

AMSA Parent Representative Summary
April 13, 2011

Thank you for considering me to serve as a one-year Parent Representative on the Board of Trustees.

I hold a BS in Economics from MIT, and I studied graduate economics at UC Berkeley. I worked as a financial engineer and econometrician, applying advanced mathematical techniques in the areas of risk management and statistical modeling. While raising my family, I have turned to part-time independent consulting, undertaking projects that have earned me two patents. I understand the importance of a strong education and the opportunities that AMSA's students will be pursuing.

As part of the Needham Public School community, I have been very involved in public education advocacy for over eight years. I worked with the Newman Elementary School PTC and administration to re-establish a long-neglected School Council at our local elementary school, including the recruitment of administrators, teachers, and parents, to establish school elections for officers and create regular meeting schedules and agendas. Despite having an elementary school with over 800 students, the School Council had not met in years; most parents didn't know that the school had, historically, had an active School Council. The School Council now holds annual elections and works collaboratively on the school budget and the school improvement plan.

As part of the Newman Elementary School Council, I organized the Newman Elementary School Math Task Force. Having faced several consecutive years of steep MCAS declines, parents, administrators, and teachers came together in the Task Force to examine weaknesses and strengths of the existing elementary math curriculum. Using MCAS data and internal assessments, we identified areas requiring supplementation.

More generally, I have been an outspoken advocate for charter schools (and AMSA in particular) as well as for rigorous math education and standards. I attended and spoke at the National Math Panel in Cambridge several years ago, and I was invited to write an editorial for the New York Times online "Room for Debate" on the topic of mathematics curricula and standards. I also participate in the many letter writing campaigns organized by Marc Kenen and the Massachusetts Association of Charter Schools.

My family has been part of the AMSA community for three years, and we look forward to many more successful years as my younger son and daughter enroll in 2011 and 2012. I enjoyed volunteering as homeroom parent for Aaron MacAdam's homeroom classroom. With one son in sixth grade and one son in ninth grade next year and a daughter starting sixth grade in 2012, I will be close to the issues confronting the upper and lower schools for several years to come. Hopefully, my skills as a research statistician/econometrician will be of some use to AMSA, whether in this role or helping out an Upper School statistics lab class offering, etc.

Thanks very much for your consideration. I look forward to speaking more about this and other volunteer opportunities soon!

Holly Horrigan

