

**Name:** Jeffrey Silva  
**District:** Las Cruces  
**Position:** 4

*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 a parent of two Children that have gone through the Las Cruces Public School system with one of them currently in elementary. I have been privileged in leading many great team members to make a difference in our Community of being successful in achieving our goals and mission statements. I realize that it may be time for our Board Members to collaborate with Parents and Teachers on a weekly basis. I would like to see more Community Schools within the school system.

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

First and most importantly is to be transparent with Parents and Teacher. I would like to create a weekly podcast to keep everyone informed and to have a monthly meeting called "Coffee with Jeffrey" to listen to concerns or question. I would like to create a mentorship/internship with the business community and the City and County Government by meeting with Business Leaders and City and County officials to discuss concerns and career enrichment.

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

I have been the Board Chair of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Board Chair of March of Dimes, The Board Chair of Cuidando's Los Ninos and of Team Zane Celebrity Waiter. The leadership role on these Boards allowed our Team to advance our mission statement and to make a financial impact, on multiple non-profits.

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

I was involved in helping New Mexico State University State Dance Sport Team (Look Who's Dancing) in which we raised money and sponsorships for these students to compete in competitions across the United States.

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

My Mother was a teacher for 40 years and seeing her love and passion in helping children has allowed me to observe the importance of education as multiple generations would return to thank my Mother and develop into responsible adults. I received my MBA late in life and as a single parent, this showed me that it can be done with a full time job and other priorities to realize hard work will pay off.

**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 not worked in a public school setting with the exception of teaching Junior Achievement in the school system. I realize that this will make me the underdog but I want to use my prior success to lead with success and integrity. My Mother is a 40 year educator and I was able to grow up in a household to see her commitment to education.

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

Create a mentorship program for those at risk students that are failing to make the grade. I would like to bring back classes such as wood shop, printing, home economics, auto and computer science to help students that may not want to finish school but become interested in a trade. Start workforce development at the elementary school level and continue this throughout high school. Focus on the strengths of our high school students to build confidence and to help many of them self discover the other hidden talents they may possess.

**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?**

I would create a buddy program for these students with their peers. I would create a take a book home program and reward all who would read and bring back the book for additional books. We could look at having business mentors and interns become part of the program in order to help future employees be successful in education. We should continue to get more technology into the classroom in order to make learning fun and students grown in the digital environment.

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

I am an active listener and lead with my heart and my head. Any concern of a Student, Parent and Employee of the Public School is a concern for me. I will address each concern and will be transparent with major decisions while listening to feedback.

**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 believe that not enough money is reaching the class room. Many teachers need supplies and learning materials to help kids. I would increase the budget and look for grants from foundations and government assistance to increase the flow of money. We should consider being more efficient with cost cutting efforts in administrative cost in order to increase the budgets going to the class room.

**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?**

I would suggest we start career fairs in college with allowing some students to mentor while they are still in school for college credits. We should consider partnering up with City and County Government to consider job share of business people coming into the class room such as “extended Junior Achievement”.

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

We should be transparent in all we do and we should give ourselves a scorecard for parents and teachers to grade us on how we are making the grade and meet quarterly to discuss improvements and collaboration with the Community.

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