

**Name:** Hoskie Benally, Jr.

**District:** Central Consolidated

**Position:** 2

*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?**

Central Consolidated School District #22, has a decline in Quality of Education due to a concerning Turn Over Rate of Educators resulting from lack of Effective and Professional Leadership. Over the last 4 years there has been 2 Superintendents and 1 Interim resulting in a adverse situation of Instability.

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

My priority will be to Restore Quality Education and Stability in CCSD by:

- Restoring Equal and Fair Treatment of CCSD Employees
- Addressing the concerning Rate of Employee Turnover
- Addressing the Low Morale of CCSD Employees
- Working toward a budget where at least 65% is for Direct Student Services
- Monitoring Student Test Scores and resulting Graduation Rates

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

Board and Commission Membership:

Member, Board of trustees, San Juan College, February 2016 to Present.

Member, New Mexico-Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, Appointed by Governor Susanna Martinez, January 2015-July 2019.

**President**, Mental Health of America-Four Corners Region, Shiprock, N. M., September 2010-February 2014.

Member/President, Navajo Nation Advisory Council on disabilities, Appointed by President Joe Shirley, Window rock, Arizona, 2007 to Present.

Board of Education Member and President, Central Consolidated Schools district, Shiprock, New Mexico, 2006 to2015.

**Co-Chair**, Fostering Indigenous Values in Education, Inc., 2005 – 2007.

**National Advisory Board Member**, American Indian Rehabilitation and Training Center, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ, August 1999 – January 2003

**Member**, Mayor's Task Force on Substance Abuse, Farmington, NM, February 1996 – 2000.

Board Member and President, Home for women and Children, Shiprock, New Mexico, 1994 to 1997.

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

CCSD is composed of 90% of Navajo Students and when serving on CCSD Board advocated for compliance of NM American Education Act. Advocated for Students with Special Needs to ensure compliance of all applicable Federal and State Mandates in serving Students with a Disability. Raised the continuing concerns of Teacher Turnover Rate due to Low Morale with CCSD Administration. Advocated Employee Grievance Rights despite opposition from other Board Members and Administration per New Mexico Law.

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

I am a 1968 High School Graduate from the CCSD School System and had the opportunity to achieve a BS Degree from Brigham Young University. With this Academic Achievement I have enjoyed a Productive and Fulfilling Life Style. It is crucial that we provide our Children and Grandchildren with a Quality Primary and Secondary Education which will reap opportunities for a Productive Future.

**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?**

(Not Applicable)

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

First we need to stop the employee turnover at schools. Relationships between teachers and students improve when teachers are seen as part of the community. Our schools must be a place where both employees and students want to be. We must also stress that an education is far more than a test score; it is an essential component of a productive future.

**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?**

Punishing our teachers and students for low test scores must stop. We must build trust and respect among the adults. We have to ensure teachers and students have what they need in the classroom. We must believe in our students' abilities.

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

Employee working conditions are student learning conditions. CCSD has experienced so much turmoil for the past few years and employee morale has suffered. We need to make CCSD a great place to work.

**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?**

CCSD seems to have a Top Heavy Administrative Budget, which results from unwarranted Administrative Positions. The Budget needs to be Stream Lined in a manner that results in at least 65% plus being reallocated for Direct Student Services. The Organizational Chart must be reviewed and revised toward this goal.

**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 School Board must collaborate with the Superintendent and Human Resources Department in jointly developing and implementing a Educator Recruitment Plan. The Board must ensure the established Milestones of such a plan are accomplished and monitored. An Employee Morale Survey will be conducted by an outside Consultant Organization and negative results much be addressed and positive results must be built upon. The development of establishing High Employee Morale will address concerning rate of Employee Turnover and result in having CCSD become an attraction for Educators.

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

With past experience as a Board Member for 8 years at CCSD, I have observed many times that some members become personal friends with the superintendent. This results in not holding the superintendent accountable for the operation of the school district and sends a message of favoritism at the highest level. Meanwhile, district personnel are expected to comply with Policies and Procedures and this fosters Low Employee Morale. To be an effective board, all board members must keep in mind their professional role and responsibilities in an objective and professional manner.

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