

## NVCS BOD Application Questionnaire

Name Chris Larkins

**Please provide a bio with relevant work, volunteer and/or life experience.**

I am a Colorado native raised in a family of public servants from firefighters to educators with a strong presence in the communities in which I have lived (Metro Denver and Northern Colorado). This upbringing has provided a lifetime personal insight into the concerns and frustrations of our government and school employees. For the past nine years, I have owned and operated a successful insurance agency in Loveland allowing me the opportunity to work with and learn about our community and teaching me the ins and outs of business management. Last, and most importantly, I am a family man who values the education of my daughters. My wife, Erin, and I have a second grader in Mrs. Nelson's class, a second daughter entering kindergarten next year and another due in June. Through my daughter's experience and my wife's involvement on many committees, I see firsthand what an amazing school NVCS is and I would like to be a part of and witness its success for our next 14 years and many years beyond.

**Please describe your strengths and why you would be an asset to the New Vision Board of Directors**

My family history in public service, my current position as a local small business owner and my future vision for my children's education allows me to see and approach concerns from multiple angles. My profession provides experience with budgeting, deciphering contracts, negotiating, managing a team and advocating for my clients. In college, I was a project manager for a custom builder which gave me skills such as simultaneously managing multiple job sites, listening to and balancing client needs and contractor concerns and ensuring quality in every detail. I feel that the combination of these strengths and my experiences make me a qualified board member because I can listen objectively and act efficiently.

**What do you believe are the most important responsibilities of a school board member?**

The most important responsibility of the board is to ensure that the fiscal demands of the school are met. This will require balancing the needs of the students and staff with the reality of the budget. Equally important, our children's world class education would not be possible without our world class staff, so taking care of them is paramount. A board member should listen to and consider every point of view to allow everyone a voice. Communication from the board to all interested parties such as parents, students, staff and community is vital. Ultimately, it is the board's responsibility to carry out the mission set forth by our founding members and/or current bylaws.

**Please describe why you are interested in serving as a school board member.**

My daughters' education is of the utmost importance to me. Serving on the board offers me the opportunity to be involved at New Vision on a level I am comfortable and familiar with as my strengths lie in budgeting and management.

**How much time and effort can you contribute to the NVCS Board?**

Because I am a business owner, my schedule is flexible and I can be available as necessary. Not only am I available to attend scheduled meetings, I am willing to take on other projects as the board and school see fit.

**What skills, knowledge, and attributes should board members have in order to be qualified?**

Board members should be passionate: passionate about the school, passionate about the students/staff and passionate about the community. Board members should be good listeners. Board members should be willing to approach a problem from all angles rather than adhering to a specific dogma. Board members should be able to prioritize money, time, needs, etc. Board members should be able to take criticism gracefully and offer it constructively. Board members should be team players.

**What skills, knowledge, and attributes should board members have in order to be ongoing, contributing members?**

Beyond the skills above, board members need a love of learning and personal development; not only is this important for the education of our children but it allows them to stay current with district politics, demographic needs, evolving educational needs, etc. The beliefs and opinions of the board members should evolve as new situations and information present themselves.

**What do you believe are the most critical issues facing the NVCS Board, and how would you contribute as a board member?**

Funding will always be a critical concern for the school so I will work with the board and the administration to facilitate fundraising, grant-writing, community partnerships and budgeting. It is my understanding that middle school enrollment is currently down so I could assist in seeking new and unique opportunities for our middle school students.

**In general terms, please describe your experience in dealing with difficult and confidential issues.**

When handling difficult situations, it is imperative to have a thick skin and not take comments personally as each individual is encountering unique and challenging situations from their own perspective. It's important to remember that everyone believes that what they are doing or saying is correct so trying to see things from their perspective goes a long way in conflict resolution. There are two sides to every story and somewhere in the middle is the truth. In working with children, confidentiality is crucial. Children must feel safe and be safe in their environment in order to thrive. Every situation is different and the privacy of the child should be respected and discussed only with those who need to know. Furthermore, confidentiality extends to the business and staff. My experience with SEC regulations pertaining to my agency's financial clients restricts any unauthorized access to sensitive information and requires ongoing continuing education. So, I have experience in handling confidential information and always err on the side of caution. So when in doubt, I say nothing.

**Please describe how you think the board should interact with parents, principal, and staff.**

Over communication removes the mystery and encourages a sense of community and open dialogue. Queries should be responded to in the same method used for initial contact (IE. If they call, call them back. Don't email).

**Please describe your involvement with NVCS to date. (i.e. committee participation, volunteer activities, etc.)**

Personally, I volunteer with the Watch D.O.G.S., I have attended field day, Hawk Walk and have spent time in the classroom. I served as the Master of Ceremonies for last year's gala and attended and bid on multiple items at the 2015 gala. My business contributes regularly by donating goods or money upon request such as being the tote bag sponsor for last year's gala. Behind the scenes, I assist and support my wife, Erin, as she plans Nighthawk Nosh events, serves on the gala and raffle committees, assists with auction/raffle contributions, creates new fundraising ideas with the finance committee, etc.

**Please describe your vision of community outreach for the NVCS Board.**

There are opportunities for outreach spanning education, extra-curricular, and fundraising. While leveraging our connections in the community can help with fundraising, I also believe that there are opportunities to supplement our curriculum and expand/create more activities which can help bolster enrollment.