

ALAMEDA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CANDIDATE APPLICATION AND INFORMATION SHEET

**\*\*Please note: Candidates must reside within the boundary of the Alameda Unified School District to qualify for this appointment. AUSD Boundaries only include the City of Alameda. Candidates please ensure your home address is included below so that your residency can be verified.**

**Please complete and ensure your application packet is received on or before 5:00pm on Monday, December 6, 2023 at:**

Heather Little, Board President  
c/o Pasquale Scuderi, Superintendent  
2060 Challenger Dr.  
Alameda, CA 94501

OR emailed to [klonergan@alamedaunified.org](mailto:klonergan@alamedaunified.org)

*Application packets should include a completed version of this form, a resume, and a letter of interest.*

Date: 12/01/2023

Lin Shulin  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Initial)

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: Controller/Finance

Employer or Name of Self-Employed Business: Alameda Alliance for Health

No. of Years Residing in District: >7 years

Do you have children in the district's schools? Yes  No

If yes, what schools? One child two children in

1. Do you have prior experience serving on a governing board, including a school district board?  
Please list your prior board experience.

See attachment

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2. Have you worked on any school committees or participated in any school activities recently?  
Please list them.

See attachment

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3. Describe any other community or business activities in which you have participated. describe your role, and whether your work was volunteer or employment-related

See attachment

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4. Why do you want to be a school board member?

See attachment

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5. What do you see as the basic purpose of the public schools?

See attachment

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6. What is the role of the school board in the fulfillment of that purpose?

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7. How does the board's role differ from that of the superintendent?

See attachment

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8. What should be the relationship between the board members and the administration in the handling of school concerns?

See attachment

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9. Briefly describe how you believe you will contribute to the educational process.

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10. What do you see as the strengths of the school district?

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11. What do you see as the area(s) most needing improvement in the school district?

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12. What other pertinent information would you like the board to consider?

See attachment

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Thank you for completing the Candidate Application and Information Sheet.

Please note that the information provided here becomes public information and may be open to public inspection, including through a California Public records Act Request.

If you have questions about this application, please contact  
Kerri Lonergan: [klonergan@alamedaunified.org](mailto:klonergan@alamedaunified.org) or 510.337.7187

# Attachment to AUSD Application Form

**1. Do you have prior experience serving on a governing board, including a school district board? Please list your prior board experience.**

I do not have any official school board experience. During the COVID time, I served on a mental health non-profit board for roughly 9 months. From late 2022, I have been serving as an advisory board member for a for-profit education/leadership development company called A2C Academy.

**2. Have you worked on any school committees or participated in any school activities recently? Please list them.**

Currently (2023-2024 school year) I am the Math Kangaroo Committee Chair at [REDACTED]. I am also a Room Parent for the Transitional Kindergarten class at [REDACTED]. Last year (2022-2023 school year), I was the Math Kangaroo Committee Chair and organized free weekly Math Kangaroo practice sessions for 30+ students. Whenever possible, since 2017, I have volunteered in various classroom activities, including field trips, art projects and holiday projects. In my earlier time at [REDACTED], I was the lunch helper (2017-2018 school year), classroom helper (2018-2019, 2019-2020 school year), art docent (2018-2019 school year), PTA treasurer's assistant (2017-2018 school year), and PTA auditor (2018-2019 school year). In 2021, I graduated from AUSD's school smarts program and learned how the education system works in Alameda.

While volunteering, I have noticed teachers welcome parent volunteers, and students welcome non-teachers wholeheartedly. I have also noticed lower participation in volunteerism from minority families. With minorities making up to 50% of Alameda's population, I see an increasing need to engage the minority community. Engagement is bottom to top and top to bottom. In this board position, I seek to listen, and aim to translate the needs, wishes and desires of our diverse community, into actionable policies for our school district. For example, in 2022, in response to the post COVID registration of school for the Math Kangaroo program, I stepped up to work with the PTA president and the school principal to get [REDACTED] setup to welcome in-person exams. Realizing there was a need to better prepare our students for the competition, I organized a group of parent volunteers to set up free practice sessions. Our students loved to come to the practice sessions. We had an increasing number of participation each week. This year, our Math Kangaroo participation has doubled. This is an example of listening to the needs of the community, translating the desires to actions that benefit our students.

**3. Describe any other community or business activities in which you have participated. describe your role, and whether your work was volunteer or employment-related.**

For employment-related, I have been in the non profit/government healthcare finance space for the past 13 years. A lot of my work is closely tied to making healthcare better for those around us. I am currently the Controller for Alameda Alliance for Health. 98% of Alameda Alliance's clients are low income individuals, mostly from the minority community, with many with language barriers. For the first 10 years of my healthcare career, my primary role was to find/secure government funding as a governmental reimbursement specialist (various roles) to fund programs that support the low income community. For the last 3 years, my role as a Controller has expanded beyond government funding, it has also involved in making the workplace better for everyone doing business with us, including healthcare providers, vendors, employees. Some of the strategic projects I led included converting manual office work to automation by leveraging technologies, while upskilling my team to welcome such change, transforming payment methods so it's lower cost, and easier for our vendors and providers to do business with Alameda Alliance. I believe the core of healthcare and education is the same. They are both foundational human rights. A lot of barriers to accessing high quality both healthcare and education are systemic. It requires an intentional effort to change it. And it starts from the top. In addition to my day job, I have been advocating for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB). I am a committee member for my employer's DEIB committee.

For non employment related experience, for the past several years, I have contributed to developing new leaders in a leadership development organization called A2C Academy based in Silicon Valley. In 2014, while I was employed at Stanford Children's Health, I met Dr. Elizabeth Xu, who was an adjunct professor at Stanford University teaching a leadership program that I attended. Thanks to her training program, I transformed from an individual contributor role to a leadership role. In 2020, Dr. Xu started her new company A2C Academy. I helped with hosting open houses, hosting student debates, moderating elections, mentoring members and many more. In late 2022, Dr. Xu asked me to serve as an advisory board member. In addition to serving as a board member, I frequently provide career advice to a group of professionals from A2C Academy.

Several years ago, in honoring my grandfather, I established a scholarship for the elementary school I attended, in the hope to encourage students to pursue higher education. My life is better now thanks to the education I have received. So, being able to contribute back to education is near and dear to my heart.

#### **4. Why do you want to be a school board member?**

Reflecting on my own journey, education has not only bettered my life, it has changed my life completely. In 2021, I attended and graduated from AUSD's School Smarts program. In Session 6, it talked about leadership and advocacy. It planted a seed. I still remember in my heart today what was discussed. I wanted to become a school board member, inspired by the School Smarts program section 6 on how to lead and advocate.

While attending several AUSD's board meetings, I have noticed most of the discussions were centered around middle schools and high schools. With half of the grades being in elementary

school, the 5 board positions can benefit from more representation from lower grades. In addition, about half of Alameda's population are minorities, the board can benefit from having a new board member coming from the minority community. While working for the Math Kangaroo program, I realized those not familiar with how the school system works, especially minority families, had challenges in becoming an integral part of the education system. One of my goals in serving as a board member is to "activate" this group of families. I have chosen to raise my family in Alameda because it's a safe city with great schools. Many immigrant families like mine have benefited from those before us. Now that I am able to contribute, my goal is to continue the legacy of Alamedan and make our district better for those after us.

I believe my leadership experience has prepared me to serve in the role of governance. In five major roles and responsibilities as outlined by California School Boards Association, I am ready to #1 work with the other four school board members to set the direction for the district's schools, #2 establish an effective and efficient structure for the district, #3 provide support through the board's behavior and actions, #4, ensure accountability to the public as a community representative, and, #5 act as a community leader and to encourage all families to participate in making the Alameda Unified School District the best it can be.

#### **5. What do you see as the basic purpose of the public schools?**

In my opinion, the basic purpose of the public school is to inform, develop and prepare our children to blossom into full fledged contributory citizens in our society..

To inform, is to educate our students to develop the critical thinking skills they need to make good decisions.

To develop, is to guide our students to becoming productive in the workforce, economically and socially.

To prepare, is to lift our students so they have the confidence to try and succeed in life's endeavors.

Similar to healthcare, education is a fundamental human right. Compared to private schools, public schools ensure access for everyone, regardless of the families' ability to pay, ethnic and cultural background, economic and social status.

#### **6. What is the role of the school board in the fulfillment of that purpose?**

The California School Boards Association put out a great summary. The roles and responsibilities of the school board have five major areas.

First, the school board sets the direction for the community's schools. This is a centerpiece of the governing board to ensure a long-term vision is established for the school system. The vision reflects the consensus of the entire board, the superintendent and district staff, and the community as to what the students need in order to achieve their highest potential.

Second, the school board establishes an effective and efficient structure for the school district. The board is responsible for establishing and maintaining an organizational structure that supports the district's vision and empowers the professional staff. Although the board doesn't implement policies or programs, the board is responsible for: employing the superintendent and setting policy for hiring other personnel; overseeing the development of and adopting policies; setting a direction for and adopting the curriculum; establishing budget priorities, adopting the budget and overseeing facilities issues; and providing direction for and adopting collective bargaining agreements.

Third, the school board provides support. Through its behavior and actions, the board has a responsibility to support the superintendent and staff as they carry out the direction of the board. This involves: acting with a professional demeanor that models the district's beliefs and vision; making decisions and providing resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals; upholding district policies the board has approved; ensuring a positive personnel climate exists; and being knowledgeable enough about district efforts to explain them to the public.

Fourth, the school board ensures accountability to the public. As community representatives, the board is accountable to the public for the performance of the community's schools. The board establishes systems and processes to monitor results, evaluates the school system's progress toward accomplishing the district's vision and communicates that progress to the local community. In addition to what's discussed above, the board also serves as a judicial and appeals body; monitors student achievement and program effectiveness and requires program changes as indicated; and evaluates its own effectiveness through board self-evaluation.

And last but not least, the school board acts as community leaders. The board has a responsibility to involve the community in appropriate, meaningful ways and to communicate clear information to the community about district policies, educational programs, fiscal condition and progress on goals. As the only locally elected officials chosen solely to represent the interests of schoolchildren, board members also have a responsibility to speak out on behalf of those children. Board members are advocates for students, the districts' educational programs and public education. The board builds support within the communities and at the state and national levels.

These five responsibilities represent the functions that are so fundamental to a school system's accountability to the public that, in our democratic society, they can only be performed by an elected governing body. Authority for these roles is granted to the board as a whole. Therefore, board members fulfill these roles by working together as a governance team with the superintendent to make decisions that will best serve all the students in the community. The California School Boards Association offers a variety of resources that provide further information about these critical roles.

## **7. How does the board's role differ from that of the superintendent?**

The board is responsible for hiring the superintendent. The board provides direction to the superintendent and evaluates the performance of the superintendent. While the superintendent is running the day to day operations of the school district, school board members are ultimately responsible for the school district on behalf of the citizens of the school district.

**8. What should be the relationship between the board members and the administration in the handling of school concerns?**

I believe in what's stated in the district's governance handbook. Overall, for any types of concerns, the board will listen carefully, and listen to both sides of the story. The Board should refer the complaining party to the Superintendent to lodge a formal complaint. The Board will assure that the complaining party is properly informed of their rights and about the investigation process. The Superintendent will keep the Board apprised of the investigation and ultimately about the outcome of the investigation. The Board will ensure that the investigation and findings are done in a timely and thorough fashion. As a judicial and appeals body, the board should exercise caution when hearing concerns regarding student and/or employee discipline matters, as these types of concerns should be referred to the Superintendent's office.

**9. Briefly describe how you believe you will contribute to the educational process.**

If selected, either through appointment or election, I believe I can contribute in the following three areas:

First, I will contribute to perform citizen oversight to ensure accountability to the public, especially in the area of fiscal accountability. My fiscal management background is well suited to serve in the role of governance in the district's fiscal and monetary policies, budgeting priorities, and ensuring accountability of expenditures and eventually meeting the board's objective in fiscal stability. In addition, I have over 10 years of experience in managing policies and procedures in fiscal management. I will contribute to ensuring checks and balances are met at the district.

Second, I will contribute to setting the district's strategic directions. Alameda's demographics have been changing, with a rising percentage of minorities. With the new development of the West End, it will bring a new influx of residents. With California's universal pre-kindergarten, younger and younger children are entering the student body. How does the district prepare to welcome these changes positively? As a parent with younger children, I have already seen a lot of challenges that can turn into opportunities. For example, the district can enhance the integrated system that treats the student as a whole. If I am selected, I would like to work with the City of Alameda in its ARPD youth program to provide childcare services (potentially with a fee) for elementary back to school nights, where children are not allowed to attend. I also believe in better coordinated after school programs. This is especially important for the families with transitional kindergarteners. How about the existing play structures, are they appropriate for 3 years old?



Third, I will contribute by advocating and acting as a community leader. I seek to listen, to understand and to be a superb communicator. I will work with other board members and the school administration to translate needs, wants, wishes and desires into policies that are actionable, for the benefits of our schoolchildren.

**10. What do you see as the strengths of the school district?**

Alameda schools have overall great ratings, compared to neighboring cities of Oakland and San Leandro. For example, in California Department of Education 2022's report on district performance for Alameda County, the district was rated high in English Leader Progress, graduation rate, English Language Arts, and mathematics, with low suspension rates. This is outstanding compared to Oakland Unified's low in English Leader Progress, graduation rate, English Language Arts and Mathematics, with median in suspension rate. San Leandro Unified had slightly better ratings in certain categories compared to Oakland in some areas, however, English Language Arts and Mathematics have low ratings.

**11. What do you see as the area(s) most needing improvement in the school district?**

I see three areas needing improvement in the school district.

First, the 16.9% chronic absenteeism rate in 2022 is relatively high compared to other districts with great ratings, for example, Albany City Unified has 12.7%, Berkeley Unified has 13.5%, Dublin Unified at 12.2% and Pleasanton Unified at 12.6%. I would like to work with other board members to implement actionable policies to improve in this area.

Second, even though mathematics had a great rating overall, it's only 7.2 points higher than the standard, which shows a huge gap between the district and other comparable school districts like Albany City Unified, Fremont Unified, Dublin Unified and Pleasanton Unified.

Third, in general, our district's teachers are not well paid. I understand it's mostly funding constraint related. I would like to explore possibilities of how to creatively enhance the pay of our teachers. I have a very recent example. My 6th grader came home one day with a blue slip from his engineering teacher, asking for monetary donation. It asks for a check made payable to the school. I have not had a checkbook for several years. It could have asked for Venmo or Zelle. I really look forward to visiting the funding with other school board members and exploring improved, new and innovative ways to access more funding.

**12. What other pertinent information would you like the board to consider?**

I am a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) licensed in California. I am working on becoming a Certified Treasury Professional (CTP). I am 100% foreign educated. Through self study, I became a CPA in the United States.

I speak/read/write fluent Mandarin and Cantonese, plus another two dialects. I am an immigrant. I came to the United States in 2006. My husband is a scientist in a pharmaceutical company located in [REDACTED].

I am a mother to 3 children. One is attending [REDACTED]. Two are in [REDACTED]. My children were all born in the East Bay.

I have lived in Alameda since 2016.