

Why is Dueñes the best candidate?

- Michael is an actual policy expert in racial disparities. He was the first to uncover the large racial disparities that exist in MN -- his work began in the prison system in the 90s, using public health methodologies (which were 20 years ahead of their time as mainstream policy is beginning to understand safety from a public health framework). As a college liberal arts administrator he successfully narrowed the opportunity gap in his departments, many of his students were 1st generation college students.
- Michael has not only taught Chicano Studies, Political Science, and Leadership classes at the university level with a focus on understanding systemic racism, but with experience as an academic dean he also understands what an education budget looks like and knows when the budget does not support promises of equity. Understanding the MPS budget is the steepest learning curve a Board Director has, with few gaining enough mastery to adequately provide oversight. He knows the MPS budget could be more transparent, and will press for better, more accurate, and more timely budget reporting.

Why did Dueñes decide to run if there is already a DFL candidate? First, the DFL convention occurred before the deadline to apply as a candidate. Michael was growing increasingly alarmed over the state of the MPS budget, particularly as it related to proposed changes with the Comprehensive District Design (CDD). He hoped he could intervene by pointing out the problems at public hearings and discuss matters with Board members, but the majority of the Board was not interested in attending to the budget details. Families and community organizations began asking him to run. Crucially, the DFL convention also occurred before the final vote on the CDD, which took place while families were sheltering in place, and in violation of MPS policy designed to protect the interests of BIPOC families and students. After that vote where the Board and MPS administration knowingly violated their policies requiring an equity audit, Michael felt compelled to step up and run.

What would he do differently?

1. Work with finance staff to create a more transparent budget reporting process, one that also allows Board Directors adequate time for review (current practice is often only 24-48 hours).
2. Require MPS to follow its own policy of equity audits for all significant changes that affect BIPOC families and students.
3. Visit and meet with administrators, classroom educators, and families at every single MPS school to understand the specific qualities of each school environment.
4. Push for more school counselors and social workers so that MPS no longer has one of the worst ratios of social-emotional support, as these are key relationships supporting BIPOC graduation and college entry.
5. Partner with community organizations who have trusted relationships with BIPOC families & students, and meet with families & students in the community environments they want

to meet at to learn about their needs and dreams.

Michael
Dueñes

**Minneapolis Board of Education
At-Large**

What's at stake

for families of MPS?

The Board of Education pushed through a wildly unpopular district redesign (CDD) while families were sheltering in place, without the required equity audit, without a detailed budget on the costs, and without confidence that the hundreds of millions of dollars in required capital costs can be funded.

- While everyone supports the concept that systematic racism in our schools policies and processes must be addressed head on - there is no evidence that the shuffling of bodies at the heart of the CDD will do anything to improve supports or results for students of color. This is what an equity audit would have helped determine.
- In three separate polls, two by the school board and one by Kare 11, over 85% respondents said they do not support the changes to the MPS school system as proposed by MPS. • Dual immersion seats were cut by over 400 in the south part of the city where the majority of Spanish speakers live. In order to continue with dual immersion many children will now have to travel long distances to NE Mpls to continue these programs.
- The reality of the CDD is that it impacts most significantly the populations it claims to better support. Elementary schools in North Minneapolis in particular are left severely under-enrolled as children who live in the north part of the city will be bused out of their neighborhoods to fill schools in NE. Students & families in the south central corridor lose all of their neighborhood schools and current magnet options, they will be displaced and separated from their communities. These are our neighbors most impacted economically and psychologically from Covid-19 and the civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd.
- BIPOC families have shown a preference for K-8 programs as seen by the programs they choose when they opt out of MPS; the CDD eliminates almost all the K-8 options. • The budget for the CDD, which is now essentially the budget for MPS, has fluctuated wildly -- it once changed 6 times in one week with a variation of \$100 million with little to no explanation of why it was altered. The proposed capital costs bonds to renovate buildings for the CDD will probably not be approved by the MN Department of Education because MPS will severely exceed its debt/revenue ratios, i.e. MPS is looking at a massive and unsustainable debt. If it is approved, bonding is likely necessary meaning a property tax hike in the middle of a recession.

Please commit to sharing this information with at least one other friend or neighbor in Minneapolis. If you can reach out to 5-10 friends and neighbors, even better! School board elections are heavily swayed by DFL endorsements and the campaign funding and literature it provides. Michael needs each and every one of you to be vocal with your support and to educate voters in this very unusual election cycle.