



## WATER VALLEY ISD SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

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### **1. What motivates you to want to become or continue to be a board member?**

I volunteer my time and energy as a service to the children of our community. We must have responsible, intelligent board members who have the ability and willingness to separate their personal feelings from the business of the district---in order to make the best decision for every child. It is my intention to continue to represent what is best for the district, students, and teachers absent of personal bias. A community thrives when the members are working together. When their community leaders focus on stewardship and servant leadership rather than seeking power. I want to represent my community not one group or person, not one idea or agenda but instead I will be a positive voice for my neighbors.

### **2. What has been your personal involvement with Water Valley ISD?**

Student, Graduate, Advisor, Donor, Volunteer.

I have been afforded the great honor in recent years of serving the district in several areas.

I was asked to serve and continue to serve on the Safety and Security Committee as a business owner/community member. Our group is tasked with keeping our campus safe and secure just as the name says. Under the leadership of the administration, we meet numerous times each year to go over the district's plans regarding how we will continue to do our best to keep our children safe.

I was asked to serve and continue to serve on the Site based committee as a business owner/community member. Our group meets 3 times a year to discuss the academic goals and progress of our students. The administration leads our group outlining performance reports in an effort to find where our kids need a little extra help—and get them that help before test day!

I was asked to serve on the building committee. We spent countless hours touring neighboring schools and some not so neighboring schools to see their newest facilities, analyzing what we liked, loved and loathed. I have continued to serve our district throughout the construction process. I attend construction meetings

with the contractors every second Tuesday of the month at 10 am. This project has been very challenging, and I am proud to say that I have done my absolute best to make sure that the construction of our school's new facilities meet/exceed the plans, specifications, and building codes. I have personally spent many hours reviewing plans, sending emails, visiting the jobsite, and arguing with architects and contractors to make certain that WVISD gets what they paid for!

I have been asked to serve and been appointed to the board 3 different times over the years. I am proud to say that because of my integrity the board knew that they could trust I would do the right thing. I was appointed to the board this year and have served our community to the best of my ability. I have never missed a meeting and I have completed all of the required trainings.

We have been blessed beyond measure and I believe that giving back to our children's education is one of the best places to donate our time and money (second only to the Church).

**3. What do you see as the opportunities and challenges in this district?**

Our district has an opportunity to educate and inspire what I believe is the greatest group of children in the world. Perhaps I have some bias, but we have great kids that have TONS of potential. WVISD has something to offer for EVERY CHILD! Art, Band, UIL, CTE/AG, Sports, AND MORE!

Our district is tasked with the challenge of educating and inspiring children. We must avoid emotional reactions, instead we must respond rationally with decisions concerning our children. It is my intention to continue to be the type of community leader who uses diplomacy and strategy in making key decisions.

There is always something to complain about, and some of it is justified, but we must be careful not to cross the line ---and focus on the positive instead. We must get away from the "what's in it for ME?" attitude! I am running against the "what's in it for me?" attitude!

**4. In your view, what has the district done well over last four years? What has the district done poorly that you would change?**

The district has made fantastic strides in the areas of communication and access to information on events!

The district managed to feed the kids during covid!

The district managed to educate to the best of their ability during covid!

The district managed to avoid catastrophe in general during covid!

The teachers and administrators are helping catch kids up with great success!

The district is providing FREE BREAKFAST for ALL kids!!!

We still have some work to do in the communication lines from administration to faculty, staff, and the general public regarding upgrades and renovations. For example, most people are unaware that the board recently voted to

purchase a significant amount of new furniture for the classrooms! It is ordered and are waiting for delivery. We can do a better job informing everyone when we are making upgrades.

We can also do a better job polishing up our existing facilities. We are blessed to have several new structures, but we cannot lose sight of the fact that the rest of the campus needs some love! I requested that the Team of 8 as well as the building committee walk through school and make a list of items that we need to address.

**5. What are the outputs/goals that matter most to you? How will you be accountable for them as a school board member?**

For every child that attends WVISD to know that they have people who love and support them.

For every kid to graduate ready for College, Career, and/or the Military.

As board members we are there to support our administration in their efforts to match our core beliefs and values. Board members set the tone for the rhetoric throughout the school and thus should be held to a higher standard than other parents, faculty, and staff.

As a leader it is my job to demonstrate ethical leadership. To hold myself and my fellow board members to the same ethical standards. This approach provides the community with the best representation. By choosing leaders based on their values, reputations for success, and positive outcomes the district can avoid electing members based on popularity--ultimately subjecting those who are most important to us (our children) to drastic unnecessary changes from untested candidates.

**6. Describe the role of the superintendent?**

Manage the finances responsibly...that is their number one job. Like walking a tightrope every superintendent has danger coming from all sides and impending disaster if they make a mistake. The goal of all school budgets—get back to zero! A good superintendent builds a budget that maximizes the revenues of the school. They attempt to find that mythical, perfect spot of just the right number of faculty and staff for the projected student attendance! The projected budget must be close to actual---a large surplus in the budget then taxes are too high, a big shortfall and then schools must reduce the work force!

School funding is a joke, the State of Texas and the Federal government are terrible at running a business and they make it almost impossible for schools to properly build a budget. However, somehow, they get it done and kudos to our current superintendent and his team as we are in what I believe is the best financial condition our school has ever been.

Make sure the rest of the administration is doing their job, show them how to do their job if they don't know. This is the type of leadership we need in the community---lead by example.

Be the “face of the school”. Be professional, friendly, courteous, reasonable, and fair.

It is NOT the role of the superintendent to deal with every complaint that is phoned into a school board member! Board members should act as a buffer between the administration and the general public, who are generally uninformed or at least under informed about certain situations. As a board we have been trained that we are a “Team of 8”. This includes the 7 board members and the superintendent—we as board members must do our due diligence to mitigate the number of complaints that get passed on to our superintendent. I am running so that our administration can do their job with less strife.

**7. If a parent or a community member comes to you regarding, for example, a maintenance issue at a particular campus or a situation involving a particular teacher, how do you see your role as a school board member in resolving that issue?**

Maintenance:

The best plan of action is to see for yourself (if possible) and then form your own opinion. If there is something that needs to be addressed, then send an email to the administration and ask about it, perhaps even VOLUNTEER TO FIX IT. Additionally, ask the person who noticed it to come help.

Examples of complaints about teachers:

Teachers really are the worst! All they do is complain! They are mean to my kids especially! I cannot believe that they talk to my child that way---who do they think they are!?

When it comes to our children--emotions run high, please understand that teachers are people too! They have bad days, they live on tight budgets, their kids get sick, their mom gets sick, their dad gets sick, God forbid a loved one passes away, their car breaks down, pet goes missing---the sky falls around all of us everyday! However---there is one major difference between the normal human being and the teacher. All Teachers love every child, maybe not everything about them, but they love something about them. Teachers somehow channel some sort of God given gift to find the patience to not only deal with these kids---but they must also find a way to reach them and teach them! As parents these days we have become entitled voyeurs for the most part when it comes to our child’s education. I personally have butted heads with teachers before---no doubt, however—I am older and wiser now. The best plan of action when there is conflict is an open line of communication. Stephen Covey said it best—“seek first to understand and then to be understood”. I am running so that the voice of reason and understanding will not be muffled by the lead blanket of hollow complaints.

**8. As a school board member, from whom will you seek advice or input in weighing key decisions?**

Advice

1. Jesus
2. More “seasoned” board members
3. Superintendent

Input

1. The party/parties directly involved in the matter at hand



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**9. How will you build consensus and support in the community around the work of the school district?**

Positive attitude and hard work. Show up, do the work and you will inspire others to do the same.

Be advised the more you do, the more you will do wrong---one of my favorite quotes comes from Thomas Sowell.

"The beauty of doing nothing is that you can do it perfectly. Only when you do something is it almost impossible to do it without mistakes. Therefore people who are contributing nothing to society, except their constant criticisms, can feel both intellectually and morally superior."

So, we will build consensus and support by continuing to do the work, wherever and whenever needed. I will help with every need that I am aware of, I will make an effort to ask others for help in order to promote an opportunity for more community outreach.

**10. Based on the Texas Education Code, what is the primary role of the school board of trustees member and of the board as a whole?**

This question really should be asked & answered before people can sign up to put their name on the ballot!

Instead of asking candidates to go look this up, copy and paste the answer---- Just come out and ask---are you going to be the kind of board member that stirs the pot----either calling the lawyer or being the reason that the lawyer has to be consulted? Are you aware that the board is really just here to make sure that the budget presented by the superintendent matches what the school needs, and that the board (if they have hired the right superintendent) pretty much concurs when presented with an action item? Did you know that you will have to spend HOURS AND HOURS in trainings—all of which tell you that you are not going to get to do all the things that your buddies tell you that you can do once you're on the board!?! Did you know that once you are elected you are not running the school!?! Did you know that THERE IS NO MEAL AT THE MEETING!???? Did you know that have to come to the meetings SOBER, and stay that way through the whole thing!!!!??? Did you know that you will have conversations at most every meeting that you cannot tell ANYONE including your spouse about!!!—can you keep your mouth shut, if you can't this job isn't for you! Did you know that parents, faculty and staff are going to call you all the time and complain that they have been WRONGED and that this aggression will not stand!!!!?---and if you do know that and it excites you---this job is NOT FOR YOU!

Just a suggestion ----but I believe this would yield a more effective answer for the next time you have an election.

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**11. Is there anything else you would like to share with the voting constituents of WVISD that you believe is a reason they should support you in this election?**

Please get out and vote! Make sure you educate yourself BEFORE YOU VOTE! Do not vote based on hearsay, or someone else's opinion. Make a list of your questions----call, text or email the candidates and talk to them personally! Do not listen to or buy into someone's negativity, our children deserve the best that we can give them---positive thoughts and positive actions.

Ask the candidates if they have attended a board meeting. Ask them if they have attended more than 1 board meeting. Ask them what they learned when they attended the 1 board meeting.

Regardless of the outcome of this election I will continue to support the district and every child it serves.