



**Candidate Statement - Governing Board Position with Ganado Unified School District #20**  
**Sylvia M. Etsitty**

I have served as a volunteer School Board member for the Ganado School District for two consecutive terms and I will complete my third term in December 2010. I am interested in another term to continue to be a vital part of the changing and growing educational community. During my service, I have promoted the concept of quality education for children and my personal philosophy is that every child has the innate ability to learn and it is inspired with guidance and support in the home, classroom and the community.

Statistics show that the school drop-out rate among American Indian students doubles that of Anglo students and, exceeds that of the Hispanic and Black student population. And even for those Native students who complete high school, few go on to higher learning institution and even fewer actually graduate from colleges or universities. And so there exists an educational disparity that diminishes educational excellence on Indian Nations as compared to schools in metropolitan and affluent communities. A generation ago, learning programs for Native children may have been designed to provide a basic challenge to stimulate the minds of children, and it may have had little or no measurable standards to distinguish where children were excelling and where they needed improvement. It seems that there were few innovative or creative ways to enable children to open their minds, to realize and embrace their potential. Fortunately, today a new system of learning has evolved as children are introduced to evidence-based programs and proven methods to challenge them to do their best. At that, Native children are now more intelligent and are eager to learn. Technology has also now become widely useful in schools, and it is one of many forces that encourage children to tap a higher order of thinking and to engage in a wider circle of learning strategies.

However, a complex set of social problems hinder and impact the process of learning for children. Today, many children come from single parent homes and from homes where there may be little or no support for their educational welfare and most regrettably some come from impoverished homes. All these are contributing factors to how children are educated today and in order to battle these issues, every child must be afforded an opportunity to receive an education that will give them the hope to succeed in life. I believe the future of the children we educate lies in the hands of a caring and competent school system and its leadership. If re-elected I will continue to promote quality education for every child that wants to achieve an education. I will continue to be a leader that emphasizes quality educational standards and integrity. And I will strive to be the kind of public servant in whom the community has confidence and trust. Thank you.