



Association of Brownsville Educators

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BISD Board Candidate Questionnaire

1. Please provide a brief biographical information essay about yourself, your family, your educational background (including elementary, middle & high school), employment, organizations you belong to (professional, community, social), etc.

My name is Minerva M. Peña and I was raised in Brownsville Texas. I graduated from Porter High School in 1976. In 1978, I earned my associates degree from Texas Southmost College. In 1979, I earned a Bachelor Science degree in Criminal Justice from Pan American University.

I have demonstrated fairness in civil service through my work as a law enforcement officer for 29 years. I retired as a Texas State trooper at the rank of Sergeant, and I worked hard to ensure the safety of our citizens in our community. I am an individual that gives back to my community. I have helped instill important values in young children through baseball as President of the Brownsville Pony League. I have also worked hard as a parent band booster member and a chess parent booster member. I dedicated my time to the children of the Brownsville Independent School District assisting them with their needs.

My dedication to the youth of Brownsville is evident in my numerous honors and awards received as listed below:

- Outstanding service award as a state trooper in 2008.
- Hats off Award from the DeMolay Phoenix Chapter in 2007
- Proclamation from the City of Brownsville for outstanding service to our youth in 2008
- Yellow Rose of Texas Commission received from the Governor's office in 2023.

I am currently seeking the position of School Board Trustee place 6, which I have held in the past. I will continue to faithfully serve our Brownsville community, doing my very best to assist in the advancement of all our students' education, by proudly serving our parents and community.

2. Why are you running for school board?

To help students and teachers. To make sure they have what they need to succeed. When our students, teachers and all school staff have what they need to succeed the entire district succeeds. A successful educational system makes a great community.

3. What do you see as the three biggest problems confronting the district? Prioritize and explain.

1. Ensuring that our teachers and school staff earn a salary that is comparable to the cost of living.
2. Making sure class sizes stay at the proper size to ensure teachers can teach all the students in their classroom and not run the risk of having some students fall through the cracks and ensure they all reach their educational potential goals.
3. Ensure that the funding for all students is a priority to enhance their education by offering them extra-curricular activities that every child can participate in. Students should not have to worry about having their parents having to pay out of pocket for their extracurricular activities. This ensures that every child will be put on a fair level playing field and not depend on their family income to be able to participate in extra-curricular activities.

4. What are your goals for BISD?

- Assuring that the district has salaries that appeal to teachers and are comparable with the cost-of-living expenses.
- Assuring that class sizes are ideal so that students can make appropriate gain within their grade level.
- Assuring that educational grants are applied for to provide important financial support for the district budget shortfall and help promote educational excellence at BISD.

5. One of the biggest issues confronting the district is the drop in student enrollment. What solutions do you have to help attract and retain students in BISD?
- Customer service needs to be a priority for everyone; this would be for all levels including campus staff, district staff, students, parents and community members.
 - Class size needs to be minimized to help teachers reach every student in their class and help them succeed and reach their full potential.
6. How do you plan to engage parents, students, and community members in the decision-making process, and what steps will you take to ensure transparency in school board decisions?
- Have parental meetings monthly at all campuses.
 - Have district administrators develop educational meetings with parents, where parents can have input on their children's education. This can be done once every six weeks.
7. How do you plan to address the issues and concerns with the leadership and membership of our employee union, Association of Brownsville Educators - AOB/E/TSTA/NEA?
- Have an open-door policy.
 - Answer all calls when possible.
 - Return all calls that were not answered at the time of the call.
 - Address all concerns brought to my attention everyone.

8. Would you consider bringing back the annual step increase to the salary pay table, and if so how would you go about it to bring it back?
- This is something that needs to be looked at and addressed.
 - Prioritizing teacher salaries is a must for the district to keep teachers.
 - Making sure that we are fiscally responsible with all finances, to ensure a budget that meets all the needs of the school district, to avoid making cuts anywhere.
9. TIA has been an issue with many of our members. What are you going to do to ensure that teacher incentive allotment is implemented with fidelity and consistency across the district?
- My objective is to make sure that the TIA is applied fairly and consistently to all employees.
 - To do this we need to look at the TIA parameters and study them well, to ensure that everyone knows what they are doing with this TIA incentive.