

First State Educate's 2026 School Board Candidate Survey

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Caesar Rodney School District

School board members play an important role in guiding the direction of public school districts. The questions below are designed to help voters understand how candidates think about governance, decision-making, and student success. While candidates may express their ideas in different ways, strong responses often reflect several core principles of effective school board leadership.

Public school boards are responsible for setting direction, overseeing district leadership, and stewarding public resources on behalf of the community. **Why do you want to serve on your local school board?**

I want to serve because this is a defining moment within the CR school district! As we enter into the final phase of the 2022-2027 strategic plan-and following our recent referendum pass-we must ensure our direction is clear, our leadership is aligned, and our resources are producing results the community can see and trust.

I'm prepared to help refine our direction-building on what's working, while strengthening or redesigning systems that are not yet producing results. I will hold leadership accountable for aligning vision to outcomes and ensuring consistent progress. I will also prioritize responsible stewardship by connecting investments to impact and maintaining transparent communication with our community.

I bring both professional experience and the perspective of a parent, committed to environments where students feel seen, supported, and positioned to succeed.

School board members make decisions that affect thousands of students and millions of public dollars. **What principles will guide how you make those decisions?**

The principles that will guide me in making thoughtful, student-centered decisions that build trust and produce results include stewardship, alignment, evidence, equity, transparency, and accountability.

S.A.E.E.T.A

Stewardship: We use all resources responsibly and connect every dollar to student outcomes.

Alignment: We ensure decisions reflect our district's vision, mission, and strategic priorities.

Evidence: We rely on data, measurable progress, and multiple indicators.

Equity: We ensure every student has what they need to succeed.

Transparency: We communicate clearly so the community understands decisions and results.

Accountability: We follow through, monitor progress over time, and adjust when needed.

This framework ensures consistency and responsibility when making decisions.

School boards are ultimately responsible for ensuring districts improve outcomes for students. **What student outcomes should your district improve over the next four years?**

Over the next four years, the CR district should prioritize improvement in literacy and academic growth, student engagement and attendance, and college, career, and life readiness.

Literacy and academic growth ensure students are building strong academic foundations and making consistent progress over time. Engagement and attendance reflect whether students feel connected and supported, which directly impacts student success. And readiness ensures students graduate prepared for real opportunities beyond the classroom.

From a school board perspective, I would focus on setting clear expectations, monitoring progress across student groups, and aligning resources to support these outcomes.

School boards must work across differences and remain connected to the communities they serve. **How will you work with fellow board members, district leadership, and families to move your district forward?**

Moving our district forward requires both strong relational equity and clear focus. I would work with fellow board members by staying grounded in our shared responsibilities-keeping our discussions on student outcomes, asking thoughtful questions, and maintaining a respectful, solutions-focused board culture.

With district leadership, I would prioritize alignment and accountability-ensuring we have clarity on vision, goals, consistent progress monitoring, and open communication around what's working and where adjustments are needed.

With families and the community, I would remain present, listen with intention, and ensure their voices are reflected in our priorities and decisions. I would also ensure clear expectations for communication are in place, so families understand how decisions are made and what follow-through to expect.

School boards are making decisions that affect students and district resources. **How should board members use data, research, and community input to guide those decisions?**

Data, research, and community input are the most effective ways to ensure our school board decisions are informed and impactful. A careful and consistent review of data across student groups will enable board members to ask better questions and monitor progress over time.

I also value research-based approaches to ensure we invest in proven-effective strategies.

At the same time, community input matters. Staying connected to families, students, and educators helps provide context, surface real challenges, and ensure our decisions are responsive to the district we serve.

School board members communicate decisions to the public. **How will you ensure the community has an honest, clear picture of district conditions and can see how the board is making decisions?**

The CR school community deserves a clear and honest picture of where we are, because we can't improve what we aren't willing to face. I'd approach it using the C.L.E.A.R. framework: clarity, listening, evidence, accountability, and shared responsibility.

That means being transparent about our district's strengths and areas for growth, while creating space for community voices to be heard. Also, grounding decisions in data and research, and clearly communicating not just what decisions are made, but why they are made, and what outcomes we expect.

Everything may not be addressed at once, but the board can show steady, honest progress and keep our community informed every step of the way.

School boards often bring together members with different perspectives. **How would you approach working collaboratively with other board members while keeping the focus on the district's long-term goals for students?**

I welcome differences in perspective because they reflect the diversity of our school community. Leveraging those differences is a game changer that will lead to stronger, more informed decisions when we stay grounded in our shared responsibility to students.

For me, that means staying present, asking thoughtful questions, and listening with intention-while still offering honest, constructive input when necessary. Relational equity is also a priority with me, because when I take time to hear someone's voice consistently, I begin to understand the "why" behind their perspective, even when we don't agree.

When we stay grounded in our shared responsibility to students, we make stronger decisions together.


Please upload your Bio (summary of resume or professional experience). We will post your Bio on our candidate page. *

Andrea Ekwem--...

 Add file

Please upload your picture- high resolution preferred *

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