Applicant
Bernadette Guthrie

Why do you want to be on the Board of Education for Academy District 20?
I am applying because Academy District 20 desperately needs institutional knowledge, experience, and directors who understand that serving on a school board is governance- not activism, personal politics, or an opportunity to impose an individual worldview on a public school system.

I have spent 35 years in District 20- first as a student, now as a homeowner, taxpayer and parent. I have served on district committees, volunteered in our schools, attended and closely followed Board meetings, studied Board policy and Colorado education law, reviewed budgets and public records, advocated for students and staff, and watched decisions made at the Board table ripple throughout our schools.

That experience matters.

Our teachers and staff deserve Board members who understand the systems they are governing. Our superintendent deserves directors who understand the distinction between governance and administration. Our taxpayers deserve directors who understand fiduciary responsibility, transparency, open-government requirements, and the consequences of poorly informed decisions. And our students deserve adults at the Board table who understand that public education belongs to all of them and not simply the students whose families share a particular director's political or ideological beliefs.

My experience with this Board is also unusually personal. I am currently involved in litigation with sitting director Derrick Wilburn arising from public criticism I made regarding his conduct as a candidate for this Board. I believe that experience illustrates precisely why a sophisticated understanding of constitutional rights, Board policy, and the obligations that accompany public office matters.

I have continued to participate in this district despite that litigation. I have continued asking questions, requesting records, reading policies, attending meetings, supporting teachers, and advocating for students. I have not allowed being sued by a public official to silence my participation in my own school district. If anything, it has reinforced why that participation matters.

What would be your top 3 priorities if you joined the ASD20 Board of Education?

1. Competent, lawful governance.

My first priority would be remarkably basic: ensuring that the Board understands and follows the laws and policies governing it.
Board policy should not be treated as optional depending upon the issue or individual involved. Directors should understand Colorado's open-meetings and public-records laws, statutory requirements governing school accountability, their fiduciary responsibilities, the limits of individual director authority, and the distinction between Board governance and district administration.
Experience and institutional knowledge matter. Our employees should not have to absorb the consequences while Board members learn these lessons through controversy, employee departures, litigation, settlements, or repeated changes in direction.

2. Rebuilding trust with D20 employees.

The people working in our schools are not political props. They are professionals.
D20 has extraordinary institutional knowledge sitting inside its classrooms, schools, and departments. Board members should be listening to those people before making sweeping changes that affect their work. Employees should be able to disagree, raise concerns, provide professional recommendations, and do their jobs without wondering whether their viewpoints or personal family situations align with the personal worldview of individual directors.
I would prioritize employee retention, competitive compensation, professional autonomy, meaningful staff input, and understanding why experienced employees have chosen to leave the district. Offering longevity bonuses as a last ditch effort to retain talent is short sighted and like putting a bandaid on a bullet wound when we are not willing to address the issues at the heart of these departures. It is past time to treat our teachers like the professionals they are with respect, trust, and true support.

3. Returning the focus to students- ALL students.

The Board's job is not to decide which students, families, books, ideas, or perspectives make individual directors comfortable.Public schools serve everyone.
And yet, far too much of this Board's time and attention has been consumed by everything except the core business of educating students. Board retreats, work sessions, and regular meetings have repeatedly centered on governance disputes, culture-war issues, rewriting policies, Board dynamics, and the priorities of individual directors. Meanwhile, substantive conversations about academic achievement, student growth, achievement gaps,

instructional quality, teacher support, and what is actually happening inside our classrooms too often seem secondary.
Academic excellence is not just a campaign slogan. It HAS to be reflected in how the Board spends its time, which has been far from reality.
While Academic excellence should remain paramount, education is broader than test scores. Students deserve access to rigorous academics, libraries, arts, athletics, career pathways, special education, mental-health resources, and information that prepares them to function in a diverse world. Decisions about curriculum and educational materials should be grounded in educational expertise, established policy, law, and student need- not whichever political controversy happens to be loudest at the moment.
If we want to call ourselves a district of excellence, the Board's agenda and its behavior should demonstrate that excellence is actually its priority.
There is another conversation I believe is conspicuously absent from the Board table: How are we preparing D20 students for the world they are actually going to inherit?
I have spent my career in technology, and I see firsthand how rapidly technology, automation, and artificial intelligence are changing the skills people need to succeed. The workplace our kindergarteners will enter will look dramatically different from the workplace their parents entered. A school district cannot prepare students for that future by simply doing what worked 20 years ago

Which Board policy do you believe should be changed/removed/updated and why?
Before identifying policies that need to be changed, I believe this Board needs to demonstrate that it will follow the policies it already has.

One policy I believe warrants particular attention is the Board's policy governing Board member conduct/ethics and the relationship between individual directors, the Board as a body, employees, and the public.

My perspective on this is not theoretical. Sitting Board member Derrick Wilburn sued me following criticism I made concerning his conduct as a Board candidate. I have defended that litigation on First Amendment and other legal grounds and we are now waiting for the Colorado Supreme Court to weigh in on what may very well be a case that is referenced for generations to come. In my view, the circumstances also implicate the very Board standards intended to govern how directors interact with members of the public and respond to criticism.

Regardless of the ultimate disposition of litigation, the underlying governance principle should not be controversial: elected officials must tolerate scrutiny and criticism from the people they represent- ESPECIALLY if such scrutiny arises from harming children.

I would therefore support strengthening the applicable Board policy to make unmistakably clear that directors are expected to respect constituents' constitutional rights, refrain from using their position to intimidate or retaliate against critics, distinguish personal interests from official Board business, and recognize that criticism of an elected official- even harsh criticism- is part of representative government.

But no wording change can substitute for enforcement. A beautifully written governance policy is meaningless if the Board will not hold itself accountable to it.

Please list any committees, associations or other roles you have had within school is ASD20, or schools outside of our District.
* Academy District 20 District Accountability Committee- Member 2024-Present * [redacted] Elementary- SAC Co-Chair 2021-Present * [redacted] Middle School- CTAC Member/Co-Chair 2022-2026 * [redacted] High School- Parent Advisory Council- 2026-Present * [redacted] Elementary School- PTA Member 2021-Present * [redacted] Middle School- PTSA 2022-2025 * [redacted] Elementary- Staff Holiday Party Committee 2023-Present * [redacted] Girls Field Hockey- Parent Volunteer * D20 Volunteer- 2015-Present * Regular participant in Academy District 20 Board meetings and governance processes * Extensive review and analysis of D20 Board policies, administrative policies, agendas, public records, budgets, and governance matters * Colorado Open Records Act requests and public-record analysis concerning district governance and decision-making My involvement with D20 extends considerably beyond attending Board meetings. I have spent years learning how this district actually functions- its policies, accountability structures, schools, employees, history, and community. I believe institutional knowledge is an asset in governance, and it is particularly important during periods of significant leadership turnover.

If you have students in the district, which school(s) do they attend?
yes, [redacted] Elementary and [redacted] High School

Outside of education, what are you most passionate about/what motivates you?
I am motivated by accountability.

Professionally, I lead a global team in a role that requires me to analyze complex requirements, work across competing stakeholder interests, identify risk, communicate clearly, and make decisions based on evidence rather than feelings. I have learned that leadership does not mean being the loudest or most certain person in the room. It means knowing what you know, recognizing what you do not know, seeking expertise, asking difficult questions, and being accountable for the consequences of your decisions.

Personally, I am passionate about my family, fairness, civic engagement, and the idea that ordinary people should not have to be lawyers, policy experts, or professional advocates to understand what their government is doing.

I am particularly motivated when institutions make it unnecessarily difficult for people to ask questions or challenge those in authority. Government works better when citizens pay attention. Public officials should welcome that engagement, not fear it.

I have taught my children that their voices matter, that they should ask questions, that disagreement is not disrespect, and that standing up for what they believe is right sometimes comes at a cost.

I cannot teach them those things and then behave differently myself.

BERNADETTE GUTHRIE

Technology Leader

Colorado Springs, CO | Contact information available upon request

PROFILE

Experienced global proposal operations leader with a proven record of building high-performing teams and scalable proposal functions from the ground up. Skilled in bid management, pursuit strategy, process improvement, and AI-enabled workflow transformation, with a track record of turning proposal operations into a strategic, revenue-enabling capability.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Bid Management • Pursuit Strategy & Qualification • Team Leadership • Project/Program Management • Process Improvement • AI-Enabled Workflow Transformation • Cross-Functional Collaboration

WORK EXPERIENCE

Global Director, Proposal Operations | Enterprise SaaS Company

Aug 2023 – Present • 3 yrs 1 mo

Built and scaled the company's first formal global proposal operations function, transforming the proposal process from a reactive administrative activity into a strategic revenue-enabling capability.

- Designed and implemented a scalable global proposal operating model, establishing structured intake, qualification criteria, and cross-functional engagement to ensure focus on high-value opportunities
- Led the implementation of Responsive (RFPIO), centralizing knowledge management, improving collaboration, and creating repeatable proposal workflows across teams
- Introduced proposal qualification and bid/no-bid discipline aligned to revenue strategy, improving opportunity selection and contributing to year-over-year win rate growth
- Streamlined proposal development processes to reduce operational friction, improve efficiency, and lower delivery costs while increasing response quality and consistency
- Partnered across Sales, Solution Consulting, Security, Legal, and Executive leadership to position proposal operations as a strategic contributor to deal success and revenue outcomes
- Led AI transformation of the proposal function, driving adoption of AI-enabled automation to increase response speed, reduce manual effort, and scale team capacity without proportional cost growth
- Built a high-trust, collaborative team environment focused on clarity, accountability, and continuous improvement

Director, Global Proposal Services | Enterprise Software Company (Post-Merger)

March 2021 – Aug 2023

- Built the Global Proposal Team from the ground up following a four-company acquisition/merger
- Guided the team through significant organizational change, implementing communication strategies that minimized disruption and maintained morale
- Vetted and implemented new RFP software, unifying processes and knowledge repositories across four merged companies
- Developed and executed a comprehensive implementation plan — including testing and training — for organization-wide adoption of RFPio
- Achieved 138% YoY growth in total opportunities worked, a 32.5% increase in average deal size, and more than doubled the team's win rate
- Led a comprehensive overhaul of the Revenue Operations training program, improving learning outcomes and reducing ramp time for new sales reps
- Developed sales enablement tools including strategic seeding templates, unsolicited proposal templates, and territory farming templates
- Led the process improvement initiative moving all post-sale and security questionnaires to the proposal desk, reducing operational costs and SLAs while increasing customer satisfaction
- Founding member of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility Committee, shaping CSR strategy and initiatives

Director, Global Proposal Services | Enterprise Software Company

March 2017 – March 2021

- Directed strategy, process implementation, and oversight of the Global RFP Team, delivering winning proposals that supported company growth
- Managed the full proposal lifecycle: pre-proposal planning, feasibility analysis, kickoff meetings, value proposition development, schedule and issue tracking, compliance oversight, and production
- Led proposal staffing and resource allocation across Technical SMEs, Professional Services, Legal, Security, IT, Development, and Customer Experience, up to C-level
- Managed multiple concurrent projects under shifting priorities and tight deadlines, frequently across evenings and weekends to meet client timelines
- Led sales enablement initiatives including the annual user conference, Force Management Sales Methodology implementation, Executive Briefing Center creation, and annual Sales Kickoff Events
- President's Club Winner 2018 ("MVP")

Project Manager, Professional Services | Enterprise Software Company

Jan 2015 – March 2017

- Delivered customer software implementations end to end, consistently on time and on or under budget
- Monitored and reported on project schedule, scope, budget, and milestone performance
- Managed a high-volume workload of up to 40 concurrent projects at various delivery stages
- Created formal resource management processes for the department and established a partner subcontracting program to align external delivery partners with projects

COMMUNITY & VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

Academy District 20 — District Accountability Committee, Member *2024 – Present*

Academy District 20 — Volunteer *2015 – Present*

[redacted] **Elementary — School Accountability Committee (SAC), Co-Chair** *2021 – Present*

[redacted] **Elementary — PTA Member** *2021 – Present*

[redacted] **Elementary — Staff Holiday Party Committee** *2023 – Present*

[redacted] **Middle School — Community Accountability Committee (CAC), Member/Co-Chair** *2022 – 2026*

[redacted] **Middle School — PTSA** *2022 – 2025*

[redacted] **High School — Parent Advisory Council** *2026 – Present*

[redacted] **High School — Girls Field Hockey, Parent Volunteer**

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Undergraduate coursework *2002 – 2006*

PMP® Certification Bootcamp, Project Management Academy *Issued Mar 2021*

APMP Foundations (Credential ID 104784) *Issued Mar 2019*

ITIL Foundations V3 *May 2015*