

Israel Irrobali

El Paso ISD Board of Trustees - District 5

As you read above is our statement of values for public education as the El Paso County Democratic Party. Do you agree with our statement, yes or no. If you do not, please explain.["Yes"]

I was one of four trustees who made the difficult decision to close six schools. While I firmly believe that neighborhood schools play a vital role in fostering inclusive environments that nurture every student's potential, the data and financial realities made it clear that closures were necessary. I remain committed to protecting and strengthening our neighborhood schools, but we must also acknowledge that EPISD had over 60,000 students enrolled a decade ago—today, that number has declined by 12,000, yet we continue to operate with a much greater number of near-empty schools. This decision was crucial to preserving high-quality programming, expanding opportunities for student success, and ensuring job security for all EPISD employees—without placing a greater financial burden on taxpayers.

Question 1: What motivated you to run for the school board, and what are your top priorities

I am running for the school board because I believe in the power of public education to transform lives. Like many students in our district, I faced challenges growing up, and I know firsthand how critical strong schools, supportive educators, and a thriving community are to a child's success. My top priorities are to strengthen academic outcomes, ensure financial stability, and make EPISD the premier district in our region.

Over the last three years, we have made significant progress—expanding programming opportunities for students, increasing compensation for EPISD employees, and prioritizing funding at campuses while eliminating positions and spending at the central office. However, there is still much work to be done. With shifting policies at the state and federal levels, now more than ever, we need proven leadership to navigate these changes effectively. During my first term—two years of which I served as board president—I have demonstrated my ability to lead with integrity, make tough but necessary decisions, and advocate for the best interests of our students, educators, and families. I am committed to continuing this work and ensuring EPISD remains a district where every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Question 2: How do you plan to address educational equity across schools in our district?

Every child deserves access to high-quality education, no matter their background or ZIP code. That's why I have championed initiatives that expand opportunities for all students, including the expansion of Pre-K enrollment and the development of programs that prepare students for success beyond graduation. One key initiative has been reintroducing AVID into our campuses, equipping students with essential skills in critical thinking, organization, and college and career readiness. However, educational equity goes beyond just access—it requires intentional investment in schools that need it most. I will continue working to close achievement gaps by ensuring additional resources are directed where they can best support underserved communities and expanding innovative programs that give every student the tools they need to succeed.

Question 3: What is your vision for the role of public education in our community?

ChatGPT said:

Public education is the foundation of a strong community. It should provide students with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities to succeed in life while fostering a sense of belonging and purpose. My vision is for EPISD to be a leader in academic excellence, career and college readiness, and innovative programming. We must support our educators, engage families, and maintain financial stability to create an environment where all students can achieve their full potential.

As the namesake district of our region, EPISD should continue leading the fight against key state issues such as vouchers and inadequate school finance policies that threaten public education. We must stand firm in advocating for fair funding, protecting resources for our students, and ensuring that taxpayer dollars remain in our public schools rather than being diverted elsewhere. Our district has a responsibility to set the standard, push for policies that benefit all public-school students, and defend the right to a quality education for every child.

Question 4: What are your plans to ensure transparency and accountability in your work on the school board?

Transparency and accountability are essential to good governance. Throughout my time on the board, I have made it a priority to engage directly with the community—meeting with stakeholders, attending events, and ensuring open access to discussions and decisions. I will continue to advocate for clear communication, data-driven decision-making, and

policies that keep our district accountable to students, families, and educators. By maintaining an open dialogue and making responsible choices, we can build trust and create lasting positive change.

Question 5: What is your stance on charter schools and their impact on public schools?

My focus is on strengthening EPISD and ensuring that our public schools remain the best choice for families. As a trustee, I have championed EPISD's legislative priorities, including personally calling for a moratorium on charter schools in the state of Texas. We must continue investing in strong programming, expanding opportunities for students, and supporting our educators so that families choose EPISD with confidence. Rather than diverting resources away from public education, we should prioritize innovative initiatives that make EPISD competitive and attractive, ensuring that every child receives a high-quality education within our district.

Every family must make the best decision they can for their child's success, and as a trustee, it is my responsibility to ensure that EPISD offers the strongest opportunities and programs to make that choice an easy one. By fostering academic excellence, career readiness, and a supportive learning environment, we can ensure that our schools remain the top choice for families seeking the best path for their children's future.

Did you attend public schools? ["Yes"]

If applicable: do your children - or did your children - attend public schools?

["Yes"]

Have you received any campaign contributions from charter school supporters such as CREEED? ["Yes"]

Do you believe in Greg Abbott's Voucher Plan? ["No"]