

Katherine M. Poulos

KATHERINE M. POULOS



December 5, 2018

Agency Human Resource Services
Attention: Gennie Hudson, Personnel Officer III
400 West King Street, Suite 406
Carson City, NV 89703

Dear Ms. Hudson,

As a former litigator with experience as a public education system leader in vastly different state contexts, I am the strategic, results-oriented, nimble team player and proactive advocate the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority seeks for the Executive Director position. My career path has demonstrated I am strongly committed to ensuring all students have access to excellent education and adept at operating successfully within complicated political contexts and developing and leveraging strategic partnerships across both sides of the aisle.

In my position at the New Mexico Public Education Department, I led efforts to strengthen the charter sector by developing and implementing a strategic plan that resulted in the Governor receiving the national "Charter Champion" award from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. I won the state a \$22.5M grant to support growth of the charter sector through replications, new school openings, and continued policy work. I galvanized various divisions within the republican controlled state education agency, the elected charter authorizing board that consisted of predominantly democratic representatives, and other educational advocacy and policy leaders to work together to strengthen public charter schools. In addition, I testified in front of the state legislature on multiple occasions with consistently positive reception despite a complicated political relationship between the legislature and the state education agency. In both of my positions leading work at state level education offices, I have developed and grew strong teams through intentional hiring, professional development, and coaching.

Through each of my professional experiences, I have demonstrated that I am the sophisticated team player with the characteristics, competencies, and knowledge you are seeking to fill the role of Executive Director. I have a demonstrated track record of setting ambitious goals and driving results, have built strong relationships with diverse stakeholders, have persevered through challenging change management opportunities, and have honed my strategic planning and implementation skills. I look forward to hearing from you to schedule time to discuss my qualifications further.

Thank you,

Katie Poulos

KATHERINE M. POULOS

EDUCATION

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL, Nashville, TN

Doctor of Jurisprudence, 2009.

Awards: Order of the Coif, Vanderbilt Law Review – Articles Editor, Dean’s List, Phi Delta Phi.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, Chapel Hill, NC

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, 2004.

WORK EXPERIENCE

BUILDING EXCELLENT SCHOOLS, Boston, MA

September 2018 – present.

Director of Leadership Development.

- Support and coach BES Fellows across the country as they identify and evaluate potential charter school founding board members.
- Develop systems, processes, and tools to support fellows across the country through charter application writing and editing.
- Deliver trainings to BES Fellows on board governance, charter application writing and requirements, and authorization processes across the country.
- Support and coach charter school boards after authorization to ensure they are able to effectively govern high quality schools and school networks.

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, Santa Fe, NM

April 2015 – September 2018.

Assistant Secretary of Education, Options for Parents and Families.

- Conceived and wrote a competitive grant awarded to the state for \$22.5 million in funds from the US Department of Education to support the startup of new charter schools, expansion and replication of successful charter schools, and improvement of charter school authorizing.
- Developed and implemented a strategic plan to improve statewide charter school authorizing practices and the statewide charter school landscape. Implementation of this plan resulted in submission of the three highest quality new charter school applications ever submitted, a measurable improvement in the engagement of charter school boards, the first charter replication in the state, closure of eight poorly performing charter schools, improvements in authorizing practices, and the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools awarding the Governor the "Charter Champion Award."
- Directed, organized and hosted the first three annual statewide charter school conferences. The highly praised conference was attended by over 300 representatives from 93 of the 99 charter schools in New Mexico.
- Oversaw reorganization and reformation of statewide supplemental virtual school program to integrate all Public Education Department statewide public education priorities into program, prioritize student achievement and strong educator selection, and save the state approximately \$1M annually by eliminating use of proprietary LMS and beginning use of state hosted open source LMS.

ARIZONA STATE BOARD FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS, Phoenix, AZ

March 2014 – April 2015.

Director of Charter Accountability.

- Directed the development, review, and continuous improvement of Board accountability policies and processes to monitor the charter schools in the Board’s portfolio for compliance with their charter contracts and standards set in the Board’s Academic Performance Framework.
- Directed the implementation of Board policies and processes to evaluate charter schools’ performance and made appropriate recommendations regarding revocations, amendments, and renewals.
- Supported Executive Director in negotiating charter surrenders, school closures, and changes to existing charters with the operators of underperforming charters and charter schools.
- Developed a strategic plan to make feasible the implementation of intervention processes for over 200 underperforming schools in the Board’s portfolio by only five staff dedicated to the process.
- Audited all academic data and data analysis processes for prior three years and directed revisions to calculations to ensure accurate data through implementation of correct methodology.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS

ARIZONA STATE BOARD FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS, Phoenix, AZ *September 2013 – March 2014.*

Fellow.

- Drafted agency rules and public communications for adoption by Board members.
- Coordinated rulemaking process according to Secretary of State and Governor’s Regulatory Review Council procedures.
- Analyzed charter school submissions and audited charter school documents to determine effectiveness and sustainability of implementation of charter school improvement plans. Prepared reports to present findings and recommendations for consideration by Board members.

TEACH FOR AMERICA

GRENVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT, Greenville, MS

June 2011 – May 2013.

Teacher.

- Maintained, tracked, and analyzed data to execute strategic planning for short-term and long-term classroom instruction and achieve targeted individual student growth goals.
- Effectively cultivated and managed relationships with multiple stakeholders including students, parents, administrators, community members, and consultants.
- Presented classroom instruction utilizing various technologies including PowerPoint.
- Created a successful afterschool mentoring program for thirty young ladies geared toward improving self-esteem, developing good health and fitness habits, and increasing civic responsibility.

IRELL & MANELLA LLP, Los Angeles, CA

August 2009 – May 2011.

Associate.

- Utilized strong analytical skills to conduct legal and factual research in a fast-paced environment and communicated research to stakeholders through written memos and oral presentations.
- Drafted and edited memos, summons, complaints, motions, affidavits, discovery requests, discovery responses, deposition witness outlines and binders, trial witness outlines and binders, and other documents for presentation to clients and court.
- Successfully negotiated with opposing counsel to favorably resolve discovery conflicts.
- Managed discovery received from client and opposing counsel; identified relevant materials and information and developed legal and factual arguments utilizing these materials.
- Successfully managed and coached contract attorney team responsible for reviewing millions of client documents and identifying and logging privileged material.
- Effectively cultivated and managed relationships with clients, in-house counsel, co-counsel and local counsel, and support staff.

LAW OFFICES OF ADRIAN RAFAEL HALPERN, PA, Chapel Hill, NC

July 2002 - July 2006.

Paralegal. May 2004 - July 2006.

Student Assistant. July 2002 - May 2004.

- Facilitated, coordinated and managed U.S. and Canadian immigration petitions.
- Conducted research, gathered background information, and developed transition plan and best practices for in-office implementation of Department of Labor PERM Regulations.
- Effectively cultivated and managed relationships with clients and external partners.
- Developed on-boarding and transition plans, trained, and coached new team members.

CERTIFICATIONS AND LICENSES _____

The State Bar of California, Member Number: #266761, Status: Inactive

State of Mississippi-Department of Education, License No. 240991, Expired 06/30/2017

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT _____

NACSA Leaders, 2016 Cohort

NACSA Fellows, 2013-2014

PERSONAL INTERESTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Running, Completed Disney Land Star Wars Half-Marathon –January 2017; Completed Disney Land Half-Marathon Weekend “Double Dare” – Labor Day Weekend 2017; 2nd highest fundraiser 2016 Albuquerque St. Jude Run/Walk

Triathlon, Completed Santa Fe and Los Alamos triathlons – July – August 2017

Hiking, Attempted to summit Mt. Whitney –2012, tallest peak in Arizona, Humphrey’s Peak –2013 and 2015; Successfully summited tallest peak in New Mexico, Mt. Wheeler – 2016

REFERENCES

DeAnna Rowe - BASIS Schools, Inc., Executive Director - [REDACTED]

Hanna Skandera - Former NM Secretary of Education - [REDACTED]

Christopher Ruskowski - NM Secretary of Education - [REDACTED]

Below, please find my five professional references:

Hanna Skandera - [REDACTED]

DeAnna Rowe - [REDACTED]

Christopher Ruskowski - [REDACTED]

KaryAnn Armbruster - [REDACTED]

Johanna Medina - [REDACTED]

Professional Reference

Applicant's Name:

Katherine Poulos

Reference Name:

Karyl Ann Armbruster

Professional relationship to applicant:

I am one of 10 elected Public Education Commissioners in NM. My job is to oversee Charter Schools with the information gathered and presented by the Charter School Division. (CSD) Katie was the director of the CSD.

She and her team did all the investigative work to report on the performance and the compliance pieces of state chartered charter schools and then presented that information to present to us. The decisions were up to the PEC based on the information from CSD.

Applicant's title while in your employ (if applicable):

Assistant Secretary of Education - Options for Parents and Families, Director of Charter School Division
NM Public Education Department

Dates of employment (if applicable) or how long you have known the applicant:

I met Katie when she was first hired in April 2015.

Applicant's reason for leaving (if applicable):

Her position would have ended on December 31, 2018, because of a change in state government administration.

Would you rehire (if applicable), and if no, please explain:

It is not my job to hire staff, but if it had been, I would have hired her immediately.

Describe the applicant's quality/quantity of work:

The quality and quantity of Katie's work would be difficult for anyone to match. When she arrived in NM, charter schools were doing whatever they wanted to do. There was little regulation, oversight, or accountability of schools that were failing students. In addition schools had continual negative financial audits but were rarely held accountable. Katie taught the commissioners what quality was. Because of her hard work enforcing regulations, NM has stringent authorizing standards and renewal practices. Now charter schools have raised their level of academic performance or been closed.

I learned after Katie hired the "best team ever" to train applicants, monitor schools, help new charter leaders prepare, assist the PEC to develop robust standards for evaluating applicants and current schools, and then taught us to recognize a school with the capacity to truly help children, how sad the majority of our portfolio was. Now our authorizing practices are rigorous and transparent. She brought in NACSA to provide training for PEC. Public Impact helped us develop our academic, financial, and organizational framework so schools can be evaluated yearly rather than fail students for 4 years before renewal in year 5. Katie also pulled the proverbial strings to get the PEC our own attorney. This enabled us to win appeals against us by schools we voted to close.

The **quantity** of work Katie put out is astonishing. Besides leading, teaching, directing her team, and preparing for PEC meetings and work sessions, she wrote the first successful charter school grant in three years. The grant Katie wrote was awarded \$22.5 million by the US Department of Education. She has led sessions at local charter school conferences, NACSA conferences, and she organized the first state wide charter school conference where more than 400 people attended and over 10 speakers from all over the United States came to present. These were prominent leaders in the charter field. Katie is well known and respected in the charter movement.

When Katie presented school status to the PEC she had delved into such depth and uncovered so much information that when it came time for us to make a decision about granting a charter, renewing a charter, adding conditions or closing a charter, her information lead us to make wise decisions. I will admit that in 2015, she said not to grant a charter to any of the six schools, and I voted against her recommendation on one school. I did that because I (and the other commissioners) felt that compared to the previous 5, this was OK. The school is a disaster. We should have followed her advice. By teaching us what quality entailed, the last few years we have approved extremely high scoring schools who are miles ahead of previous schools in closing the achievement gap.

Describe the applicant's interpersonal skills:

Katie is well liked, respected, and admired. It speaks volumes to know that she has maintained business and school friends in at least five different states. Her team at the Charter School Division and employees in the Public Education Department were deeply saddened by her departure. They spoke of her confidence in them and how much she trusted them to do their job. They appreciated the training she gave them to improve professionally. Katie holds herself to very high work and ethical standards and expects others to also. Team members often spoke of how they admired that in her.

I found Katie to be warm, personable, and quite approachable. She is serious about her responsibilities and yet spontaneous and fun when appropriate. She holds herself to very high work and ethical standards and expects others to meet those standards. No one has to push or prod her. She perseveres a project until it is not only complete but perfect.

Describe the applicant's leadership skills:

Katie is extremely organized, knows exactly what must be done to help children be successful, and what adult actions will accomplish that goal. She reorganized how and what CSD did. She had realistic but high expectations for herself and her team. Duties were delegated to each team member and that person was trusted to do his/her job. Each became an expert in an area, and in turn trained others so that if someone left others could step in. Those who worked with Katie always spoke highly of her. It is not easy to be the leader when everyone on your team is older than you, but Katie managed to not just be the leader, but to be friends with her team. When she left, although they were devastated, they pulled together and were able to accomplish what CSD was charged to do. What they did not have was the experience and ability to see the entire picture beyond their job as Katie was able to do. Katie defended and protected them from criticism whether from commissioners or schools. That is what a leader should do. What she did in private if the person did error, I do not know. Her commitment to students inspired her team to be as dedicated as she was. There was much midnight oil burned.

Members of her team admired Katie because she taught them to be experts in their areas and then trusted them to be the decision makers. Her passion and enthusiasm for her job spilled over to them. They were very loyal to her. The team, without exception, openly state that Katie prepared them for their job, and encouraged them to be proud of the work they are doing for children.

Additional comments you would like to share:

Note I am twice Katie's age, taught special education for 22 years in California and 17 years in Los Alamos, and have worked with many types of people over those years. Katie and I formed a bond immediately. I appreciated her high energy and deep commitment and willingness to try new ideas. She did what was right even if others did not like changing the status quo. Working with others and changing the culture of CSD has been a very positive step for everyone involved. Katie is an athlete, a scholar, and an animal lover. Her belief that all children must have a rigorous education that will enable them to prosper in the future, drives her to work many extra hours.

Prior to Katie, there was never a CSD director who really knew how charter schools should be held accountable or have a rigorous curriculum. No director seemed to have the knowledge of what a quality charter should be or the leadership necessary to have a team trained to evaluate. NM has many charters that are outstanding, but we have many who should never have been granted a charter. Because of that lack of quality, mistrust and dislike of the charter movement erupted. Under Katie, the PEC developed stronger authorizing practices, renewal expectations, procedures for amendments to a charter, procedures for opening a second school. Her team was trained to thoroughly look at a school's records, especially IEPs and English Language Learner plans as well as make sure home language surveys had been completed to avoid lawsuits as well, of course, as properly providing instruction to students. None of this had been done by prior directors. Her team even found a school that had not conducted a fire drill in three years even though former CSD directors had sent teams out to this school in the prior year.

NM was incredibly fortunate to lure this young lawyer who was Director of Accountability for Charter Schools in AZ. She brought with her the knowledge gained from working with NACSA and the charter school connections she made as well as knowledge of the law.

Under Katie's leadership and commitment to quality schools, our legislators now have confidence that this parallel group of schools can accomplish what they were designed to do. Many legislators still do not like the charter movement, but with the work Katie did to insist on performance standards, good authorizing practices, and the much-needed academic improvement, they are more accepting of charters.

Professional Reference

Applicant's Name:

Katherine Poulos

Reference Name:

DeAnna Rowe

Professional relationship to applicant:

Former Supervisor at Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS)

Applicant's title while in your employ (if applicable):

NACSA Fellow and Director of Charter Accountability

Dates of employment (if applicable) or how long you have known the applicant:

Fellow - September 2013-March 2014, Director - March 2014-April 2015

Applicant's reason for leaving (if applicable):

Took a position with New Mexico Department of Education

Would you rehire (if applicable), and if no, please explain:

If I were still at the ASBCS and Katie wanted to come back, I'd happily rehire her.

Describe the applicant's quality/quantity of work:

Katie was a tremendous addition to the ASBCS staff at a time when the board was implementing new performance standards for its large portfolio of schools with very limited staff. As a NACSA Fellow, Katie took the lead on drafting the agency's rules and shepherded them through the rulemaking process. Her ability to quickly grasp the key components of the Board's work and articulate them in clear concise language resulted in the timely refinement of existing rules and the successful development new rules. As a Fellow, Katie also evaluated school data and documents, producing high quality materials for Board consideration and legal proceedings.

Because of the quality of her work, commitment to holding schools accountable to performance standards, grasp of academic data, ability to craft clear documents and a demonstration of leadership during her tenure as a Fellow, Katie transitioned easily into the Director of Accountability for ASBCS. As Director, she led the development and implementation of a manageable process for assessing sustainable school improvement efforts and the collection of documentation to support school closure when necessary.

Describe the applicant's interpersonal skills:

Stakeholder engagement is essential in the drafting of rules and facilitation of changes in processes. In her work, Katie actively engaged the stakeholders, listening to and acting on the information they shared. As a member of a small team with a large workload, Katie took initiative – picking up the slack when necessary, taking on both high profile work and more mundane tasks with equal enthusiasm and completing all work efficiently and timely. Katie quickly gained the respect of her colleagues because of her drive, comradery, dependability. In all of her work, Katie kept the mission of the board as her guide - demonstrating a passion for and dedication to the students enrolled in Arizona charter schools and their opportunities for a quality education.

Describe the applicant's leadership skills:

Katie demonstrated a variety of leadership skills. She modeled the work ethic she expected of her team and provided clear expectations, training and the support needed to complete each task. She delegated work, holding her team members accountable, but didn't relieve herself of the responsibility for a quality outcome. She sought the expertise of others and collected information from a variety of sources when making recommendations on high stakes matters. In a variety of settings, she presented information in a clear, concise manner regardless of the audience, handled opposition professionally, and answered questions with confidence in her knowledge of the subject matter.

Additional comments you would like to share:

I had the opportunity to meet Katie early in her charter school leadership career and am pleased that she continues to pursue opportunities to share her talents and passion for students' access to quality charter schools. I believe you'll find she can be a tremendous asset to your organization and your state.

Professional Reference

Applicant's Name:

Katherine Poulos

Reference Name:

Johanna Medina

Professional relationship to applicant:

Co-worker

Applicant's title while in your employ (if applicable):

Director of Accountability

Dates of employment (if applicable) or how long you have known the applicant:

I have known Miss Poulos for 5 years, since 2014.

Applicant's reason for leaving (if applicable):

Miss Poulos was offered the position of Director for Options for Parents and Families to oversee the charter schools in New Mexico.

Would you rehire (if applicable), and if no, please explain:

As part of a hiring committee I would definitely recommend Miss Poulos for a leadership position.

Describe the applicant's quality/quantity of work:

Working with Miss Poulos has provided me ample opportunities to see her in action and learn from her. In those opportunities, I have seen the systems/steps she puts into place to tackle any project or task. She ensures to pay attention to all detail and takes into consideration both the ins and out of box ideas that may impact or improve a project. As a presenter and lobbyist for her agency she is always well prepared based on the time spent to be knowledgeable on the subject matter at hand. Currently, at the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools we continue to use the systems and rules she created and implemented that has made our work more streamlined and effective. At the agency, she was a

primary person in the development and implementation of the performance frameworks used to hold schools accountable, which are currently utilized. The quality of her work has not only lasted but has also served as an example of effective authorizing.

Describe the applicant's interpersonal skills:

Miss Poulos is above all professional, responsible and courteous. However, what makes her stand out is how she makes every effort to understand others and is patient in that understanding. I have observed her working with a team and providing the appropriate mentoring and leadership to make her team successful. Another feature of Miss Poulos is her genuine kindness with others and ability to draw you in to a topic through her enthusiasm.

Describe the applicant's leadership skills:

In the beginning of her career in authorizing, Miss Poulos received leadership mentoring from a national authorizing association (NACSA) through her leadership fellowship. I watched her utilize effective methods to assist her team in time management, communication, quality of work product, and overall satisfaction for the agency and the position. I also had an opportunity to see her work with the team she had put together in New Mexico. Based on comments from her employees they all had great things to say about the quality of her as a person and as a director.

Additional comments you would like to share:

Miss Poulos has had ample experience in authorizing in the last 5 years and has been successful at improving the charter school sector in two states. Additionally, I believe she is the best fit in the state of Nevada because of her work with the two prior directors, Mr. Gavin and Mr. Canavero and her work with the southwest region of the nation.

Ms. Whalen--

Attached you will find the scanned/signed professional reference for Ms. Poulos for the ED position within NV's State Public Charter School Authority.

Please confirm receipt! And thank you again for the reminder today.

My recommendation for this candidate is without reservation--she would be an excellent leader for SPCSA. Please do not hesitate to contact me with additional questions.

All the best to you and the team in the process ahead--

CR

Professional Reference

Applicant's Name: Katherine Poulos

Reference Name: Christopher N. Ruszkowski

Professional relationship to applicant: Former Supervisor, Secretary of Education

Applicant's title while in your employ (if applicable):

① Assistant Secretary, Office of Options for

Dates of employment (if applicable) or how long you have known the applicant:

Two Years Oversight: April 2016 - August 2018

Applicant's reason for leaving (if applicable):

End of Martinez Administration / New Opportunities

Would you rehire (if applicable), and if no, please explain:

Yes, without reservation.

② Director, Charter Schools Division
Parents & Families

Describe the applicant's quality/quantity of work:

- ① Highest-Quality
- ② Thorough & Meticulous
- ③ Deeply Analytical
- ④ High Volume

Most Productive Team Member
By Sheer Volume

Describe the applicant's interpersonal skills:

- ① High Expectations for Internal/External Stakeholders
- ② Willing to Make Tough Decisions / Be Unpopular for Kids
- ③ Deeply Respected By Colleagues


Describe the applicant's leadership skills:

- ① Leads By Example
- ② Acts Mission First
- ③ Doesn't accept low-quality work
- ④ Accepts responsibility

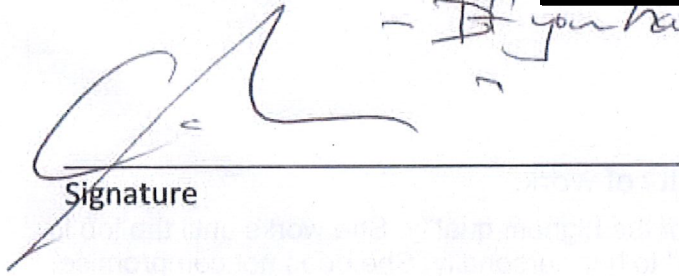
Additional comments you would like to share:

Ms. Poulos transformed New Mexico's
Charter school sector, making it healthier for
generations ahead and stronger for our
students attending school today.

Please attach additional pages if needed

My cell: 

- If you have questions.


Signature


Date

Professional Reference

Applicant's Name: Katherine Poulos

Reference Name: Hanna Skandera

Professional relationship to applicant: Former New Mexico Secretary for Education/Sup

Applicant's title while in your employ (if applicable):

Director of Options for Parents and Families.

Dates of employment (if applicable) or how long you have known the applicant:

I have known Katie since 2015.

Applicant's reason for leaving (if applicable):

Katie was a political appointee and the Governor's term ended.

Would you rehire (if applicable), and if no, please explain:

I would highly recommend Katie and would absolutely rehire her.

Describe the applicant's quality/quantity of work:

Katie's work ethic and quality of work is of the highest quality. She works until the job is done with excellence no matter the "cost" to her personally. She does not compromise. Her attention to detail and understanding of policy and regulation development and implementation is outstanding.

Describe the applicant's interpersonal skills:

Katie's expectations are always high for herself and those she leads. She is unwavering in her commitment to excellence and mission.

Describe the applicant's leadership skills:

Katie leads with conviction and courage. She also leads by example. She never asks anyone to do something she is not willing to do herself.

Additional comments you would like to share:

Katie is a champion for children and a true fighter for their best interests.

Please attach additional pages if needed

Nanna Skandera

Signature

2.19.19

Date