

WILLIAM E. BLAKE

APS
SCHOOL
BOARD

William E. Blake
Ohio
USA



1 OCTOBER 2024

Hiring Team

Akron Public Schools Board of Education
70 N Broadway St
Akron, OH 44308

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

I hope this letter finds you well. As a lifelong resident of Akron and an active leader in this community, I am writing to express my interest in the open position on the Akron Public Schools Board of Education. My deep passion for youth development, educational equity, and community service, combined with my professional experience in leadership and programming, make me uniquely suited to help address the challenges facing Akron Public Schools today.

Throughout my career, I've had the privilege of contributing to the growth and diversity of several organizations in Akron, notably as the Director of Programming for the Rubber City Jazz & Blues Festival and the 3rd Vice President of the Akron NAACP. In these roles, I've honed skills that will be valuable on the Board, including strategic planning, resource allocation, and fostering inclusive environments—skills that are essential in balancing the needs and resources within our schools. For example, during my time with the festival, I successfully expanded our geographical reach by 20%, while enhancing the diversity of our programming and leadership team. These initiatives increased engagement and participation, reflecting my commitment to equity and representation, something I believe is critical in education as well.

I also recognize that community expectations and accountability are paramount for school board members. Through my work with organizations like the Akron Urban League Young Professionals and Summit County Arts & Inclusion Council, I've consistently served as a bridge between organizations and the communities they serve, fostering understanding and support. Whether it's through organizing educational panels or advocating for policy change, I've learned the value of listening to varied perspectives, addressing concerns openly, and ensuring that the voices of those I represent are heard. In a role as important as this one, maintaining strong relationships with parents, students, and educators is essential to building a supportive educational environment.

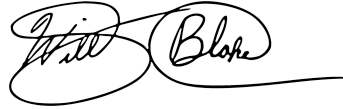
One of the greatest challenges our school district faces is ensuring equity in educational access and opportunity. Serving on boards and committees that are dedicated to inclusivity, like the Summit County Arts & Inclusion Council, has equipped me with the tools to approach this issue thoughtfully and strategically. My efforts in expanding diversity within arts and culture initiatives have created more inclusive platforms for underrepresented groups, and I'm eager to bring the same focus on equity to Akron Public Schools, ensuring that every student has the resources they need to succeed.

It would be an honor to apply these skills as a member of the Akron Public Schools Board of Education. I believe that with my experience in

governance, my passion for education, and my commitment to community engagement, I can contribute meaningfully to the district's future. I welcome the opportunity to further discuss how my background aligns with the needs of the board and how we can work together to create lasting, positive change for Akron's students and families.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to the possibility of serving the Akron Public Schools community in this capacity.

Love and Light,
William E. Blake

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will Blake", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

[LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/itswillieb/>]