

**Name:** Edward Frank

**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 am running for the board to provide maximum support for the people who work in classrooms---that would include students, teachers, and EAs.

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

I want LCPS to be a great place to work. I want LCPS to be a place where staff knows that their opinions are valued and where creativity is encouraged.

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

I am currently serving as president of the LCPS Board of Education. With the support of fellow board members, we have given a voice to students by having a student representative join us on the dais during regular board meeting.

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

As a union leader, I fought to reduce class size. I also fought to raise salaries and improve benefits for both certified and classified employees.

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

I went to a terrible high school and a great college. The difference was that in college my professors truly cared about me as a person. Those professors would always give the extra help I needed to succeed. To me, a great school is a school that truly cares about its students. BTW, I attended West Chester University of PA.

**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 was a math teacher and union activist for 39 years. As a teacher, I always wondered what it would be like to have a school board that actually understood my job. I want to be that school board member---the one who understands the obstacles faced in classrooms by students, teachers, and EAs.

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

In LCPS, our graduation rate is 86.2% which is the highest in NM among districts with more than one high school. That rate is higher than the national average. I'd like to see it go higher, but I'm more concerned with whether our students are career and college ready. We need to make our curricula more rigorous and make students more responsible for their learning. We need to measure achievement with something more authentic than standardized tests. Not all students can succeed in a large comprehensive high school. That's why in LCPS, Rio Grande Preparatory Institute was created. The success of that school is one big reason why our graduation rate has increased over the past five years.

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

Early intervention and remediation by subject matter specialists is needed to address the problem of underachievers. We must act before grade 4. That's why lowering class size in k-3 is vitally important.

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

I was an employee of a public school and I was a student. I have empathy for both of those groups. I will listen and I will fight for change that matters.

**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?**

Yes, I agree. A certain amount of administration is necessary but we want to maximize the percentage of the budget that makes it into our classrooms. We have increased full time employees at LCPS even though our enrollment has been flat. Our 2020 budget is spending less for administrators not in schools than we did in 2017. We're making progress but not fast enough. If elected, I will continue to scrutinize our budget for ways to get the money into our 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?**

The state is doing its part by creating programs that enable emerging teachers to leave college debt free. That will help greatly. We also have to create a friendly and stimulating work environment that encourages innovation and creativity. Of course, the pay has to improve and we have to lower class size. At LCPS, our HR Department is doing a great job of attracting quality teachers by using social media and job fairs.

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

We just have to do our best. We have to show our staff and students by our actions that we care. I hope the voters give me another opportunity to serve with this great school board.

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