

Do you currently hold other public office?

Yes ___ No X

If yes, list office: _____

Do you have any affiliations with the Albuquerque Public Schools? Yes X No ___

If yes, what are your affiliations? APS Board of Education Member_____

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

Additionally, there are five board committees that mostly meet once a month at 7:30 a.m., 4:00 p.m., 4:30 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. Are you available to attend committee meetings?

Yes X 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 X 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; many board members spend much more time than that. Can your schedule accommodate the extra time involved in serving as a member of the Board of Education?

Yes X No ___

Experience

Answers should be brief and concise.

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

I decided to run for the APS Board to represent the North Valley as a result of several long conversations with teachers, administrators, staff, and community activists, and elected officials who asked me to run again because of the role I've been able to play on the APS Board over the past 8 years.

Feedback has been; 'that I've been able to consistently exercise thoughtful leadership, and good judgement through my interactions; and, the relationships built have been thoughtful and respectful...".

I've built various relationships and at times coalitions amongst the Board, based upon the issues at hand in order to raise key critical issues; to advocate for important reforms, as well as, to identify cross various cutting challenges, and possible options for those needing to be addressed".

I often emphasize that we must be data informed, as well as data driven both the numbers, and seeking input from every side on an issue. By actively listening to students, parents, community members, teachers, and staff we can work to find common ground, when possible, to communicate respect to each person, as we build the kinds of relationships that are best suited to meeting the challenges before us.

I understand that this is an important leadership role in our community.

My tenure of the last 8 years has prepared me to work collaboratively with District leadership, all staff, and the community to address these significant challenges.

2. What is your interest in education?

Our public education system is our lifeline for our democracy. The building and maintaining of our democratic society requires society be nourished by an educated public. Literacy, numeracy, as well as creativity skills through art, and music are a means to our democracy. One's capacity to deal with life's challenges can best be achieved by our ability to practice our capacity to think, to learn new ideas, as well as to debate, and to explore life's potential and meaning. This educational practice of our natural life long learning skills can be reflection of the best of who we are as human beings.

We get to decide important issues about our lives. How we live, and how we treat one another, and organize our society, can be enhanced by a strong public educational system. Ideally, this system will allow us to learn from history. This system will provide us opportunities to work together to solve complex problems like global warming, and fundamental local and economic challenges of our day. We accomplish great things if our public education system is viewed as a fundamental right, for every student. But, if we allow our public education system to perish under the illusion of "parental choice", our societal challenges will likely only multiply due to the risk. Individuals, and our society can become vulnerable to systematic misinformation, to propaganda, creates the

conditions that tolerate systematic ever widening divisions between the “haves the luxury of a “good education,” and those who do not.

3. In what ways will you support the mission and vision of the district?

In Academics, APS has identified the Vision and Mission to be that "All public schools students will attend high quality schools responsive to their communities", through four goals: 1. early learning, 2. college and career readiness, 3. and by developing the whole child, as well. The performance framework emphasizes school culture and climate, student growth and achievement, student engagement, and parent and community involvement.

As a Board member, my role is to insure that our three areas of focus reflect a clear intent of our commitment, through the policies we establish, through our approval and oversight management of the budget, and ongoing review of efforts that are taking place, by work study sessions, community and parent surveys, and meetings around key topic areas with other governmental and non-governmental organizational partners.

We must work with staff to insure that our baseline data is clearly established, realistic, and measurable, in order to that these areas are monitored in a manner that can demonstrate growth, or clearly identifies the reasons why expected success has not been achieved.

We must consistently work with the Superintendent and District leadership to assess the organizational climate. We must be advocate leaders, and be clear on what it is that we are saying, as a group.

We will need to work together to leverage opportunities so teachers can do their jobs, rather than use the board positions as a personal partisan platform. We must find ways to provide support to all staff, build wrap around service networks for all students, and for parents to grow in their opportunities for engagement.

As a Board we must work to insure that all parents and students are welcome, as these challenges are identified at each school.

4. How will you work with the superintendent?

The Board has only one employee, our Superintendent. I believe in supporting leadership. The Superintendent is the leader in our District.

My goal is that this person be clear I available for consultations as needed, will work to give thoughtful feedback; and, or raise issues when needed. I will work to be a catalyst for immediate action on some issues, when necessary with the Superintendents approval, be available to listen or to dialogue and brainstorm with members leadership team members as they work to address issues in the District.

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

I attended Albuquerque Public Schools in Elementary, Middle and High School. In the 1970's was a member of the Albuquerque Urban Coalition and I participated in the community advisory for the establishment of the Career Enrichment Center. Later on as a young parent, I became active in at Carlos Rey Elementary. I ran for the APS School Board in 2008, and have served in this position since March of 2009.

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

This relationship should ideally be a collaborative relationship. It also should be one where communication remains open, honest, and focused.

The APS Board has one employee: the Superintendent. It also sets policy, and approves the budget. A successful Board is built upon mutual respect, thoughtful dialogue, and a clear commitment to work together.

7. What qualities and skills would you bring to the Board of Education?

I enjoy working together to identify challenges, and build a strong organizational culture for success at APS. I care about teachers, staff, students and parents. I am a good listener, and a very good organizer. I am skilled at picking out key issues, and at building successful partnerships to bring about constructive dialogue and change.

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

Early on, as a young person, I was involved at the Parish at Holy Family, where we worked to build recreational opportunities for teenagers in our church community. Afterwards, as a young adult, I again began working with other young people to build a Christian youth leadership movement at Holy Rosary Parish. In my early work career, I began working to establish school breakfast and lunch programs in our public schools, worked to establish Community programs for young people in poor neighborhoods.

9. How do you plan to work with constituents?

I would like to establish a network of cluster neighborhood meetings, attend meetings with instructional councils as well as be available to meet when issues come up. Most importantly, I would strive to organize individuals to work together, to build coalitions that will help us address the issues we face..

10. What do you see as opportunities and challenges to the district?

There are many. The Chinese defined the idea of a challenge as one that inherently brings an opportunity. Our biggest challenge has to do with each of us working to recognize that we must find common ground, and decide to work together. Educators, and those who have no formal education must find common ground. All parents must feel welcomed in our schools, and all schools must work to exhibit that they create a welcoming and nurturing environment, for everyone. One might say we have to decide to not fall prey to the societal trappings that teach us to live at odds with one another due to an endemic pattern of misinformation, that makes us vulnerable to exploitation, while preventing any progress or forward movement in a challenge. This situation compels us to learn new things; for example, to explore and implement very important ideas such as restorative justice in our schools versus that of zero tolerance.

11. What do you think is the best way for the district to accomplish the three academic goals?

- a. **Early learning** – Early learning begins with expecting parents, is nurtured as children develop language and number skills in elementary school, and grows with students as they mature in supportive classrooms becoming adept at using these skills in a variety of contexts.
- b. **College and Career Readiness** – Students acquire skills which support formal and informal life-long learning to adapt and remain productive through changing economic and job market landscapes. All students will be prepared for post-secondary opportunities (college and/or career) without the need for remediation.
- c. **Developing the Whole Child** – APS will ensure each child is safe, engaged, challenged and supported through programs and practices focused on removing social, emotional and physical barriers to learning and increased health literacy.
 - Safe and welcoming environment
 - Whole Child includes... physical, mental, emotional, social, intellectual
 - Remove barriers to learning
 - Discover and develop individual gifts and talents
 - Use skills to better the community

These are issues that are interdependent. Like pieces of a puzzle, they each are key ingredients for us as a community. As a Public education system we can enhance what services we provided that we build collaborative relationships, (not just huddle in our comfort zones).

Schools must actually be in our neighborhood communities, through the development of an enriched neighborhood by neighborhood community-school movement. Assembling these ingredients into a successful public education system will require intentionality discipline, as well as learning to have the "hard conversations", in places where there may appear to be conflicting perspectives or past histories and practices. In short, we have to as the saying goes "get over ourselves" while we put our egos aside, find and build common ground in each of the areas noted.

For example, parents must learn the skills of taking an active role in their children's education and future. Struggling parents must be able to enlist resource without fear of reprisals or negativity. This can happen through the development of community wide systems of support: via the idea of "mutual aid societies, various groups and or organizations" something that historical precedence (sociedades mutualistas),

As a community we must strengthen the safety net to include a welcoming and supportive attitude towards these parents.

For example. early learning begins with expecting parents, before a child is born. Access to good pre-natal care, and health care is essential.

We must, as a community, establish opportunities to insure young people and potential parents have the information needed, and be mentored as they develop skills; build supportive mentor-mente like relationships to insure their understanding about this most essential of issues, without doing so in isolation. Prospective parents and parents themselves need to have a safe place where mutual respect and inquisitiveness is welcome.

Children are nurtured as they develop language and number skills in elementary school. Pre school visitations are essential, and parents need to know about talking to their children, even before they are born (research indicates that in utero- infants begin to hear and recognize sounds, before they are born.

Classrooms must not be over-crowded, and should ideally allow time play and for the development of strong social emotional skills. Recess is as important as academic proficiency and for small children, socialization skills are absolutely critical.

This also grows with students as they mature in supportive classrooms, where older young people can have opportunities to mentor younger students, becoming adept at using skills learned in a variety of contexts.

12. If elected, how will you work with the current board?

The basic idea we must each strive for is the establishment of the attitude of complete and mutual respect towards each other. I think we must be committed to finding common ground, put our partisan perspectives aside, and work through the solutions to move us forward.

By my signature, I affirm that I meet all requirements to become a member of the Board of Education.

_____Lorenzo L. Garcia_____

_____1-02-2017_____