

Statement of Interest in Appointment to the Durham Public Schools Board of Education District 3 Vacancy

In order to serve on the Board, a candidate must reside in school board district 3, not be a convicted felon unless restored to the rights of citizenship, be a registered voter, be at least 21 years of age, and not be an employee of Durham Public Schools.

Additionally, all candidates should be prepared to fulfill responsibilities including participating in work sessions, monthly meetings, hearings, called meetings, school visits and regular communications with constituents.

Name: Jessica Friedlander

Preferred Pronoun: she/her/hers

Address: 610 Panthers Run Drive

Durham, NC 27713

Telephone: 612-720-8844 Email: jess.friedlander09@gmail.com

I hereby declare my interest in filling the vacant District 3 seat on the Durham Public Schools Board of Education through June 30, 2024. I have read the DPS Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for School Board Members (1106) and agree that if I am appointed to the vacant seat I will comply with the code and with all other policies governing the conduct of board members.

I certify that I reside within the boundaries of District 3 and that I am eligible to vote in elections for the District 3 seat on the Durham Public Schools Board of Education.



February 26, 2023

SIGNATURE

DATE

*The completed form must be delivered to Nicole Smith, School Board Executive Assistant, by **8am. on February 27, 2023.** The form may be delivered to Ms. Smith by electronic mail at Nicole.Smith@dpsnc.net or by letter carrier at Durham Public Schools, 511 Cleveland Street, Durham, NC, 27702.*

Statement of Interest

My name is Jessica Friedlander, and I am interested in filling the vacancy for District 3 on Durham's Board of Education. I have lived in Durham just shy of 10 years now, and passionately love this city and community. I worked for 8 years at Riverside High School, resigning last spring to be a stay-at-home mom while my girls are little. While I love being home with them, I do deeply miss being in the classroom. I would like to serve on the Board to utilize my skills, experience, and energies to support DPS and the Durham community. I am a service-oriented energetic individual, thrive on personal connection, and am deeply committed to education and social justice.

I would love an opportunity to give back to the Durham community, advocating for students, families, and educators. As a former teacher, I understand the important role the Board plays for DPS, and am deeply committed to continuing to support and improve DPS. As a growth minded person, I seek out and enjoy new opportunities to learn more and increase my understanding, particularly about equity, social justice, and education in Durham. I am excited for a chance to learn from the board, engage in reflective conversations, and build consensus to continue to serve students, families, and the growing Durham community. I believe in high quality education, and I'd love to serve the students in a new manner to help make DPS the best school system it can be.

My recent extensive experience in DPS provides me with a unique combination of knowledge, skills, and understanding to be an asset to the Board. I am well acquainted with many of the topics and issues in DPS, such as building maintenance, equity advocacy, mental health concerns, teacher shortages, and the post-Covid in-building experience. Further, I have deep relationships with teachers (from pre-service to veteran), students, and parents in the community. As a history high school teacher, I regularly facilitated challenging conversations, fostered an environment where all voices were heard and valued, and was always focused on meeting students where they were and helping them prepare for the future. I bring ample knowledge and experience about curriculum, school resources, challenges facing schools, and communication with families. I have coordinated trainings and PD, evaluated and mentored teachers, designed curriculum, and spearheaded initiatives to boost supports for students. I am an adaptable, creative, and reflective team player.

In my 9 years working in DPS, I worked hard to listen and learn, I asked questions and sought out solutions, I reflected and adapted, and I worked tirelessly for the students. For example, I attended SIOP training and advocated for sheltered ESL courses to better serve students, and I facilitated conversations among AP teachers and stakeholders focusing on equity, outreach, and support. I have held various leadership roles, including PLT lead, Student Government Advisor, and AIG Specialist. My work in these roles highlights my continued commitment to equity in education, as many of my initiatives focused on supporting historically marginalized groups. The experience and outcomes of these roles show my collaborative, culturally responsive, and relational style of leading. From leading PLT meetings and guiding curricular choices to planning and executing two leadership conference field trips to Chicago to presenting at the AP National Conference in 2019, my experiences in leadership at Riverside showcase my commitment to the whole student, thoroughness and persistence, strategic planning skills, high quality work, ability to take initiative, growth mindset, and intellectual abilities.

Finally, as a stay-at-home mom, I have a flexible schedule. For meetings and work needs, I have the support of my mother who lives locally, my husband, friends, and babysitters to watch my girls as needed.

Jessica Friedlander

610 Panthers Run Drive • Durham, NC 27713
(612) 720-8844 • Jess.Friedlander09@gmail.com

Education

UNC Wilmington, MA in History current
Duke University, AIG Licensure Program
2020-2021
Duke University, Graduate School
June 2014
Master of Arts in Teaching, GPA 3.91

- Duke Teaching Fellows recipient

Bryn Mawr College, Bachelor of Arts, History May
2009
History Major GPA 3.0, Concentration in Education GPA 3.6
University of College Dublin, Study Abroad
Fall 2007

Honors & Awards

Duke MAT Mentor Teacher Fall 2019 – Spring
2022

- Provide support transitioning from online to in-person by conferencing, observing, & assisting in planning brainstorming.

Beginning Teacher Mentor
Fall 2017

- Worked with teachers on classroom management, pedagogy, differentiation, & best practices for teaching.

Recipient of Alan B Teasley Travel Award
2016
Beginning Teacher of the Year Finalist 2015-
2016

Professional Experience

Duke Teach House Mentor *Fall 2022 –*
Present

- Work with beginning teachers in support role, provide mentoring, PD sessions, and one-on-one individualized support.

Social Studies Teacher Riverside High School *Fall 2014 – Spring*
2022
2015-2016 Beginning Teacher of the Year Award.
Teaching Experience
AP Human Geography *Spring 2017 – Spring*
2022

- Increased pass rate (with a 3+, gaining students college credit) every year taught.
- Recruit underrepresented minority students within school & with middle school visits. In 4 years, grew enrollment in the program from 2 sections of 25 to 3 sections.
- Focus on critical thinking, analysis, and explanatory writing through various activities. Teach study habits & reading for comprehension skills needed for future AP courses.

American History II – Honors, Standard & ESL *Fall 2014 – Spring*
2022

- Use the concepts of storytelling, multiple perspective, microhistory, and bottom-up history engage students in critical thinking.
- Integrate podcasts, news broadcasts, opinion pieces, and sections of academic history texts into class.
- Revamp lessons to incorporate local history as well as stories of multiple minority groups seamlessly into the curriculum, utilize various teaching methods including: projects, document analysis, hands-on experiences, interactive technology activities, & discussions, additionally coordinate with ESL department to enrich & modify reading & writing.

Leadership Roles
AP PLT Lead *Spring 2018 - Spring*
2021

- Support focus on equity, access, and support for students, teachers, & parents involved in our program, aligned with SIT goals.

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- Lead monthly meetings, plan agenda, lead discussions such as adapting program goals, alignments of AP program, promotion of program, and supports for students, & send regular communication regarding pertinent updates.

AP Human Geography PLT Lead *Spring 2022*

Fall 2018 -

- Developed pacing guide and assessments.
- Collaborated with team to create note structure, interactive activities (online & offline), new projects based, and revamped our multiple choice & written test structure based on the new course of study from 2019.
- Organized field trip to local religious sites.

American History 2 PLT Lead *2022*

Fall 2014 – Spring

- Lead full-day in-service work day to create pacing guide, determine overarching thematic goals and skill-attainment goals, and share resources. Coordinated division of labor for creating resources for new curriculum in 2014.
- Launched initiatives to: use more projects & group work, increase consistency of teaching writing, include primary sources in each unit, create vertical alignment. Shared my resources as models for rubrics, interactive lessons, writing strategies.
- Lead bi-weekly meetings, devise team goals, take minutes, communicate with administration.

Department Interview Representative *2021*

Spring 2016 - Spring

- Attend job fairs, host initial interviews, promote our department, rank applicants. Attend second interviews, make rec for hire.

AIG Specialist Riverside High School

2020-2021

- Spearheaded the following initiatives:
 - Registration Level-Up - presented to faculty initiative for each teacher to create meaningful & tailored encouragement of at least 1 student to take advanced courses; created talking points & google survey to collect student names for follow up.
 - AP Student Supports Survey - surveying all current AP students to determine what supports they want & need from school.
 - AP Summer Readiness Camp - advocating for school-based AP prep program to increase equity & school community.
 - Creating AP Testing Website - provides students & families with updated review & testing information.
- Established & lead the Equity in Advanced Academics Team, focusing on creating systems to increase enrollment in honors & AP courses from historically underrepresented students, as well as provide schoolwide supports tailored to the needs of students.
- Representative on Advanced Academics Leadership Council.
- Organized & led first AP Information Family Night, including creating succinct information handouts, promotion of event, and coordination with AP teachers, current AP students, and recent alumni to serve on panel.
- Collaborate with Middle School AIG Specialists for future vertical alignment, create outreach & promotional AP class info.
- Collect and analyze data regarding enrollment in AP level classes, AIG student numbers, and overall school demographics. Use data to create specific recruitment tools, such as AP Potential Letters home.
- Consult with students & families, focusing on: recommended enrollment in advanced courses, setting & meeting goals that align with students' vision, providing academic supports, providing information about benefits of advanced courses.
- Coordinate with College Counselor & counselling team to coordinate programming for college preparation.
- Launched partnership with Duke University Education professor for undergraduate service-learning program to offer drop-in college application assistance during free NC application week, & offer 45 minute sessions tailored to high school learners regarding growth mindset, motivation, & study skills.

Presentations

AP Annual Conference *2019*

Summer

- Presented with Principal & Assistant Principal on our initiatives as a school for transparency as a faculty, and creating equity & access for all students in our AP program. Some initiatives include utilizing our AP PLT to start making an AP study space, planning outreach at the middle school, preparing an AP-week where students can try out classes

ESL Presentation to Duke MAT Program *Present*

Fall 2018 –

- Presented strategies & best practices for modifying lessons for ESL students of varying levels of English proficiency with former co-teacher. Explain the 4 ACCESS test categories and provide exemplars of modifications to grow student proficiency.

Panel Participant for Duke MAT Program *Present*

Fall 2014 –

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- Discussed with the cohort best practices as a beginning teacher, such as: differentiated instruction, use of literacy strategies in non-English classes, use of images to skills & content, strategies for assessing knowledge other than multiple choice tests, using PLTs, and maintaining sanity.

Extracurricular & Volunteer Experiences

Student Government Advisor

Fall 2014 – Spring 2021

- Host weekly meetings and train student leaders on how to lead meetings, image, plan, and execute events, and advocate for their ideas with building leadership. Focus on active student engagement at school to build a positive school community.
- Organized and lead two Chicago leadership conference field trips for students (Fall 2017 & Fall 2019), including fundraising initiatives to ensure trip if affordable for all students.
- Assist & facilitate student-led schoolwide events, such as fun Color Runs, Pancake Breakfasts, Mental Health Wellness Wednesdays, Candy Grams, holiday spirit days, student-led community circle discussions. Manage SGA social media accounts.
- Organize and execute schoolwide events, such as Homecoming Week (including pep rally, spirit days, dance, tailgate, senior picnic, and homecoming court), and the Annual Thanksgiving Basket Food Drive.

Lesson/Curriculum Writing Experiences

- Hollywood or History? - co-wrote 2 lessons on African American history through film to be published 2022.
- DPS Hybrid Lessons - created 2 units of hybrid lesson plans with online and offline options.
- AP Human Geography & American 2 PLT Lead - crafted pacing guide, curriculum goals, interactive lessons & local field trips
- WWI Scholar with UNC - created a multi-day investigatory [lesson](#) on the impact of WWI on the home front, focusing on NC
- Full Frame Teach the Teachers Fellow - crafted a lesson plan template for films from the festival
- NEH Summer Institute in Chicago on Gilded Age and Progressive Era - recreated a unit based on findings from seminar & was invited to write a [lesson](#) for the Edsitement website

Professional Development Participation

Canvas Kyte Trainings –Canvas Department Lead	Selected to be Canvas Department Lead, attended online trainings for Canvas, coordinated with other leads to create training & support for entire staff	Summer 2020
AP Reader – Human Geography	Selected to read, & trained to grade AP Human Geography FRQ questions. Graded for 8 hours each day for 7 days.	Summer 2019 & 2020, 2022
APSI Human Geography	Attended 4-day training that covered content, pacing, study strategies, sample lessons, critical geography skills needed, and training on FRQ writing & grading	Summers 2020 & 2016
AP Annual Conference	Attended 3 days of presentations exploring racial & SES equity in AP courses; crafted a plan for the following year for my school to increase enrollment in AP courses	Summer 2018
National Board Certification Process	Received National Board Certification. Submitted components 1 & 3 in 2018, received above a 3.0 on averaged score. Submitted component 4 in 2019, received a perfect 4.0.	Fall 2017 – 2019
WWI Scholar with UNC	3 day training at the North Carolina History Museum, focusing on the exhibit of NC in WWI; listened to various expert presenters; toured the museum & crafted a social media scavenger hunt ; explored digital primary sources; created a multi-day investigatory lesson on the impact of WWI on the home front, focusing on NC	Summer 2017
NCCAT (North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching) Digital Learning in English, History, & Science Classrooms	4-day training focused on using technology in the classroom; learned how to: create interactive google maps, create assignments where students watch videos & answer questions throughout the video, annotate PDFs, set up digital discussions & commentary boards. Presented to the faculty about integrating technology into the classroom, & set up my teacher website with tech lessons, such as: an interactive Google map of WWII battles	Summer 2017
Full Frame Teach the Teachers Fellow	Attended the Full Frame Festival for 2 full days of documentaries & presentations by filmmakers; crafted a lesson plan template for films from the festival	Spring 2017
NEH Summer Institute in Chicago on Gilded Age and Progressive Era	4 weeks of daily courses with history readings & presentations by various professors, in addition to visiting various historic sites throughout Chicago, such as where various riots occurred or the site of the Chicago World's Fair; discussed best practices for making this era engaging, including more voices, such as Mexican Americans, women, African Americans, laborers, etc.; recreated a unit based on findings from seminar & was	Summer 2016

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	invited to write a lesson for the Edsitement website	
NCCAT (North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching) The Canvas Connection	4-day training on using technology as a tool for learning, focusing on using Canvas or other tracking websites, such as Google sites & Google classroom; advocated for use of full Canvas at school but was denied; created webquests for American History using digital textbooks & primary source photos & cartoons	<i>Spring 2016</i>
SIOP ESL Training	3-day training over 2 months focusing on how to modify instruction for ESL students; participated in small group discussion & readings; modified several lessons & advocated for the teaching of sheltered ESL classes	<i>Fall 2015</i>

References

- Tonya Williams, known since 2016, former principal, job: works at TNTP; contact: 919-641-5981
- David Norman, known since 2013, former mentor & department chair, job: Social Studies teacher at Riverside High School; contact: David.Norman@dpsnc.net
- Laura Parrot, known since 2018, job: Director of Advanced Academics for DPS; contact: Laura.Parrott@dpsnc.net
- Alaina Burr, known since 2015, former co-teacher & instructional coach, job: Assistant Principal Southern High School; contact: Alaina.Burr@dpsnc.net
- Kristen Stephens, known since 2017, former parent of students & professor for AIG courses, job: Education Department Chair for Duke, contact: kstephen@duke.edu
- Jan Riggsbee, known since 2022, current director of Duke TeachHouse; contact: jrigg@duke.edu

From: [Mary Foster](#)
To: [Nicole Smith](#)
Subject: Letter of Support for Jessica Friedlander
Date: Sunday, February 26, 2023 1:48:43 PM

CAUTION: This is an external email. Do not click links or open attachments unless they are a trusted sender. Send all suspicious email as an attachment to itsupport@dpsnc.net.

Dear Ms. Smith,

Please find below a letter of support for Jessica Friedlander to run for school board.

February 26, 2023

Dear Durham Public Schools Board of Education,

I am writing this letter in support of Jessica Friedlander's interest in running for the Board of Education. I had the pleasure of working with Ms. Friedlander for many years at Riverside High School when she taught history courses and I taught English courses. I found Ms. Friedlander to be an astute professional who always put her students first.

Ms. Friedlander started her work at RHS as a long-term sub for an English teacher who left for medical reasons. While this was not her field of expertise, she worked hard to create lesson plans that were worthwhile for the students and would provide with them the necessary skills to prepare them for the next course in the series. She also reached out to English teachers for help and guidance which illustrated from the beginning her willingness to work with others to help students.

Then RHS was fortunate enough to hire Ms. Friedlander for her chosen field of interest which was history. She was a tireless, motivated educator who worked diligently to make history interesting to a wide variety of students, from the most motivated to the least motivated and all those in-between. We often shared students, and those students always told me stories of the information they learned in her class and how it related to the work we were doing in English.

I watched as Ms. Friedlander took on the responsibility of the Student Government Association and as a leader, helped students develop their leadership skills. The SGA is responsible for numerous activities at RHS that help spark school spirit and more importantly provide the students a voice in how the school is operated. This allows the students to feel heard at a time in their lives when few adults take them seriously. With Ms. Friedlander at the helm, SGA became an important place for students to find their space in high school, their home away from home.

Her next step in her career involved Advanced Placement, not only teaching the courses,

but leading the other teachers in the building as the PLT leader. She brought the AP teachers together to discuss how best to increase our diversity rates and identify students from all groups that should be in AP whether they realized it or not. We also encouraged each other in the development of our skills to create more challenging lesson plans and not just more work for our advanced students. This PLT worked towards providing scaffolding for students who traditionally had not been in AP so that they could be more successful and start their next academic stage with skills that would continue to allow them to pursue their dreams. Ms. Friedlander helped lead that group of teachers to do that work.

As a retired teacher of Durham Public Schools (32 years), a parent of three graduates of Durham Public Schools (therefore a parent of students of DPS for 26 years), and a graduate of Durham County Schools (NHS, Class of 1983), I believe that I have a great deal of knowledge and experience when it comes to the leadership that DPS has had through the school board. Often I have seen school board members use that position to feel powerful and manipulate situations. More often I have seen board members work diligently and selflessly for the improvement of all of the students who live in our community. I truly believe that Ms. Friedlander is one of the former. With two little girls of her own, she has a lot invested in seeing that all of DPS moves forward and becomes the most equitable of school systems. She will work hard to ensure that DPS is the dream that we all believe it can be where all students learn and all teachers inspire.

Sincerely,

Mary E. W. Foster
NBCT

Amy Takahashi
4621 Pinedale Drive
Durham, NC 27705

February 26, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend Jessica Friedlander to a position on the Board of Education. I am the parent of three daughters, all of whom attended and graduated from Riverside High School. The older two had Mrs. Friedlander as a teacher in AP Human Geography and all three of them experienced working with her as the faculty advisor to the student government.

While my children had any number of influential teachers with at RHS, Mrs. Friedlander was particularly so. She became the "safe space" for one of my children during a difficult time and advocated for her as she was navigating her way through these challenges. She felt that Mrs. Friedlander heard and understood her and stood by her when she needed a sympathetic adult.

Mrs. Friedlander also worked to make the AP program at Riverside more inclusive. While there is still progress to be made, she made great strides in getting a more diverse group of students to enroll in AP courses. As a parent, I was glad to see the school working to actually reach out to students and families that might not assume that the AP classes were for them. Her focus on inclusivity helped to make this happen.

I think that Jessica Friedlander would make a great contribution to the important work of the Board of Education. One of my children described her as being "all about inclusivity" which is probably one of the things we need most in our Board. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy Takahashi