

**Candidate's Name: Emma Violand-Sánchez**  
**Party Affiliation: Democrat**

**Biography:** Teacher and Administrator, Arlington Public Schools (retired). Member, Northern Virginia Community College Board, Adjunct faculty Georgetown University. B.S. and M.S. Radford University, Ed.D. The George Washington University. Recipient: Fulbright Award, James Hunter Human Rights Award, Notable Woman of Arlington. Founder LULAC 4606, Escuela Bolivia, Project Family, Children: James and Julia.

**Question 1: What can be done to increase the graduation rate for Arlington County.**

Every student must graduate prepared to succeed at the college level and in a global workforce. Dropout rates mislead the public into thinking that most students are earning diplomas. The APS Dropout Report (2007) states that 2.2 % of students dropout. In contrast, the APS Graduate Report (2007) indicates that the NCLB graduation rate is 93.3% for White , 85.1% for Asian, 70.2% for Black and 61.7% for Hispanic students.

It is a priority to develop an action plan to address the graduation gap. Findings from research and best practices (Center for American Progress 2007) indicate that it is essential to: 1) focus on transitions from middle school to high school, and from high school to college, 2) provide necessary support and guidance to students and families 3) extend learning time to ensure that students get the instructional time beyond school hours, 3) align expectation to college and career readiness. I will promote enhancing partnerships with community organizations and colleges.

**Question 2: What do you plan to promote student fitness?**

I will promote improved school nutrition and fitness for all students. Student's health is essential for academic achievement. The prevalence of obesity among students contributes to poor academic performance. We need to jealously guard times in the students' day which are designated for physical activities. I will endorse "ArlingtonFit" initiative. We need to assist families and students to identify and pursue various in and out of school opportunities for physical activities. I will support greater access to school facilities during non-school hours.

**Question 3: What do you see as the major challenge facing Arlington County Schools and how would you propose to address this issue?**

A major challenge is resolving the crowding/boundary issues and capital improvement. I believe we must have an open and deliberate process for short and long term planning particularly when making significant decisions about educational facilities and school boundaries. The underlying principles to follow in making decisions start with equity so as to ensure educational excellence for all students.