

1 Please enter the information indicated below.

Name: **Bertha Bailey Whatley**
Job Title: Chief Legal Counsel
Company Name: Irving independent School District

2 Please describe your motivation to serve on the Board of Trustees as well as your involvement in Dallas ISD or public education issues over the last 5 years.

I believe passionately our public schools can educate every child to a high standard, and I want to work to accomplish this. I am persuaded of this by my life experiences. I have learned we have the resources to do this, but one barrier is the lack of effective governance of our schools. I believe my knowledge and skills gained as legal counsel to many districts will enable me to work with the other trustees in a meaningful way to govern Dallas ISD effectively.

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

I have held a senior leadership in public school districts for over fifteen years. During this time, I have been involved in developing policy, special education issues, leadership development, budgeting, and strategic planning.

4 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 the Rotary Club. This organization has shown it is possible for interested individuals to develop effective programs to implement in specific schools.

I attend Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship. I believe the value of partnerships with the faith community is shown by the success of this church's mentoring program. The faith community can exert moral authority, which is very important in developing character and ethics in our students

5 Identify three specific issues that you think should be addressed in order to improve education in Dallas ISD.

Effective pre-kindergarten programs
Effective discipline management
Teacher compensation

6 If elected, what would you do to address these issues?

I would advocate for the inclusion of Montessori education in our pre-k classes as part of the reform of our instructional methods. I would advocate for the adoption of a discipline management program for all schools which includes self-discipline, conflict resolution skills and anger management techniques.

7 Comment on the state of teacher morale in Dallas ISD. Whether you believe it is strong or weak, what would you do as a Trustee to improve morale?

I believe staff morale is weaker now. This is because of the abrupt changes made on some many levels. It is also because of the lack of self-discipline in our students. I believe with a strong discipline management program, improved leadership development for principals, and an appropriate compensation plan teacher morale will improve.

8 Do you think Dallas ISD teachers and principals receive effective professional development? Please address both teachers and principals in your explanation.

Teachers do not receive effective professional development because the budget is not designed to pay the teachers for the time needed to acquire effective professional development. Professional development is usually limited to two weeks before the start of school and a few days during the school year. Teachers should receive enhanced compensation to attend professional development during non-instructional time. Principals should receive professional development in human resources management. Principals are usually good instructional leaders, but often lack leadership skills.

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

	Very Weak	Weak	Somewhat Effective	Effective	Strong	Not Sure
Teacher recruitment			✓			
Principal recruitment		✓				
Retention of high performing teachers		✓				
Retention of high performing principals		✓				

10 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 Board has to hold the superintendent accountable for personnel decisions. However, the superintendent should have a plan addressing the recruitment and retention of staff which includes professional development, mentoring, and consideration of student academic progress.

Text Block :

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

11 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: Educating students from lower socio-economic homes without high levels of parental involvement is extremely difficult. This is shown by the success of charter schools, which generally require parents to be engaged fully in student academic support. Parental involvement has been identified as one of the nine attributes of high performing charter schools. Public schools can model such success.

- 12 **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: I believe this to be true because the school board should include this as a goal for the district and hold the Superintendent responsible for implementing the programs necessary to accomplish this. The board is responsible ultimately for the effectiveness of the educational programs through its supervision of the superintendent.

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

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
		✔			

Comment: I believe these barriers have a significant affect on the academic success of students , but history shows us the public schools educated poor children very well at one time. My own experience shows this factors can be overcome. I believe we lack a consensus that is important to educate every child.

- 14 **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
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.			✓
Teachers and principals are paid the same regardless of performance.		✓	
Teacher evaluations are not accurate or rigorous.			✓
There is no standard or process for identifying high quality candidates for schools, classrooms, and central office positions.			✓
Micromanaging staff is a pervasive problem and undercuts progress.			✓
There is no accountability for poor customer service (where customers are parents and students).		✓	
We are losing strong candidates because the hiring process sometimes takes months.	✓		

- 15 Give us an example of a complex decision you've recently made and how you arrived at your decision. Please describe the situation, your task, your action and the result of your decision.

I was asked to evaluate a recommendation for the termination of a classified employee. My task was to evaluate the nature of the offense, the applicable workplace rules, and the handling of similar offenses by the administration. I did all of these things and made a recommendation. The decision was not mine, as I only provide advice and counsel to the administration.

- 16 **Analyzing information is a fundamental trustee responsibility. In preparation for monthly meetings, what information or resources will you rely on to have a full understanding of board issues?**

I will read each in its entirety. I will rely first on the Board governance documents and the financial reports in evaluating this information. I will expect the information provided to me by staff to be factual and comprehensive, and if it is not I will question the superintendent. I would welcome information from the community, and consider it in assessing the merits of proposals.

- 17 **What is the difference between school board governance and school district management? How you would avoid common micromanaging pitfalls?**

School board governance is the "what." For example, what do we want students to learn during their time in the Dallas public schools, what expenditures will be included in the budget, and what goals should we establish for the superintendent. Management is the "how." How will we instruct students in reading? How will principals manage their campus budgets? Micromanaging is avoided by holding the superintendent accountable. All issues should be referred to him, and his evaluation should reflect his ability to resolve issues appropriately.

- 18 **How do you plan to balance the needs of your constituents with the needs of the district as a whole?**

My constituents are the students of the entire district. Therefore, I must refrain from acting as if one district 's needs come before another. All students must achieve academic success, but not at the expense of another student.

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

The ideal relationship includes a high degree of trust between both. The board and the superintendent should be confident each is performing their respective roles competently. Each should be free to express dissenting opinions in a respectful

manner.

20 What, if any, district relationships need to be created or improved?

We need to improve the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent. We need to improve the relationship between central office administrators and the board. We need to improve the relationship between campus administrators and teachers.

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

What programs have you implemented in your current district to address the achievement gap?
What method do you believe to be the most effective for bilingual instruction?
What would you do specifically to implement a school culture supporting student academic success at all schools and for all student populations, including special needs students.
I would like to learn from these questions whether the candidate has the experience and skills to address the learning deficiencies in the student populations of our schools.

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

In order to connect with our stakeholders, it is important I listen and then listen some more to their concerns. I plan to communicate with all groups through twice yearly forums, a blog, and regular attendance at school events. My relationship and communications with stakeholders will reflect the trustee's role of governance.