

Candidate Information

1. Brief bio: Education, HISD children (if any), employment, previous elected office(s).

I am a pediatric neurologist and HISD mom running for HISD school board district 7. I'm married with and have 2 children, a 1st grader at Wharton Dual Language Academy and a 3rd grader at Memorial Elementary School. I received my undergraduate degrees in bioengineering and cognitive sciences from Rice University, MD and PhD in neuroscience from UT-Houston, and then completed pediatric neurology residency training at the Harvard Medical School/Boston Children's Hospital program.

I was a full-time academic attending physician at Texas Children's Hospital until 2021, when I transitioned to more flexible telemedicine work.

2. Civic involvement: Boards, organizations, officer roles (dates included).

I have served on the Medical Advisory Board of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) since 2023. In this role, I lend my expertise as an epileptologist in determining safety of firearm ownership and driving in people with epilepsy.

I have been a community advisory board member since 2023 for The Village Connect, a local non-profit that uses an evidence-based, multifactorial approach to end episodic homelessness. I have helped them with both fundraising as well as conducting peer-reviewed research into health outcomes of this population. My work with this organization has opened my eyes to the needs of the unhoused in Houston, which intersects with the HISD student population (~4% experience homelessness every year).

3. Why are you running for HISD School Board?

As a physician and a parent of 2 HISD students, I want my board to support science-based policies. I also want to be represented by someone who supports having democratically-elected board members who answer to the community.

4. Top 3 priorities for increasing student success the board can influence (max 200 words).

1. Improve student support. We need to give our students all the tools they need to succeed, from wraparound services to fully-funded special education. Every child has potential, and maximizing learning will build the workforce of our future. And thinking forwards to future jobs, I also support more opportunities for our high school students to explore trades.

2. Fiscal responsibility. We need to streamline our taxpayer funds to support our teachers, staff and students.

3. Return to local control. As a taxpayer and a constituent, I believe that we should be represented by an elected school board. Every constituent deserves to have a democratically-elected school board that is held accountable to the voters. We will move forward by listening to our parents, students and teachers to create the best school district for our community.

Governance & Leadership

5. What is the role of a school board vs. the superintendent?

The school board members work together to monitor the finances of the district, implement policies that improve the learning of students of all abilities, and inform constituents regularly about the policies and goals of the district.

The superintendent puts forth the vision for the district, manages the budget of the district, hires high-level staff including principals, and implements the policies set by the school board. There is also a role for advocating for the district with state and federal-level lawmakers.

6. What are your expectations of the Superintendent during budgeting?

I expect full transparency from the superintendent regarding major financial decisions. We need to know if our spending is helping students.

7. How would you handle disagreements with board members or the Superintendent?

My time working in interdisciplinary teams in the hospital to make timely life-or-death decisions has taught me that even under pressure, the best approach is to listen respectfully to team members when creating a complex plan. While we may have differences of opinion, I plan to focus on finding common ground to improve student outcomes.

8. How will you stay informed on national education trends and best practices?

I plan to stay abreast of news and best practices in other school districts through involvement with the National School Boards Association.

9. What should elected trustees do during the state intervention and transition back to local control?

During the state takeover, there is still a role for the elected trustees to speak with parents and teachers to understand their goals and concerns, bring these issues back to the board and superintendent, and speak out publicly to their constituents to inform them about the decisions made at board meetings.

Community Engagement

10. How will you stay connected to issues and goals in HISD and your district?

I plan to implement a regular HISD district 7 town hall to speak in person with students, parents and teachers to discuss the needs of the community. I will then take these concerns back to the rest of the elected board and board of managers to advocate for relevant changes. Currently, there is no such regular town hall with constituents by the incumbent HISD district 7 trustee.

11. What's your approach to engaging the community during your term?

I will continue to speak with title 1 schools in district 7 about their need for donated supplies, organizing donations from the community, and delivering these directly to schools. This work was recently featured in the Houston Chronicle, and I look forward to coordinating regular supply drives.

12. How would you navigate controversial decisions (e.g., school closures)? Student Success

Difficult decisions to close a school, which may be very disruptive to families in a community and may result in students dropping out of the district altogether, need to be made with utmost transparency. We will need to listen closely to the community to determine how best to mitigate resulting hardships to families that may result from difficult decisions.

13. Which 3 student outcomes should HISD prioritize and why?

We should prioritize participation in STEM programs at the high-school level, literacy rates, and shorter delays on evaluations for learning differences.

14. How will you address disparities in outcomes for Black, Latino, and high-need students?

As someone who has truly benefitted from STEM education in my own life, I plan to address disparities in access to STEM programming in predominantly-Black schools. For example, without a chemistry lab, it is difficult to master many of the concepts in a chemistry class. I believe that we should prioritize STEM infrastructure in these schools when considering the allocation of Capital Renovation Funds.

15. How can the board sustain gains in historically underperforming schools?

I think that we need to have requirements for teacher certification as well as bringing back some form of wraparound services to these campuses. Students don't learn well when they're hungry or have access to basic hygiene.

Policy & Values

Please select your stance (Yes / Maybe / No) for each of the following:

- Support weighted funding based on campus needs, including extra funding for persistently failing schools.

Yes

- Support incentives to place top teachers/principals in highest-need schools.

No, as uprooting teachers and principals in a large-scale "musical chairs" can be disruptive to student learning. I believe we should require certification for teachers and principals in all schools.

- Support bold school improvement decisions (e.g., restaffing, new calendars, reallocating funds).

In some circumstances, yes

- As a trustee, should decisions prioritize your district, or the entire HISD student body?

Decisions should be mindful of improvements for all HISD students.

- Should bold action be taken for any school rated D/F for multiple years?

Yes

Statements of Belief

Please rank your agreement (1 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Strongly Agree) on the following:

- Budget transparency is essential. 4
- Student data is key for goal setting and monitoring. 3
- All board decisions should prioritize student outcomes. 3
- Independent financial reviews should be regular. 4
- The district should explore vetted partnerships to improve school performance. 4
- Teachers/principals should be evaluated and compensated based on performance and student growth. 2
- Resources should address achievement gaps and expand access to quality pre-K. 4
- School boards should focus more on student outcomes than day-to-day operations. 3

Optional: In 250 words or fewer, elaborate on any of your answers above on a separate sheet of paper.