

## **John Ponce De Leon**

### **EPISD School Board Trustee District #3**

**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"]**

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

*I'm running because I care deeply about the future of Central El Paso. As a father of two daughters, my wife and I are all proud products of EPISD, I understand the challenges our community faces. I want to see surplus school properties in Central repurposed for new development that will bring growth and opportunity to our neighborhood. I also believe it's time to redirect resources from empty buildings to better support our teachers, support staff and students. Central El Paso deserves the same attention and investment as other parts of the city, and I'm committed to making that happen.*

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

*To address educational equity across schools in our district, I am committed to ensuring that Crockett, Bliss, Coldwell, Paul Moreno, Clendenin, Travis, Navarrete, Austin High School receives the attention, investment, and resources needed to thrive. Educational equity isn't just about fair access to resources; it's about ensuring that all students, regardless of where they live, have the support they need to succeed.*

*Given that my old high school is set to drop to 885 students, it's clear that we need to act now. This decline in enrollment is part of a larger trend, and it's crucial that we focus on revitalizing our schools, especially those in underserved areas like Central El Paso. I plan to repurpose surplus school properties for new development, which will bring growth and opportunities to our neighborhoods, and by doing so, make Central El Paso a more attractive place for families to settle, thereby increasing enrollment and revitalizing our schools.*

*By redirecting resources from empty school buildings, I can ensure that those funds are put to better use by supporting our teachers, staff, and students directly. We need to prioritize*



*the success of our schools and the people who are working on the ground to improve educational outcomes.*

*My top priorities are reusing surplus properties, strengthening the Austin feeder pattern, and being responsible stewards of our resources. Every child in our district, no matter where they are located, deserves the same quality education, and I am committed to making sure that happens.*

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

*My vision for public education is that it should be the foundation of opportunity and empowerment for every child. Schools should not only focus on academic success but also foster community, unity, and civic engagement. To strengthen this, we need to bring PTAs back and encourage more parent involvement. When parents are active participants in their children's education, it creates a stronger support system for students and schools alike. Public education should be a tool for equity, where every child has the opportunity to thrive, and the community plays a vital role in that success.*

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

*To ensure transparency and accountability, I will focus on open communication through regular community meetings and provide clear, accessible updates on district decisions and finances. I will advocate for ongoing performance reviews of programs and staff to ensure we're effectively meeting the needs of our students. My commitment is to keep the community informed and responsive to feedback at every step.*

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

*Charter schools can offer choices for families, and ultimately, it's up to each family to decide what's best for their child's education. However, public education is the backbone of our country, and we must ensure it remains strong and equitable for all students. With vouchers coming to Texas, we need to be proactive in strengthening our public schools. That's why I'm focused on repurposing surplus properties and using taxpayer money wisely to invest in our schools. Our priority must be to ensure public education continues to serve as the foundation for all children, regardless of the options available.*



**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? ["No"]**

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