Applicant
Jason Knese

Why do you want to be on the Board of Education for Academy District 20?
For more than 22 years, I have had the opportunity to serve our country in the United States Army. As I look toward the next chapter of my life, I want to continue that commitment to service in the community where my family lives.

My mother worked in the New York City School System for over 30 years. Her one piece of advice when looking for a home was to make sure the school district was among the best. I believe that strong schools are one of the most important foundations of a strong community. The decisions made by a school board have long-term effects not only on students, but also on families, teachers, and the community as a whole. I would like the opportunity to bring my experience in leadership, strategic planning, resource management, and collaborative problem-solving to those decisions.

My military career has taught me the importance of listening to people with different perspectives, gathering the best information available, making difficult decisions when necessary, and remaining accountable for the outcome. I would bring that same approach to the Board while keeping student achievement and preparation for life after graduation at the center of my decisions.

What would be your top 3 priorities if you joined the ASD20 Board of Education?
Academic excellence and preparing students for what comes next.
My first priority would be ensuring that ASD20 continues to provide students with a strong academic foundation while preparing them for success after graduation. Not every student's path will look the same. Whether a student chooses college, a skilled trade, military service, or another career path, our schools need to develop the knowledge, critical-thinking skills, communication skills, character, and personal responsibility needed to succeed.

Second, I want to ensure the district is supporting excellent teachers and creating an environment where they can teach effectively.
Teachers have one of the greatest direct impacts on student success. I would want to understand what is helping our best educators succeed, what unnecessary obstacles are taking time away from instruction, and what the district can reasonably do to recruit and retain high-quality teachers. Students also deserve safe, orderly classrooms where expectations are clear, and teachers can focus their time on teaching.

Responsible stewardship, accountability, and transparency.
A school district has an obligation to use taxpayer resources responsibly. My experience has included managing large programs, budgets, personnel, and competing priorities, and I understand that resources are limited. I would approach district decisions by asking whether an investment produces meaningful value for students, whether results can be measured, and ensure the district can clearly explain its decisions to the community.

Which Board policy do you believe should be changed/removed/updated and why?
I would be interested in reviewing and further refining the Board's Policy Governance framework, particularly the policies defining the boundary between Board oversight and authority delegated to the Superintendent.

I believe there is significant value in allowing professional administrators to manage the day-to-day operations of the district without unnecessary Board micromanagement. At the same time, the Board has an obligation to the community to provide meaningful oversight and accountability on significant decisions affecting students, families, employees, and district resources.

I would support clearer criteria identifying when an issue rises to a level that warrants additional Board visibility, discussion, or approval while preserving the Superintendent's ability to effectively manage district operations.

To be clear my goal would not be to expand Board involvement into everyday administrative decisions. Rather, I would want to ensure that responsibility, authority, and accountability are clearly aligned so that the community understands who is responsible for major decisions and the Board has sufficient information to fulfill its governance responsibilities.

Please list any committees, associations or other roles you have had within school is ASD20, or schools outside of our District.
YMCA- Youth Soccer

If you have students in the district, which school(s) do they attend?
I have one [redacted] who attends [redacted] Elementary School, and a [redacted] who will be attending [redacted] in the coming years.

Outside of education, what are you most passionate about/what motivates you?

I am most motivated by service, leadership, family, and helping people and organizations become better than they were when I arrived.

For most of my adult life, service has been a major part of who I am. During more than two decades in the Army, I have had the opportunity to lead and develop people, solve difficult problems, manage significant responsibilities, and work alongside individuals with very different backgrounds and perspectives toward a common objective.

I particularly enjoy developing people and teams. Some of the most rewarding parts of my career have not been individual accomplishments, but seeing people I have trained, mentored, or led become confident leaders themselves.

I am also motivated by tackling difficult problems where there may not be an obvious answer. I enjoy learning, evaluating different perspectives, identifying practical solutions, and then taking responsibility for executing them. As I transition from military service, I want to continue using those experiences in ways that contribute positively to my family and community.

JASON KNESE

Strategic Leader & U.S. Army Special Forces Veteran | Public Service • Organizational Leadership • Resource Stewardship
Colorado Springs, CO 80920 | [redacted] | [redacted]

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

U.S. Army Special Forces veteran and strategic leader with more than 22 years of public service and experience leading people, managing complex organizations, overseeing multimillion-dollar programs, and making decisions in high-accountability environments. Brings a disciplined, collaborative and data-informed approach to strategic planning, resource stewardship, risk assessment, organizational improvement, training, and team development. Current work includes educating soldiers and military families about digital identity, online privacy, and personal risk in an increasingly connected environment.

CORE QUALIFICATIONS

Strategic Leadership	Fiscal & Resource Stewardship	Public Service	Team Development
Risk Management	Conflict Resolution	Strategic Planning	Cross-Functional Collaboration
Process Improvement	Data-Driven Decisions	Digital Safety & Privacy	Training & Education

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Identity Management Technician | Colorado Springs, CO — Current

- Train soldiers on digital identity, online privacy, and how personal information can be collected, connected, and used across the internet.
- Conduct individualized assessments to help soldiers understand their digital footprint, identify potential online exposure, and recognize privacy and security risks.
- Provide practical education to soldiers and their families on online dangers, responsible information sharing, privacy settings, and the long-term implications of personal activity on the internet.
- Translate complex technical and privacy concepts into clear, actionable guidance for individuals and families with varied levels of technical experience.

Technology Integrator | Space Technical Applications — Sep 2023 – Present
Detachment Commander | United States Army

- Developed and executed customized training pathways to address evolving global needs, supporting modernization efforts across space, cyber, and electronic warfare initiatives.
- Collaborated across government directorates, program offices, and industry partners to assess emerging technologies and determine practical applications for complex operational requirements.
- Helped develop training pipelines and organizational doctrine through more than 50 operational flights and repeated evaluation of new capabilities.

Operations Manager | Special Forces | United States Army — Sep 2021 – Sep 2023

- Led a 10-person staff supporting global operations while managing a 100% increase in active programs and maintaining accountability for personnel, resources, and mission requirements.
- Served as a focal point across specialized programs, coordinating stakeholders and translating complex capabilities into practical options for senior leaders.
- Developed and managed a comprehensive risk-management program for high-intensity training, contributing to more than two years of zero-incident operations.

Program Manager | Technical Surveillance Detachment — Jun 2020 – Aug 2021
Operations Sergeant | United States Army

- Led a diverse team of 16 technical operators and helped enable a 300% budget increase through effective program execution and demonstrated organizational value.
- Managed a $30M program across four technology portfolios with a $1.6M annual operating budget, supporting more than 1,000 personnel in combat and operational environments.
- Served on an organizational innovation panel, evaluating new approaches, building partnerships, and identifying practical solutions to complex challenges.

Team Lead | Senior Medical Sergeant | United States Army — Jan 2015 – Jun 2020

- Led teams in complex, high-accountability environments and researched, acquired, and integrated new capabilities to improve organizational effectiveness.
- Contributed to four national-level security assessments, identifying critical vulnerabilities and recommending actions to reduce organizational risk.
- Selected over more senior peers for leadership responsibilities based on performance, work ethic, and demonstrated ability to improve processes and develop teams.

EARLIER LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Platoon Sergeant (2011–2012) • Senior Scout (2009–2011) • Section Sergeant (2008–2009) • Team Leader (2006–2008)

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Liberal Arts | Excelsior University

SELECTED LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Army Space Control Planners Course | Army Space Fundamentals
Space Force and NRO Overview
Anti-Terrorism Officer Level II
Unconventional Warfare Operational Design
Special Operations Combat Medic

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Youth Sports Coach – Soccer | YMCA

- Coached youth athletes with an emphasis on teamwork, confidence, sportsmanship, skill development, and creating a positive environment for children and families.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Bronze Star – awarded for exceptional performance in combat
Army Commendation Medal for Valor – awarded for actions in Afghanistan