Albuquerque Public Schools
2015 Questionnaire for Board of Education Candidates

The Board of Education is an elected body created according to the laws of the state of New Mexico to serve as the governing board of the school district for the purpose of organizing, maintaining, and locating schools and for providing educational opportunities and services for all citizens residing within the school district.

Candidates are requested to return their questionnaire to the Board Services Office, by 5:00 p.m., on Monday, January 5, 2015. Mailed questionnaires must be received by Monday, January 5, 2015. Address to: Board of Education Services Office, 2015 Board Election, Alice and Bruce King Educational Complex, P.O. Box 25704, Albuquerque, N.M. 87125-0704. Questionnaires also may be faxed to 880-2575 by the deadline above. Please call the Board of Education Services Office at 880-3729 to confirm fax arrivals, or for other information.

Personal Information
[Please Print, Type or Use Digital Form]

Name: _______________ J. _______________ Lopez _______________
First Middle Last

Residence Address: _________________________________

Length of Residency in School District: __________

(Check Preferred)
☐ Home Telephone: __________________
☐ Office: __________________
☐ Cell: __________________

Fax Number: __________ Primary Email address: __________________

Occupation: _______Retired______________________________

Employer: _______n/a____________________________

Business Address: _______n/a________________________

Business Telephone: n/a__________
Do you currently hold other public office?  
Yes ___ No ___
If yes, list office: ________________________________

Do you have any affiliations with the Albuquerque Public Schools? Yes ___ No ___
If yes, what are your affiliations? ________________________________

Are you available to attend board meetings the first and third Wednesday nights of the month at 5:00 p.m.? Yes ___ No ___

Additionally, there are five board committees that mostly meet once a month at 7:30 a.m. or 5:00 p.m. Are you available to attend committee meetings? Yes ___ No ___
If no, please explain why: ________________________________

Periodically, the board must meet during daytime hours for board meetings, budget hearings, and luncheons. Are you available during daytime hours for these activities? 
Yes ___ No ___
If no, please explain why: ________________________________

In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, the board requires approximately 20-25 hours a week in reading, researching, miscellaneous meetings, school visits, telephone calls, and e-mail correspondence; some board members spend more time than that. Can your schedule accommodate the extra time involved in serving as a member of the Board of Education? Yes ___ No ___
Experience
Answers should be brief and concise.

1. Why do you want to be a board member for Albuquerque Public Schools?

I want to continue to advocate for students. As an educator for 42 years, I have always worked with and for students. I would like very much to work for 85,000+ students who are APS. I especially want to speak for those who have no one to speak for them.

I also want to advocate for teachers. As a former educator, I want to assure that our teachers are treated with respect and honor. The fantastic job that our teachers do is so often thankless and unnoticed. Teachers are at the forefront of the educational process and their worth is invaluable.

2. What is your interest in education?

I was an educator for 42 years and will always be interested in public education. I especially want to be involved in some major decisions that are going to shape the public schools of the future. I know that our young are the future and their education is critical.

3. How would you support the mission of the district?

I feel I have much to offer as far as the mission of the district is concerned. I will always be an advocate for students for 42 years and will therefore support any mission that the school system has that will make students successful.

4. What is your past and current involvement with Albuquerque Public Schools?

I was an educator in the Albuquerque Public Schools for 40 years teaching all social studies courses, coaching and sponsoring the student government. I also was involved in other extracurricular activities such as sponsoring clubs or organization and working sporting events. I am presently a member of the Hispanic Latino Academic Achievement Committee which is working to close the very large achievement gap in the district.

5. What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of Albuquerque Public Schools?

The strengths of APS is high amount of students that they are educating and the amount of money that is brought into the economy and the great amount of jobs that it creates. There are many successful citizens of this city, state and nation that received a good education from APS. However, one of the weaknesses is that that number of successes should be much higher. The district has allowed many students to ‘fall through the cracks’. Another weakness is that there is
there has been too much mismanagement of funds. Too much money has not gotten to the students.

6. What do you consider the role of the Board of Education?

The role of the Board of Education is to create goals and steer the direction of the district. This includes hiring the best person to be the superintendent and leader of the district. Part of this hire includes finding a person who is going to move the goals created by the board forward. The other part of the hire is to find a person who has vision to make the district all it can be.

7. What do you consider the role of individual board members?

Each board member has a district of constituents and schools that they must represent. They must be part of the overall goals and visions of the district but at the same time take the needs and wants of their district to the full board.

8. What should be the relationship between the superintendent and Board of Education?

The Superintendent must move the goals of the board and the district forward. That person must have good communication with the board and keep them up to date with the day to day operation of the district.

9. What qualities would you bring to the Board of Education?
   - 42 years as an educator.
   - Ability to listen to people and act in a professional manner.
   - Willing to compromise.

10. What school or community volunteer activities have you participated in related to the community?

I have always pushed community involvement as a sponsor of the student government. I also made sure that students understood the benefits of volunteering. One example of this is my student government served at a homeless kitchen every Friday for 15 years.

11. How do you plan to work with constituents about district initiatives?

I will be open to meeting with PTA’s Administrators and other community groups of District 4. I strongly believe it takes a community to educate a child so I would welcome all forms of community input.
12. What letter grade would you give to the current Board of Education and the district?

Not knowing the inner discussions and dialogue by the board, this is a tough question to which to respond. I myself do not believe in giving letter grades to any entity including schools and therefore refuse to give a grade. I will say that this board has been challenged by some very important issues and look forward to working with them to discuss existing and future issues. Instead of a grade, I would evaluate them by saying they are on task and working hard to educate 85000+ students.

13. What do you think is the best way for the district to:

a. Improve academic achievement and close the achievement gap?

The list is long but what it really comes down to is the relationship that is created in the classroom. The environment of the classroom must be welcoming, challenging and relevant. The district must work to achieve this environment and successful students will emerge.

b. Maintain financial accountability and still support student achievement, family and community engagement and a safe school environment?

I do not see there being a conflict. The entire above mentioned are part of running a school district and therefore all aspects of the district must be accountable.

c. Make a safe and supportive climate for learning and working that maximizes student achievement?

According to Bloom's taxonomy, safety is the second most important part of a person's live. Safety is critical to successful learning. With the institution of the APS police department and with the cooperation of the Albuquerque Police Department, we are ahead of many other school districts as far as safety is concerned. But we have to go further and train all adults in the schools on the safety measures necessary to protect our students and employees.

d. Engage families and enhance partnerships in the community to maximize student achievement?

Parents and the community must be invited into the educational process mostly because their children's success is at stake. I strongly believe in community schooling knowing that parents and community members have much to offer towards the education of our youth.
By my signature, I affirm that I meet all requirements to become a member of the Board of Education.

John J. Lopez 12/19/2014
Candidate Signature Date