

USD 232 Board of Education Candidate Questionnaire: September 2023

Name: Andrew Jacober

Position: 7

1. Please list any previous elected or appointed offices you have held.
Board Chair - De Soto Chamber of Commerce
2. What is your current occupation and where are you currently employed?
Financial Advisor. Edward Jones - 8960 Commerce Drive, Suite 4A, De Soto KS.
3. Please list the school(s) where you completed your secondary and any post-secondary education.
High School - Hickman High School, Columbia MO
College - University of Central MO, Warrensburg MO.
4. What degree(s) do you hold?
Bachelor's of Science, Management.
5. How long have you lived in the district? Do you have school-aged children living at home? If so, what school(s) do they attend?
16 years. 2 children, age 20, 17
Daughter, 20, Mize Elementary - Mill Creek - De Soto High (Class of 2021). Currently in college in Springfield, MO studying Elementary Education.
Son, 17, Mize Elementary - Lexington Trails - De Soto High (Sr, graduating May 2024)
6. Please describe your community involvement and activities.
Throughout our kids lives, we've been involved in Church and sporting activities including coaching and Youth Group leadership. It was my privilege to take my daughter on a mission trip to Nicaragua in Feb. 2020. I believe that trip helped her decide to pursue Elementary Education as a Career. I have also been involved in the Rotary Club of De Soto. For the last 5 years, I've been a member of the De Soto Chamber of Commerce, serving as the Board Chair the last 3 years. Growth is obviously on people's minds with housing concerns and large scale manufacturing heading to De Soto. I believe my experience with the De Soto Chamber, whose primary purpose is to navigate workforce development and create networking opportunities for our members, will help as we cope with a growing district.
7. Why have you chosen to run for the USD 232 Board of Education?
It is no secret that when parents are involved with their children's lives and education, those kids thrive and succeed. USD 232 is near the top in the state of Kansas for that reason. I would love to see our district at the top of Kansas for education. Like many involved parents, my why will always be my children. My hope is that our



daughter returns to the area after college and teaches here. She's expressed interest in doing so. Our teachers do not have an easy job. My wife was a Para Professional for a few years at De Soto, and we have supported all of the teachers that our kids have had. We must continue to strive to attract and keep good quality teachers. Several friends approached me to run for the School board, saying that I would be very good. I do feel it's very important for more Dad's in our community to step up and serve. Lastly is equal representation. We have 2 very good High Schools and I am one of only two candidates with children at or will attend De Soto High.

8. What will you do as a board member to ensure you have adequate knowledge and information on which to base your decisions?

The old saying that you have two ears and one mouth for a reason, is true. My career requires me to listen a lot more than I talk. I need to know my clients priorities, dreams, as well as their concerns. You must gather all of the information and of course seek advice and counsel from good people. A really good book said that "where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors, there is victory".

9. How would you foster collaboration between the board, parents/guardians, school staff, and community members to ensure everyone's input is considered in decision-making processes? See #8! Listen. Even if I don't necessarily agree with someone, I always listen to what they have to say. Patience is a virtue. Something I try to instill in our kids. (Even if social media and society are creating a horrible sense of instant gratification) You must be patient and help people find common ground. It is there, you just have to bring it to the surface.

10. When funding becomes critical, what do you see as priorities for our school district?

Our teachers and our students! As I walked around our district I have had multiple conversations with retired school staff and one area that I believe gets over looked is custodial staff. They are over worked and understaffed. We just do not have enough good people to adequately keep our schools clean. I know that payroll is a very large part of the district budget. Reviewing that on a regular basis to make sure the funds are being spent wisely, is a major role of a school board.

11. If funding becomes more abundant, what do you see as priorities for our school district?

Growth is coming. I'm certain we will have to address additional schools. The district has done a great job of planning and acquiring land anticipating growth areas and needs for additional schools. Bonds, and construction projects, I'm sure, will be needs in the near future. From a wish standpoint, I would love to see a possible partnership with the community for an aquatic center. Stress fractures and injuries were all too common with my son's track and cross country team. Aqua-jogging/low-impact training could be an option for the kids in the off season, not just for our swimmers and runners, but all of the student athletes as well as the community.

12. What do you view as opportunities for improvement in USD 232?

We have done a great job with the Real World Learning program. I would like to expand that and continue to help our Juniors and Seniors explore different career paths. This would give them even more opportunities to see what

a day in the life of different companies and jobs may look like. I also feel a shift out of the "you must go to college" mentality. There are a lot of careers that do not require a 4 year college degree. Our country was built on small businesses started by someone with a passion who did not go to college, but learned a skill and perfected it.

13. What do you view as USD 232's main areas of strength?

CTEC has been a great addition to our district. Our school and class size makes USD 232 very attractive to families. I love the smaller class sizes (not only for the teachers to manage, but for the kids and learning). I would really like us to continue to try and keep a manageable class size. It goes without saying, that our teachers are some of the best. I've had the pleasure of meeting a lot of them through our kid's growth from Mize to DHS. In a meeting with Dr. Gibson, I told him that a big part of the reason we are a strong district is that Parents really do care about their kids education. Family is very important to me. When you have a strong family at home, that does translate to kids growing up to be productive member's of our society.

14. Is there anything else that you would like to share with our members?

Johnson County Kansas has some fantastic schools. We are here because of USD 232. My wife and I lived in Lees Summit, Missouri after we got married. We made the decision to move to Kansas in 2007 to reduce my work commute. I can say without a doubt, that the schools here were a major deciding factor. It was the best life decision we have ever made. Realtors and friends kept saying that by the time our kids got to high school, we'd have a 3rd high school. 2008 slowed that down a bit. We are on a trajectory to possibly get there. It would be my honor to be a part of making a 3rd high school in USD 232 a reality. Like I mentioned before, family is very important to me. If we create a safe, loving home for our children, then they won't want to leave town as soon as they turn 18. This could be a community that our kids decide to come back or stay in the area to work and raise families of their own.