

NASB State Board Candidate Questionnaire 2026



Cindy Johnson – LD 10

1. **Local Control** - With so many decisions from the legislature impacting local boards, NASB is interested in your view of local control. Regarding education, what decisions do you feel are best made at the school board level vs. the State level?

I believe that decisions on policy, curriculum, personnel, and budgets should be left to local school boards. It's not the State's job to micromanage the various school districts from the panhandle to Omaha. Truly, the State's role should be paving the road for district growth and improvement, and improved educational outcomes for students. I am a strong believer in local control and know that what works best for an Omaha/Lincoln school is not necessarily what's best for Norfolk or Crofton.

2. **School Funding** - Every year the legislature makes decisions about the way schools are funded, making predictability of funding a challenge. What changes and/or adjustments, if any, do you think the Legislature should address?

I believe that the Legislature's role is to provide a predictable, sustainable model of state financial support for schools. This year-by-year "building the plane as we fly it" approach is not suitable for a strategic plan that brings Nebraska's public schools along with the rest of the nation into the future. Ultimately, I think the State should provide additional funding for local school districts.

3. **Role of Education in the State** - What role do you think PK-12 Education plays in the future success of the State and your community?

PK-12 education is the first step in a young Nebraskan's journey of joining society and building their future. The role of PK-12 education in building up a rigorous, strong foundation for our children cannot be overstated. I strongly believe PK-12 education is the single most important determinant of future success and students should have robust, accessible, and high-quality (well-funded) public education.

4. **Educational Workforce** - Educational workforce continues to be a challenge across the State from teachers to bus drivers. What would be your plan to address this challenge?

My plan is simple. Retention and recruitment programs that have proven successful and brought/kept educators and staff in Nebraska should be expanded, and we should

seek to learn from other states and empower school districts to take novel, innovative steps to recruit and retain staff and teachers. I want to hear from your board members and other stakeholders on how the State can provide meaningful support. This is an issue we can partner together to solve.

5. **Mandates** - School districts continue to be challenged by the increasing unfunded mandates put upon them by the State and Federal government. What is your response to mandates and the State's role in them?

Again, I believe school districts should be well-resourced. The State's role in closing the gaps that unfunded mandates present is clear. I support providing school districts with the support they need to balance their budget and deliver quality results for their students and the families that depend on the districts across Nebraska. We can't keep increasing the demands on schools and cutting the aid we provide them.

Final Thoughts

I have worked in and around education for most, if not all, of my professional career, providing assistance to students who are hard of hearing and working collaboratively with educators and administrators to deliver quality education. My time on the Learning Community Coordinating Council has shown me there are achievement gaps where extra support is needed for our schools. I understand the role that NASB and its members play in delivering quality public education - and I want to make sure that you know you can count on me to listen and advocate for education in Nebraska.

How can voters contact you?

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