

First State Educate's 2026 School Board Candidate Survey

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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?**

Public education is a critical public service. As the mother of a toddler who will be attending school soon, I look forward to the opportunity to lend a hand in building a system that will serve my own child well.

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

Evidence-based strategy, equity, and sustainability.

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

Of course core academic outcomes like literacy, math proficiency, and graduation rates are critical, but also attendance, student mental health, access to supportive services, and a sense of safety and belonging in school. When we invest in both achievement and well-being, we create the foundation for students to succeed.

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?**

It helps immensely that everyone's goal is the same- student success. Being open to all perspectives and feedback on how we achieve that, especially from teachers and school staff who do the work on the ground, forges the strongest path forward.

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?**

There are over 12,000 school districts in the US, and a trove of research and case study to help guide our decision-making- which must also be informed and modified by what's unique about our community and what specific results our residents and stakeholders want to see.

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?**

As someone who works for a nonprofit, I understand the importance of transparency- you can't inspire donors and volunteers without being clear about what they're supporting! I feel exactly the same about tax dollars- every resident deserves transparency in what's communicated during meetings and in written communications, including what needs the district has, what decisions are being made, what is informing them, and what results they produce.

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?**

With a commitment to respectful, good-faith collaboration, listening carefully to different perspectives while keeping students' needs at the center of every decision. While we won't always agree, we share a responsibility to make decisions that are transparent, evidence-based, and sustainable.

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

Lauren Sawin Ca...

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Please upload your picture- high resolution preferred *

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