

Selection of Student Questions for Mayoral Candidates Developed by Students at University High School, Newark, N.J.

Mayor Sharp James

- I just registered to vote. Mayor James, please give me three reasons why I should vote for you.
- What plans do you have for teens or youth interested in jobs or internships and summer activities?
- Mayor James, you have been mayor for 16 years. Why hasn't the crime or drug use rate declined in Newark?
- Would renewing the Newark Football League be a real solution for youngsters looking to belong to an organization?
- What is the percentage of new housing dedicated to low-income families?
- With recent developments stalling the construction of the Newark arena for the Nets and Devils, are you in favor of the project, and how would you guarantee that construction and other jobs go to Newark residents?

Councilman Cory Booker

- I have seen some of your ads and they were about crime prevention. What are some of your other priorities if you become mayor?
- Talk about your vision for a revived recreational program. How would it be funded? Who would staff it? Who would be eligible to participate?
- As of September 2001, there were over 5,000 teens under the age of 17 in the Newark juvenile detention center. As mayor, what would you do differently to drastically reduce the incarceration of Newark youth as well as prevent repeat offenders?
- How do you feel about the Newark Public Schools and the state takeover?
- As a class project, we went out and surveyed our community on the topic of Newark. Almost everyone agrees that job creation is important. What are your plans for creating jobs in the following areas: 1) customer service and 2) retail sales that pay a living wage?

Businessman Mr. Dwayne Smith

- In improving the quality of education in the city of Newark, are you in favor of an elected school board or a board of education that is appointed by the mayor?
- What makes you different from the other candidates?
- How do you plan to deal with the issue of low test scores and what can you do to increase student interest in school?
- As mayor, what would you do differently to stop gang violence and drug trafficking in our communities?
- What do you plan to do about gang violence in schools besides getting more police officers because police intimidate many students?

Extra Questions

- For the past two years, Newark has experienced lower crime rates, new housing, more police patrols, street construction, etc. Some say that this is only election-time activity. How do we know that after the election, Newark's standard of living will continue to climb?
- What are you planning to do to improve the city's polluted environment?

Source: High schools participating in the Newark, New Jersey, Student Voices Project