to support our educational leaders.

The key responsibility of the superintendent will be to keep the governing board informed on all events and activities taking place in the district. This ongoing practice will assure the board is getting the facts rather than information that may or may not be true.

The superintendent is the main source of communication between the staff and the governing board, and it is important that we improve our schools in a scientific and systemic manner. It is the superintendent’s responsibility to obtain a School Improvement Plan from each of our schools and to get them approved by the governing board. A summer retreat with the Leadership Team will allow each school to share their plan with the board and this in turn will improve communication throughout the district.

Other superintendent responsibilities that improve board and superintendent relationships:

• Balance the district’s budget and seek federal and state dollars to supplement the M&O budget
• Attend conferences with the board to stay current with all educational issues
• Meet with schools, parents, and the community on a biweekly or monthly basis
• Assure all departments are in compliance and consult with district attorney as needed
• Address public concerns or grievances in a respectful and effective manner
• Visible in community and establish partnerships with higher education and works force

Working relationship with staff

Dr. Javier Abrego
A nurturing successful relationship with the staff will require a superintendent who listens to the concerns of the staff. The superintendent must not only listen but strive to remediate or improve on the concerns of the staff. As the superintendent addresses the concerns of the staff he will earn their respect and establish positive rapport with the staff and community. The superintendent may not always be able to solve the concerns of the staff but the most important item is to care about the staff and attempt to improve their positions. Each department must be treated with dignity and respect, and all individuals in the district must understand that they are all important to the district.

The working relationship will continue as the superintendent visits the various schools and communicates with the staff. I have been in positions from teacher aide to superintendent and feel very comfortable talking with individuals from all walks of life. I believe in face to face contact and individuals appreciate when the superintendent takes time to speak with them. It is not only important for a superintendent to be visible in our schools but also in the community.

The superintendent’s role will be to share the district’s academic plan with the entire staff and community, and inform each individual of the importance of their role so the district will achieve success. An example that comes to mind is the importance of our bus drivers. They bring the students to school each day and if they do not do their part then teachers will not have students in their classroom. The key is to make everyone feel important and special, and to have the success of our students as our main focus.

Positive relationship with parents and community

A positive relationship can be established with our parents and community by welcoming them into our schools. We start each year by welcoming them into our schools on the first day of school and explain how we will help their children achieve success in our schools. We share all of the good things going on in our schools and inform them of how they can volunteer their services to make our schools better. We also provide classes on how they can improve their daily lives by learning English, math, science and other subjects that will in turn allow them to support the classroom teacher. Many parents have special skills that can be shared with our classrooms in academic and extra-curricular areas. The process of educating our students is the responsibility of everyone and by working together we achieve success at a much faster rate. Parents can volunteer in the classroom in the areas of art, music, dance, and also the academic areas. A parent who knows how to lay tile on a floor can teach our students math and geometry from a practical stand point. This parent can also make learning fun as students do a hands-on project that can also lead to an Associate’s degree in a Career and Technical Education course.

All parents want their children to be successful and to have great jobs in the future. Schools must take an active role in educating parents so they may acquire skills to obtain a good job and to support their children at home. My parents only achieved a third grade education and lived a migrant life until my father relocated the family to East Chicago, where he worked as a laborer in the steel mills for 30 years. They were unable to help me with school academics, but they understood the value of a great education and provided me with strong values and beliefs during my adolescent years. Having a Doctorate degree changed my life, and I accomplished this even though I entered school unable to speak English and lived in poverty. As a school superintendent I always stress the importance of a good education and how it can open doors for our students. Parents need assistance in the process for their children to attend college. In one district, we developed partnership with higher education that allowed our sixth grade students a college experience. A partnership with Purdue University’s Gifted Program allowed our Navajo middle school and high school students to attend summer school at Purdue University in Lafayette Indiana, with all expenses paid by Purdue University. By establishing these programs for our students we were able to establish good rapport and build trust in our community.

Dr. Javier Abrego
In the Morenci Unified School District, we developed a partnership with a college that allowed our students to earn an Associate Degree in nursing, sports medicine, auto motives, cosmetology, and culinary arts. Parents were very appreciative as the school paid for the college credits and the parents in turn did not have to pay for two years of college tuition. Morenci Arizona is home to the largest copper mine in the United States and they also have companies in various countries.

The school system provides service leadership to our community. We strive for academic excellence and our ultimate goal is to help each student reach their maximum potential so they can be productive citizens and life long learners.

2. Considering that the district is in its fifth year of turnaround- or priority improvement status, how would you increase student achievement for all students while meeting the needs of student diversity and family poverty?

The first step is to understand the process of how the district achieved turnaround-or priority improvement status. The School Accountability Ratings indicate that a school must earn less than 37% to be placed on turnaround status. To improve, we form a partnership with the Colorado Department of Education and request the support that is provided by Senate Bill 09-163. The Colorado Department of Education, by law must provide chronically low-performing districts and schools with 1) data and research support; 2) consultative services on best educational practices; and 3) feedback and resources on the district and school plans. After all, we both want the same thing which is to improve student achievement and help all students become productive citizens. The CDE has curriculum frameworks that have been successful in other districts and they can recommend some to our district. I have also implemented three curriculum frameworks in prior district with much success and will seek approval to implement one of these in Adams County. The Adams Leadership Team must then decide which framework best fits the district’s needs, and then implement and monitor the curriculum framework on an ongoing basis. This strategy has proven very successful in other states because the department of education’s main responsibility is not just to monitor districts for compliance but also to assist and guide them to excellence. The most difficult component for success will be to implement the framework with fidelity and to monitor it on a weekly basis.

Curriculum framework models that I have had success with are the Teacher and Student Advancement Program (TAP), the Beyond Textbooks Framework (BT), and the Title I School Improvement Process. These three frameworks have many common factors and each will work when implemented with fidelity. Each of the frameworks will require specific professional development geared towards the school board, administrative team, staff, parents, and the community. We implemented the Title I framework in East Chicago with Hispanic and Black students and we elevated our elementary school from a failing status (F) to excellence in a two year period. The School City of East Chicago has approximately 7000 students with 50% being Hispanic and 50% Black, and 80% of the students are on the free and reduced lunch program. The most notable fact is that 50% of the graduating seniors go on to college. On the Navajo Reservation in Arizona we implemented the TAP framework and we elevated seven underperforming schools (D) to a Performing Plus Status (B) within a three year period. In Morenci Arizona we implemented the Beyond Textbooks framework and our high school was elevated from a “D” status to a “B” in one year, and then achieved an “A” rating in the second year of implementation. To achieve an “A” status a school must have 90% of the students passing the state test administered in April of each year. In Morenci we not only elevated the high school to an “A” rating, the elementary school to an “A” rating, but also the district to an “A” rating within a two year period. Teachers and administrators received a monetary incentive for moving the school to an “A” rating.

The East Chicago district was 98% minority and 80% of the students were on the free and reduced
lunch program. On the Navajo Reservation we had 100% of the students on the free and reduced lunch program and many students did not have running water or electricity. Poverty cannot be used as an excuse, and it is the responsibility of the staff to create programs to help all students achieve academic excellence. The Morenci district was 50% Hispanic and approximately 50% of the students were on the free and reduced lunch program. The schools and district achieved an “A” rating within a two year period, but many tough decisions had to be made by the administration and school board to achieve this success. As superintendent I earned the support of the school board, administrators and staff and I made sure the staff had the required materials and resources to implement the Beyond Textbooks framework correctly.

The frameworks listed above work because they address the following three concerns that all schools face on a daily basis and they are the following:

1. What do we want our students to learn? (Grade level standards)
2. How will we know if they learned it? (Assessments)
3. What are we going to do if our students don’t learn the standards? (Reteach block)

Meeting the needs of a diverse student’s population can be accomplished through professional development. Most districts provide one half day per month for teachers to address instructional needs of their classrooms. A work-study session on Differentiated Instruction will give teachers an understanding of why all students do not learn in the same manner or at the same pace. Another professional development session on Ruby Payne’s book Understanding Poverty, will give our teachers insight on the home challenges presented to our students and the disadvantages of living in poverty in the field of education. Other workshops that will benefit our staff will address the needs of English language learners and our special education students.

At the beginning of each school year it is important to share the district’s budget and the district’s academic status with our staff and community. This is important because the district is in its fifth year of turnaround improvement status and decisions will have to be made on programs that are not productive or cost effective. I strongly believe in making decisions based on our data and evaluating and updating our programs on a yearly basis. In prior districts I have formed a Superintendent’s Advisory Council composed of staff and parents that help me with this process. Other steps I have taken in prior districts to improve student achievement are as follows:

• Recruit and retain the best teachers from throughout the United States
• Mandatory Induction Program for all teachers new to the district
• Professional development in technology, child development, best educational practices, grade level standards, data, and understanding poverty and diversity in our schools
• Place an Academic Coach at each of our schools if the budget permits
• Incentives for staff and administrators for improving our schools
• Individual School Improvement Plans that support the district’s mission
• Implement before, during, and after school RTI programs as well as Summer School
• Implement a summer enrichment and remediation program, and partnerships will high education
• Mandate summer retreat for the Leadership Team to plan for the upcoming school year
• Monthly workshops for parents in math, reading, and writing on how to support their children at home and support the classroom teacher

Steps Needed for Fifth Year of Turnaround

In Adams School District I can elevate the district in two years with the full support of the governing board. I will need the board’s permission to implement the Beyond Textbooks Curriculum Framework with fidelity in our schools. To be successful I will need to create or eliminate positions at no cost to the
district. Staff will be moved to positions where they will best benefit the district, and job descriptions will change for various individuals. Below are the steps that need to be followed to be successful:

- Implement the Beyond Textbooks Curriculum Framework with fidelity (cost $13 per student)
- Directive to staff to implement the BT framework with fidelity at chosen schools
- Provide the needed professional development for staff
- Obtain grant to offset cost of Beyond Textbooks to district
- Modify school schedule to provide 30 minutes of additional instruction
- District provides materials, supplies, and resources to chosen schools
- Provide schools with an Academic Coach for smooth BT transition
- Schools schedule weekly data meetings to analyze student achievement
- Data teams analyze quarterly benchmarks on district assessments to modify instruction
- Schools meet with superintendent and board on a bi-weekly basis
- Quarterly reports provided to school board and parents after each grading period

I have the experience and a proven record of moving districts to excellence. It is a difficult process that requires change on the part of the Board and Superintendent, and both must be a united team to get the job done. I will need the support of the Board when making difficult decisions. As the new superintendent I will outline the steps that the district must follow to achieve success. The plan will be very specific and will be monitored by the superintendent and board on a bi-weekly basis. Individuals will not have a choice on whether to follow the plan or to teach in their own manner. A scientific framework will be successful only if implemented correctly. Therefore, principals will have to monitor their staff for compliance and make tough decisions on staff that does not follow the framework. The entire team must understand the possibility of the CDE taking over the district if the district does not succeed. Therefore, it is the superintendent’s responsibility to identify each person’s strength and place individuals in positions where they will most benefit the district.

The superintendent will hold bi-weekly meetings with the staff to monitor the progress of the district’s plan. During the meetings, the leadership team identifies items that are hindering implementation. The process allows them to network with each other and resolve common issues as a team. The bi-weekly meeting will also educate the governing board on objectives and timelines that must be met.

3. What strategies would you use to build and maintain a positive school climate and culture that encourages creativity while addressing the academic needs of all students according to state accreditation requirements?

The best way to establish a positive school climate and encourage creativity, is to allow all stakeholder input on the creation of the district’s mission, vision, and goals. These documents are the beliefs and values of the community and give everyone in the district certain responsibilities to uphold. The board and superintendent take the lead role and determine when the district’s mission and vision must be updated. The goals are updated on a yearly basis because at the end of each year we determine which goals were met and then update others for the following school year.

A very important step in maintaining a positive culture is for the superintendent and board members to visit schools throughout the year. It is important that we are visible in our schools and to let staff know that we are all in this together, and we want to see the progress that is being made in our schools. The board and superintendent must also be visible in the community. It is wise to have conferences with our
parents to inform them of state mandates and explain our mission, and the progress we are making in our schools to help their children. We must also inform our parents that they are always welcome in our schools, and we appreciate their support and attendance at all school and district functions.

Another strategy which is very important is to praise individuals for a job well done and recognize individual accomplishments on a monthly basis. This will motivate our staff and community and will keep the momentum going in a positive direction. The entire community will support our efforts if they truly know that we are doing everything possible to help our students succeed academically, physically, and emotionally in our classrooms.

A positive climate is attained when the superintendent is honest and respectful with everyone. I always inform individuals that we are here to serve our students, staff, and community. As a Superintendent I may not always be able to help everyone, but I will try my best to help as many individuals as possible. I strongly believe that all challenges are just an opportunity for educators to grow as a team and become a family.

Another successful strategy, is to have a Leadership Meeting in June to analyze our current data and programs to determine which will be eliminated or updated. I will hold each school accountable for the implementation of their programs and ask them to justify the success and cost of each program. Each school will present their data and share with the board and superintendent their successes as well as their short comings. The strategy will allow all schools to share and learn from each other. It will also help determine the cost effectiveness of each program in the event that our budget mandates cuts to school programs. It is important that all stakeholders understand the school improvement process and budget that supports our programs.

The team will then be given time to reflect on their plan from the previous year and asked to make modifications for the upcoming year. Each school will once again present their school improvement plan in July to the school board and superintendent. This will lay the foundation for schools visits by the governing board and superintendent that will take place during the school year. The board and superintendent will know exactly what strategies are being implemented by each school to improve in deficient areas. The school presentations in July will serve as the Summer Leadership Retreat and will improve the rapport between the staff and governing board.

Other steps or actions to improve student academics are as follows:

- Monitor the various departments for state and federal compliance (Sped, ELL, CTE...)
- Assure that each department has accurate data to justify their budgets
- Monitor the success of our the elementary reading program or reading textbook adoption
- Implement Daily Math Skills in our elementary schools (additional math minutes)
- Implement RTI during school day (additional 30 minutes added to schedule)
- Implement a common plan period for teachers to analyze state standards
- Strive for an Academic Coach at each school
- Curriculum Map in our schools indicating when a standard is taught and for how long
- Ongoing classroom assessments on state standards and an RTI period during school day
- A data room at each of our schools to monitor student growth for all sub groups
- Weekly data meetings required at schools
- Leadership Teams meets bi-weekly with superintendent and board
- Monthly professional development for all schools in various areas of need
- Partnerships with the Colorado Department of Education and higher education
- Monthly meeting or workshops with parents