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**2 Please describe your involvement in Dallas ISD or public education issues over the last five years. ◊**

Over the past five years I have served as a Dallas ISD 8th grade U.S. History teacher and Social Studies department chair, a member of the T.C. Marsh Campus Instructional Leadership Team, a 7th and 8th grade football and baseball coach, and a volunteer at different Dallas ISD schools including Medrano and Marsh Middle Schools. I have also worked with every central office department in some form or fashion as a former Dallas ISD administrator. In 2011-2012, I pursued and obtained a Master's Degree in Education Policy and Management where much of my focus was on studying management and governance issues of large, urban public school districts. I also served as the director of an education advocacy non-profit where much of our efforts focused on working with public school parents, educators and community members to discuss the current state of Dallas ISD and to work together to educate around, advocate for and ensure that all students of this city are successful.

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**3 Please explain leadership positions and responsibilities that have prepared you for school board governance.**

I consider my time as a teacher to be the most important training one could have to serve as an effective School Board member. As a teacher, I knew I could not demand success from my students without building a relationship with them and empowering them to be the driver of that success. As a potential Board member it is critical that I work together with the other Trustees to empower the staff of Dallas ISD to enact the vision and mission we have set for our schools.

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**4 Please identify three specific issues that you think should be addressed in order to improve the quality of education in Dallas ISD.**

The creation of a new teacher evaluation system that supports the leadership development of Dallas ISD teachers and respects them as professionals.  
The expansion of early childhood education locations across the city.  
Budgeting to support instruction and steadily growing the fund balance to avoid any systemic impacts brought by legislative cuts.

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**5 If elected, what would you do to address each of these issues? ◊**

I would clearly communicate with stakeholders to discuss their thoughts and ideas around each of these issues, work with Trustees to develop clear and concise policy for each area, provide the administration with the tools necessary to enact the policy, and finally hold the administration accountable as to whether or not students are positively impacted by their decisions.

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**6 Do you think Dallas ISD faces a teacher morale problem? If so, what do you think are the primary causes, and what would you do as a Trustee to improve morale?**

I believe our teachers are facing a respect issue with morale being an effect of this. Everyone has a role to play in improving this issue. I believe some of this comes from the need for effective professional development. As a trustee, I will work on creating policies around professional development that supports teachers as they grow in their profession. Doing these things will most definitely improve our respect for teachers, which will lead to better teacher morale.

**7 Do you think Dallas ISD teachers and principals receive effective professional development?**

I first applaud the Trustees and Superintendent for making instruction the primary focus of the school district. Teaching and learning must remain at the core of our decisions because it is the thing that is most within our locus of control. The discussions I have had with teachers and principals make me believe they would like to see professional development improve. I would work with the Trustees to reach out to the professional organizations as well as principals and teachers across the district to determine their thoughts. I am looking forward to analyzing and studying successful practices from other urban districts to create policies that would improve the support our educators deeply desire.

**8 Please rate the following Dallas ISD practices in terms of effectiveness.**

	Very Weak	Weak	Somewhat Effective	Effective	Strong	Not Sure
<b>Teacher recruitment</b>			✓			
<b>Principal recruitment</b>					✓	
<b>Teacher professional development</b>			✓			
<b>Principal professional development</b>			✓			
<b>Retention of high performing teachers</b>		✓				
<b>Retention of high performing principals</b>			✓			

**9 For any of the Dallas ISD practices rated "very weak", "weak" or "somewhat effective" in the question above, please explain what you will do as a Trustee to improve the practices.**

The district has shifted the paradigm on teacher recruitment by actively building partnerships with campuses, assessing campus needs, creating ways to speed up the hiring process and actively recruiting in Texas, the nation, and the world. With nearly 72 percent of our students being Latino, many of whom are ELL, we do not have enough bilingual teachers. I will continue to raise the issue with the Superintendent until we see those vacancies decrease. Teacher PD is impacted by Principal PD. I will ask the Superintendent to continue refining the PD system while actively having impacted parties at the table to offer suggestions. We have got to retain our high performing teachers and principals by implementing a new evaluation system, paying teachers like professionals, and creating paths of leadership opportunities while developing their instructional and leadership capacities. Finally, I will work with Trustees to ensure the Superintendent has the opportunity and tools to get this done.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following three statements. ⚡

**10 Parental and community involvement is extremely low, which prevents Dallas public schools from consistently generating high-achieving students. ⚡**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
		✓			

**Comment:** We should look at how we assess parental and community involvement. Simply looking at how many parents are part of a PTA or how many community members volunteer at an event does not adequately reflect the level of commitment of our Dallas ISD parents and community members. However, I do believe that the District must continue to prioritize reaching out to stakeholders and building relationships. Empowering people to invest in the District and its students is essential to effective schools.

- 11 Dallas ISD's college-readiness failures (i.e., the district's SAT/ACT scores are in the bottom 25% of all U.S. test takers) are the school board's ultimate responsibility. ⚡

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
				✓	

**Comment:** It is clear that college is the key that unlocks doors for all students regardless of one's circumstances. Trustees should work to ensure that all schools are focused on getting students ready for college. But college cannot be the only focus. We should also be preparing students to succeed as humans and also to be ready for the 21st century workforce. Not everyone will have the means to initially attend college. Those who don't should not be forgotten and should be prepared to succeed in life.

- 12 Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds cannot consistently perform at high academic levels without first addressing poverty and other social issues.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
		✓			

**Comment:** Poverty and other social issues must be addressed, but students can learn despite these issues. Not only can they learn, but they can excel. I have been a first-hand witness to what happens when you get a great principal, a school staff that will not accept excuses and consistently raise the bar academically, and students who, though at first may be hesitant, buy into dreaming big dreams and working to make them a reality. ALL students can learn, and they can learn well. We just have to believe.

- 13 Dallas ISD's superintendent has identified the following structural problems that negatively affect student achievement. Which three issues should be "top priorities" (please highlight exactly three top priorities)? Similarly, which issues are less important? Please label at least one issue as "not critical". ⚡

	Not Critical	Important But Not a Top Priority	Top Priority
Teacher morale is at a long term low.			✓
Principal evaluations are routine and meaningless.			✓
Educators do not have access to comprehensive, powerful technology to guide learning for each student.	✓		
The District's budget is not driven by instructional priorities.		✓	
Principals are paid the same regardless of performance.		✓	
Teacher evaluations are not accurate or rigorous.			✓

<b>There is no standard or process for identifying high quality candidates for schools, classrooms, and central office positions.</b>		
<b>Micromanaging staff is a pervasive problem and undercuts progress.</b>		
<b>There is no accountability for poor customer service (where customers are parents and students).</b>		
<b>We are losing strong candidates because the hiring process sometimes takes months.</b>		

**Comment:** I am a firm believer that our current teachers and principals must be provided an opportunity to understand where they are as instructional leaders, how they can scale up what they are doing well and what they can improve on, all while being coached and supported. Technology is critical, and I will work to making sure all schools have access to cutting edge advances, but without quality instruction and instructional practices, technology can only do so much.

14 **Analyzing information is a fundamental Trustee responsibility. What information will you rely on to have a full understanding of board issues, and what groups will you call on for perspective (e.g., staff, central office, constituents)?**

I would need to have a pulse on district-wide student achievement including quantitative and qualitative components. I would want to analyze how different demographics are progressing. For this information I would consult the Superintendent and his School Leadership/Teaching & Learning departments as well as professional organizations and a focus group of educators from District 8. I would want to analyze the financial health of the district, including the growth of our fund balance, the budgetary process, and the status of any proposed legislation and additions/cuts from the state. For this I would talk to the Superintendent and his CFO as well as our representation in Austin. I would also rely on information from principals and teachers about their thoughts on the district and the support they are receiving. Most importantly, I would seek the input and opinions from the parents/guardians and students of the district who in the end, are the stakeholders most impacted by my decisions.

15 **Please highlight three school district micromanaging pitfalls, and explain how you would avoid these pitfalls as a Trustee.**

The first pitfall would be the misunderstanding of the roles of governance and management. As a Trustee, I would work to provide clear policies and tools for the superintendent to do his/her job, ultimately holding them accountable to student success. Another pitfall is trustees wading into hiring decisions. The role of the Trustee is not to dictate who should and should not work in Dallas ISD. The last pitfall is trustees making management issues in any form or in any area of the district. If a trustee interferes in this area, it is hard to hold anyone accountable. I would stick to setting clear policy and holding the administration accountable to the achievement of our students.

16 **What local organizations are you affiliated with, and how have they influenced your thinking regarding the needs of the district? Please give at least three examples.**

I am a member of SMU's Young Professionals in Education. This organization has opened my eyes to cutting-edge developments in public education both here in Dallas and across the nation and how we can help scale those in Dallas ISD. I am a member of the Young Professionals' Coalition for Dallas ISD. This organization has given me the opportunity to work hand-in-hand with Medrano Middle School and its students, allowing me to see how policy and administrative decisions directly impact the classroom level. Finally, I am a member of the Mayor's Star Council. Being a member of this group has shown me that for Dallas to be a "world class city", it must have a "world class public education system".

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**17 How do you plan to balance the needs of your individual voters with the needs of the whole district?**

One major area where former Trustee Adam Medrano excelled was at balancing the needs of individual voters with those of the entire district. The first thing I would do is consult Mr. Medrano and former Trustees to learn their best practices. Second, I would not be a stranger to District 8. I would be actively seeking the ideas and opinions of the parents/Guardians, educators, community members and leaders, and other elected officials of D8. Furthermore, I would work on cultivating collaborative relationships with my fellow Trustees. The Trustee relationship is critical to really understanding the true needs of the whole district. I would make it a priority to share what I am hearing in D8 with other Trustees so that we could all work together to make the best decision not just for my constituents, but all constituents.

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**18 Who will you consult with when considering and making key decisions for the district?**

I aim to be a listening, communicative, and collaborative Trustee focused on building coalitions of members from all stakeholders in our community. Every decision a Trustee makes has wide-ranging effects. I would first consult with all of my fellow Board members. Our collective decisions have different effects for different people so I would want to consider how those decisions would impact not only District 8 but the district as a whole. I would also consult the Superintendent of schools because ultimately, he/she is the one who must implement those decisions. I would seek the input of citizens and educators of D8. I would reach out to the multiple professional organizations of the district who represent a host of employees. I would consult other elected officials and in particular, our city officials. I would do this because our school system and city government must work together to move the city forward. I would also consult students, because I have found they tell you how it is.

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**19 What is the ideal relationship between the superintendent and the Board of Trustees?**

The ideal relationship would strike the right balance between governance and management. That relationship would need to be based on trust and confidence. The school board should be focused on setting the vision and mission for the district, monitoring and assessing the performance of the superintendent towards the goals it hired he/she to meet, crafting policy, approving the budget, and most importantly, engaging the community. The Superintendent must enact the vision and mission by creating a comprehensive plan of approach. The Board of Trustees should then provide the opportunity and tools necessary for the Superintendent to achieve this plan. If the Superintendent does not do this, it is incumbent upon the Board to decide if and when to move forward with another executive. This cannot happen unless the Board and Superintendent consistently communicate and build their relationship.

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**20 What district relationships need to be created or improved?**

The general relationship that must be improved immediately is that of the Board and Superintendent. Culture starts at the top. If the Board and the Superintendent can work together, our school system will continue to improve as it has over the past decade. It is critical that this is a supportive relationship based on opening better lines of communication.

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**21 What are three questions you would ask a candidate for Dallas ISD superintendent? What would you want to learn from those questions?**

"Can all students succeed, regardless of circumstances including poverty?" I would want to learn whether the candidate has a firm belief that all students can learn and I would follow that by ensuring that whatever plan the candidate submits for managing the district reflects this belief.

"In your current and previous roles, what steps did you take to engage community stakeholders?" I would ask this question to gauge their belief on the role stakeholders play in the creation of a plan and a continuous involvement throughout his/her tenure.

"What would lie at the heart of your strategy to improve students outcomes?" I would ask this to determine whether or not the instructional core (students, teachers and content) is the primary focus of the overall strategy. I would also ask the candidate to explain how he/she would create organizational coherence factoring in components such as district systems, resources, stakeholders, culture, structures and the overall environment.

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**22 How will you encourage parent and community collaboration with teachers, principals, and the superintendent?**

I will first model collaboration with teachers, principals, and the superintendent by actively seeking opportunities to do these things. I will be a face that is seen in District 8. I will actively seek the ideas and opinions of multiple stakeholders, including teachers and students of Dallas ISD schools. I will attend principal trainings to learn more about how they will be enacting the strategy set for by the superintendent. I will reach out to the superintendent and relay what I am hearing on the ground, both positives and area for improvement. And I will also charge the superintendent with continuing to improve our efforts to work hand-in-hand with the stakeholders of our district.

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**23 How do you plan to communicate and connect with all Dallas ISD stakeholders -- students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and the community?**

I will hold community forums. I will visit all the schools in D8 and do my best to visit those across the district. I will collaborate with my fellow Trustees to understand the issues their constituents are facing. I will strive to attend their community forums as well. I will make a full-fledged effort to attend district-wide events including district-wide trainings to get a pulse of the instructional progress we are making and the support our staff is receiving. I will engage other elected officials across the city to build collaborative partnerships across multiple sectors. And finally, I will seek the feedback of our many stakeholders not just on how the administration and staff are doing, but also how I can be a better representative of the people.