



## 2025 School Committee Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Luis Robles

Office Sought: Lawrence School Committee

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### (A) Your Candidacy

**1. Why are you running, and what would be your top three priorities if elected to serve?**

**Improve academic achievement** by promoting proven strategies that raise reading and math levels, especially in the early grades.

**Promote collaboration and reduce staff stress** by improving communication and ensuring teachers have the support and resources they need to focus on teaching, not bureaucracy.

**Protect parent rights and involvement** by making sure families have a stronger voice in decisions that affect their children's education.

**2. What qualifies you to hold this office?**

I'm an active parent with children in the Lawrence Public Schools and currently serve as the Secretary of the English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC). In that role, I work directly with other parents and district staff to address concerns and improve student outcomes. My experience has taught me how our schools operate day to day and where we can do better. I'm committed to bringing a parent's perspective, transparency, and accountability to the School Committee.

### (B) Open-Ended Policy Questions

**1. Massachusetts has wide racial, income-based, and language disparities in educational outcomes. How would you evaluate your school district's work to improve educational equity? What additional steps would you advocate for?**

Our district has made efforts to address disparities, but too often the focus has been on programs and labels instead of real academic results. True educational equity means giving every student, regardless of background, the tools and expectations to succeed. That starts with strong reading, writing, and math instruction, not lowering standards.

As a parent and ELPAC Secretary, I have seen that many families, especially those who speak other languages, want to be involved but feel left out of the decision-making process. We can do better by improving communication, increasing transparency, and holding ourselves accountable for measurable progress.

I would advocate for clearer goals to raise proficiency rates, stronger early literacy programs, and consistent support for teachers so that classrooms are focused on learning, not politics. Equity should mean opportunity through excellence, not excuses for failure.

**2. Earlier this year, the Trump administration repealed a Biden-era policy that protected schools from immigration enforcement. What steps would you take to ensure that schools remain a safe and welcoming place for all students, regardless of immigration status?**

Lawrence Public Schools already has a policy in place that ensures all students are treated with respect and can learn in a safe, welcoming environment regardless of immigration status. I fully support maintaining that policy as it stands.

Our focus should stay on education, not politics. Every child who walks through our doors deserves the same opportunity to learn and succeed. As a School Committee member, I would continue to uphold district policy, ensure consistent communication with families, and make sure our schools remain focused on academic excellence and student well-being.

**3. The Trump administration has been targeting LGBTQ students's civil rights. What steps would you take to ensure that schools remain a safe**

**and welcoming place for all students, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation?**

Every student deserves to feel safe, respected, and able to focus on learning. Lawrence Public Schools already has policies in place to protect all students from bullying and discrimination, and I fully support continuing those protections.

My priority is to make sure that all students, regardless of background or beliefs, are treated with dignity and fairness. Schools should focus on creating a respectful learning environment where differences are handled with understanding and professionalism. I would continue to support strong anti-bullying measures, promote respectful communication, and ensure that staff are trained to address concerns appropriately so that every student can succeed.

**4. What role do you see for the school district in the city's response to climate change?**

The school district's primary role should be education. Our focus should be on teaching students to think critically about science, the environment, and how personal responsibility and innovation can make a difference.

I believe the district can lead by example through practical steps like improving energy efficiency in school buildings, reducing waste, and teaching students about conservation in ways that connect to real-world problem solving. These efforts should be cost-effective and support the district's main mission of academic achievement.

Our goal should not be political messaging but preparing the next generation to be informed, responsible stewards of their community and environment.

**5. How would you model transparency and accountability if elected?**

Transparency and accountability begin with communication and consistency. If elected, I would make sure parents, teachers, and community members have clear access to information about how decisions are made and how resources are used.

I would support publishing data on student performance, program outcomes, and spending in a way that is easy for the public to understand. I also believe in listening to families and staff before major decisions are made, not after.

Accountability means following through on promises and measuring results. I would focus on setting clear goals for academic improvement and reporting progress openly so the community can see what is working and what needs to change.

**6. How will you engage stakeholders, including students, in budget decisions?**

As a School Committee member, I would advocate for open meetings, clear budget summaries, and accessible communication that allows parents and staff to give feedback. I also believe in giving student councils real responsibilities, not just symbolic roles, by allowing them to discuss school priorities, gather feedback from their peers, and present their findings to the School Committee.

Students have valuable insight into what works and what does not in their classrooms. Including them meaningfully in these discussions helps build leadership, accountability, and a stronger sense of ownership in their education.

**7. How will you use your position to advocate at the state level for increasing education funding, especially to provide additional support for students in historically marginalized districts/communities?**

At the state level, I would support efforts that strengthen accountability for how funding is distributed and spent, ensuring that money reaches students and teachers directly. I would also work with other districts to highlight the challenges faced by communities like ours, where many students are learning English or come from low-income families.

More funding alone is not enough. We must make sure every dollar is tied to measurable results, such as higher reading and math proficiency, better teacher support, and programs that genuinely close achievement gaps.

**8. How will you use your position to combat the Trump administration's war on public education?**

As a School Committee member, I will work to ensure that Lawrence Public Schools provide a high-quality education for every student, with strong academic standards, parental involvement, and support for teachers. I believe that when schools are transparent, effective, and responsive to families, they earn the public's trust and become harder for any administration to weaken.

I would also work to collaborate so that we can partner with the Trump administration using data and facts to demonstrate the needs of our district and to remind them that strong education is the foundation of a strong nation. Rather than attack the administration, which would only worsen relationships and risk retaliation that could hurt our schools even more, I would focus on diplomacy to achieve the best outcomes for our students.

My priority is to focus on what we can control here in Lawrence: academic excellence, responsible budgeting, and policies that put students first.

### (C) **Yes/No Policy Questions**

1. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools? **NO**
2. Do you support police-free schools? **NO**
3. Do you support teaching comprehensive, medically accurate, consent-based, LGBTQ-inclusive sex ed in schools? **YES/ NO Yes (high school only)**
4. According to the American Library Association, in 2022 there were at least 45 attempts to restrict access to books in MA schools, disproportionately books that speak to the experiences of LGBTQ students and students of color. Would you oppose such book-banning efforts if they occurred in your city? **YES / NO Yes (unless it is too sexually explicit for that grade level)**

### (D) **Additional Comments**

*(Use this space to make any final comments you deem important for progressive voters assessing your candidacy.)*

Every issue in education deserves to be handled with thought, respect, and balance. I believe in focusing on what unites us, helping students reach their full potential, supporting teachers, and giving parents a real voice in their children's education. Sometimes there are sensitive topics that come up in schools, and we need to recognize that there is nuance to everything. These conversations should be approached with care, honesty, and respect for the diverse values of families in our community.

My goal is to strengthen academic achievement, promote collaboration, and create a school environment where every student feels supported and every parent feels heard. I am committed to leading with transparency, fairness, and common sense to

ensure that Lawrence Public Schools are focused on excellence for all students.