



## Plano ISD Board of Trustees Candidate Questionnaire

*Place 2: Amanda Jackson*

### What are the top three reasons you want to serve as a Plano ISD School Board Trustee?

My desire to serve came from love- love of kids, education, and God. My decision to run came from the belief that my skill set, competencies, and experience specific to the field of public education could be a source of good in Plano ISD through service as a board member. I want to (1) increase student performance for vulnerable and at-risk populations; (2) advocate for all students, teachers, and staff; and (3) apply data to decisions to ensure effective use of resources.

### What do you feel are the most important responsibilities of a trustee?

Trustees are ultimately responsible for students/children, finances, and our local educational system as a whole. This means a trustee will need to study each issue, ask the right questions, seek understanding and knowledge, use resources effectively, consider multiple points of view, and collaborate and communicate well with others. Trustees also are representatives of our district, a responsibility that requires professionalism, competency, and integrity.

When I decided to run for this position, I felt the gravity of these responsibilities and had to assess if I could indeed be ready to answer to God at some point after this life for the decisions I will make which will affect so many lives. This is not a responsibility to be entered into lightly, or for self-gratifying or prideful reasons. A trustee needs to be a servant leader.

### What do you see as the top opportunities and challenges in Plano ISD?

Plano ISD is in a unique position, with the high community and parent involvement, strong tax base, and designation of being a district of innovation. There is opportunity here to continue with more programs like Academy High, one of which is already underway, and to approach learning both traditionally and innovatively. The challenge I see, and one that brought me to seek this position, is the demographics of our student body are changing and we need to square up and meet that change. We should implement those programs proven to be effective with specific student populations as well as with our students who get lost in the highly competitive system of Plano ISD. Every student matters, and we can meet each student where they are now and prepare them for the next step whether that is post-secondary education or meaningful employment.

### Why are you qualified to hold the position of trustee?

A trustee needs to represent the district well, be dedicated to studying each issue so as to be an informed policymaker, collaborate with others, have high integrity, be a protector of children, and understand public education. I believe I embody each of these key qualities. In addition, I am the only candidate who has completed doctoral coursework in the field of education and am one of the few candidates with experience in Texas public education both as a student and educator. Working on a doctorate in education has trained me to know how to evaluate data, understand consequences of policy, and apply research to educational decisions. Continually, I have first-hand teaching experience in a variety of roles, including as a high school teacher, community college instructor, university adjunct faculty, graduate teaching assistant, and substitute teacher. In these positions I have taught AP, general education, GED, undergraduate, and ESL courses. I also have experience serving on boards, and working with outside organizations including AVID (regional office) and THECB. Between my personal, educational, and work experiences and with my formal training in the field of education I am ready to assume a place on the Board of Trustees and “hit the ground running.”



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### What is the most important thing you want to accomplish if elected?

By the end of my term, if elected, my overall goal is to see a district that serves every student by enabling him/her to reach his/her fullest potential. For me this improvement in the lives of our students may be evidenced by increased completion rates, graduates who are college and/or work ready, less disparity in performance between specific student populations, and the development of a district culture that values each student. I also would like to see greater retention of quality teachers and staff, increased student safety and well-being, inclusivity, and implementation of innovative programs that foster creativity, collaboration, and excellence.