

Name: Carol Cooper

District: Las Cruces

Position: 5

Please answer the following to the best of your ability within 150 words or less.

1. What is motivating you to run for the school board?

I WANT TO SEE GRADUATING SENIORS WHO ARE PREPARED TO ENTER ADULTHOOD WITH THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO SUCCEED. I WANT TO ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO ENGAGE WITH THE STUDENTS IN THEIR LIVES TO DEMONSTRATE THEY VALUE THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION.

2. What will your priorities be as a school board member?

THE SCHOOL BOARD IS MADE UP OF CITIZENS REPRESENTING THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS. I AM GOING TO WORK HARD TO DRAW FELLOW-CITIZENS INTO CONVERSATIONS ABOUT: THE KIND OF SOCIETY WE WANT TO LIVE IN; HOW EACH GENERATION NEEDS TO PREPARE FOR ITS LIFE'S WORK AND PLAY; AND HOW WE CAN HELP OUR NEXT GENERATION BECOME PREPARED AND READY FOR LIFE. WITH THAT KIND OF SUPPORT FROM FELLOW CITIZENS, PERHAPS THE SCHOOL BOARD CAN SELECT AN APPROPRIATE SUPERINTENDENT AND PREPARE A BUDGET THAT WILL FUND EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT MAKE US A VERY WELL-EDUCATED CITIZENRY.

3. What have you done in the past to help your community thrive?

1) I HAVE PRODUCED MORE THAN I HAVE CONSUMED; I HAVE CREATED CAPITAL. CAPITAL IS IMPORTANT, NOT JUST FOR THE CREATOR, BUT SOCIETY IN GENERAL. I SET AN EXAMPLE FOR OTHERS.

2) I TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS ARE STILL THE BEST GUIDE I KNOW OF TO MAINTAIN AN ORDERLY SOCIETY. THEY HAVE BEEN PASSED FROM ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT FOR A FEW THOUSAND YEARS NOW, AND WHEN FOLLOWED, ALL OF GOD'S CREATION THRIVES.

3) SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I DIRECTED A NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM IN TWO NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS. THE PROGRAM FOCUSED ON EVENING CLASSES THAT WERE SUGGESTED BY THE PARTICIPANTS. CLASSES WERE OPEN FOR ALL AGES, AND TAUGHT BY VOLUNTEERS. AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND SUMMER PROGRAMS WERE PROVIDED BY PARKS AND RECREATION AND AIDED BY NEIGHBORHOOD VOLUNTEERS.

4. How have you previously advocated for students and educators in your community?

I ADVOCATED FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN PRESENTING THE CONCEPT OF LIFE-LONG LEARNING TO THE LAS CRUCES SCHOOL BOARD.

5. How did your educational experiences shape you, and what lessons will you take with you from those experiences?

MY EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES HAVE BASICALLY TAUGHT ME HOW TO LEARN AND MAKE THE MOST OF NEW SITUATIONS. EFFECTIVE LEARNING IS LEARNING HOW TO LEARN, NOT WHAT TO LEARN.

6. Have you ever worked as an employee in public education? If so, how did your school board affect you? What lessons will you take from your experience into this position?

I HAVE NEVER BEEN AN EMPLOYEE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION.

7. New Mexico has the lowest high school graduation rate in the nation. What specific steps will you take to address this problem?

PARENTS HAVE A LOT TO DO WITH WHETHER A STUDENT VALUES SCHOOL, AND THE VALUE A STUDENT ATTACHES TO EDUCATION HAS A LOT TO DO WITH HIS/HER MOTIVATION TO MAKE THE MOST OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES. I WOULD: 1) MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT TO ENGAGE PARENTS AND EXTENDED FAMILY TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH THE MESSAGE THAT BEING ABLE TO LEARN "WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, HOW, AND WHY", IS TIME, MONEY, AND INTELLECT WELL SPENT. 2) ENCOURAGE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS THAT PERMIT PROGRESS TO BE HONESTLY EVALUATED. 3) ENCOURAGE PARENTS AND TEACHERS TO DEMONSTRATE THE RELEVANCE OF STUDY TOPICS TO EVERYDAY LIFE.

8. New Mexico ranks 49th in 4th-grade reading and math scores. What specific steps will you take to address this problem?

FIRST, HAVE SEPARATE CLASSROOMS FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE READY FOR SCHOOL AND CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT READY, WHEN READING IS BEING TAUGHT. SECOND, EVALUATE THE SUCCESS OF TEACHING TECHNIQUES SUCH AS PHONICS AND SIGHT READING OR A COMBINATION THAT HAVE BEEN USED OR ARE AVAILABLE TO USE. THIRD, IDENTIFY OBSTACLES TO BEING ABLE TO READ AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. FOURTH, PROVIDE LOTS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR READING AND MATH FACTS PRACTICE, FIFTH, ALERT PARENTS TO WAYS THEY CAN REINFORCE WHAT HAS BEEN TAUGHT IN THE CLASSROOM. DO NOT LET A NON-READING CONDITION OR SEVERE FRUSTRATION WITH NUMBERS PERSIST!

9. How will you advocate for both the students and the employees of the public education system in your role?

AS A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, MY GOAL IS TO EQUIP ALL STUDENTS WITH THE TOOLS OF LEARNING TO LIVE PRODUCTIVE, FULFILLED ADULT LIVES AND BE ABLE TO PREPARE THEIR NEXT GENERATION FOR THE SAME. TO THAT END, I HOPE TO ENGAGE AND ENCOURAGE EVERY EMPLOYEE, EVERY VOLUNTEER, EVERY PARENT, EVERY CITIZEN TO SHARE THAT GOAL. WE SHOULD ALL BE MINDFUL OF THE RESOURCES AND CONDITIONS NEEDED TO MAKE LEARNING EFFECTIVE AND WORK TOGETHER TO SECURE THEM. THE NEXT GENERATION IS IN SERIOUS DANGER. WE CANNOT UNDERESTIMATE THAT DANGER, AND WE CANNOT BE DAUNTED BY IT.

10. Think New Mexico, a non-partisan think tank, released a study in 2017 which suggests that the percentage of a state's education budget that makes it to the classroom, as opposed to administrative costs, is related to student performance. Do you agree? Will you advocate for an increased percentage of the budget going to the classroom? Why or why not? If so, how will you address the issue?

I DO AGREE THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF THE EDUCATION BUDGET GOING TO THE CLASSROOM RELATES TO STUDENT PERFORMANCE. AS THE PERCENTAGE GOING TO THE CLASSROOM INCREASES, STUDENT PERFORMANCE INCREASES. GREATER PERCENTAGE TO THE CLASSROOM CAN MEAN MORE COMPENSATION FOR TEACHERS WHICH CAN ATTRACT EFFECTIVE TEACHERS TO THE AREA AND ULTIMATELY MORE TEACHERS TO SHARE THE CLASS LOAD. GREATER PERCENTAGE TO THE CLASSROOM CAN ALSO MEAN MORE MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES, A LEARNING BENEFIT FOR STUDENTS AND FINANCIAL BENEFIT FOR TEACHERS WHO OFTEN PAY FOR THE SUPPLIES NEEDED BY THE STUDENTS. SMALLER STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS, MORE EFFECTIVE TEACHERS WILLING TO TEACH IN NM, APPROPRIATE MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS, ALL TEND TO INCREASE STUDENT PERFORMANCE. I CERTAINLY SUPPORT INCREASING THE PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET GOING TO CLASSROOMS.

11. New Mexico is combating a "teacher shortage." A recent study by NMSU said New Mexico's "teacher attractiveness score"* is 2.18 on a scale of one to five. What will you do to increase this score and make sure these vacancies are filled by qualified individuals as quickly as possible?

1. I WOULD ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO READY THEIR CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN AND NOT TOLERATE DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR AT ANY TIME IN SCHOOL. UNRULY, DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR CONTRIBUTES TO POOR WORKING CONDITIONS FOR TEACHERS.
2. ALLOW TEACHERS TO REQUEST APPROPRIATE MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES AS THEY HELP DESIGN CURRICULUM; INADEQUATE PROVISION OF MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES CONTRIBUTES TO POOR WORKING CONDITIONS.
3. INCLUDE TEACHERS IN CURRICULUM DESIGN TO RECOGNIZE THEIR QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL INSIGHT REGARDING STUDENTS' CAPABILITIES AND LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT.
4. ALLOW TEACHERS TO SELF-EVALUATE THE RESULTS OF TESTS TO IMPROVE CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM METHODS.

12. How can you make your school board an example of excellence for the other boards in the state?

EDUCATION IS LARGELY A ONE-ON-ONE ENDEAVOR, ONE STUDENT, ONE TEACHER. THE TEACHER MAY BE A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER, A LOVING PARENT, FRIEND, OR THE WORDS AND IDEAS THAT MIRACULOUSLY TRAVEL FROM THE PAGES OF A BOOK TO THE STUDENT'S MIND. NO MATTER HOW LONG A STUDENT TRULY STUDIES AND LEARNS, THERE IS A LOT MORE STUDY AND LEARNING TO FOLLOW. THE ABILITY TO STUDY, LEARN AND APPLY NEW KNOWLEDGE OPENS THE DOOR TO LEARN EVEN MORE AND SETS US APART FROM THE ANIMALS. THAT ABILITY IS VALUABLE BEYOND MEASURE.

IF EACH SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, CITIZEN, TEACHER, TEACHER'S AID, SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT, SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION, AND STATE LEGISLATOR TRULY VALUES THE "EDUCATION BEGINNING" WHICH LCPS CAN MAKE AVAILABLE, WE WILL BE "EXCELLENT" IN ALL WE ATTEMPT. "ONE ON ONE", YES. "ALL OF US FOR ONE", YES. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO ASPIRE TO LESS THAN THAT, IF WE EXPECT TO ACHIEVE "EXCELLENCE".

**According to [NMSU](#) "Teacher Attractiveness Score" takes into consideration compensation, working conditions, teacher qualifications, and teacher turnover.*