



# Questionnaire Response 2024

## Michelle Newsom\*

### for Place 1

*\* Mrs. Newsom's response was received on the evening of April 2, 2024, after two candidate responses had already been published to the MOVE Facebook page and website. Though her questionnaire was scheduled to be posted first, per ballot order, her responses were posted last in the series of candidate responses.*

*For the 2021 School Board Elections, Michelle Newsom did not respond to the questionnaire nor make an appearance at the in-person Meet & Greet Forum.*

**Q1. Have you taught in a public school? If so, explain. If not, what experience qualifies you to hold this position?** *As President of Surepoint Emergency Centers, I bring a forward-thinking leadership style, honed from roles in healthcare management. This experience, combined with my active involvement as a PTA member and MISD volunteer, equips me with a deep understanding of complex operational challenges, including budget management. Mostly, my time serving on the board of trustees in MISD gives me true experience with the decisions and accountability needed for this position.*

**Q2. If you have children, where do/did they attend school in public school, private school, charter school, or homeschool?** *My daughters, Madison and Raegan, have attended MISD schools and graduated from Mansfield High School, reflecting my family's commitment to public education and the community. Their experiences in MISD schools have given me valuable insights into the district's strengths and areas needing improvement.*

**Q3. What is your vision for education in our district & community?** *My vision for MISD centers on academic excellence, safety, and fiscal responsibility. I aim to ensure our schools foster an environment where students are not only academically successful but also life-ready, equipping them with practical skills for their future careers.*

**Q4. Challengers only (non-incumbents): What prompted you to run? What would you specifically like to achieve that would be in your capacity?**

**Q4. Incumbents: What accomplishment(s) are you most proud of as a school board member?** *During my tenure there are many accomplishments to be proud of in our district. I believe the one that standouts is our designation as an "A rated district" as this shows all the hard work of our entire team across the entire district. I'm proud to*

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share that MISD was one of the very first Texas schools to prioritize safety and place an officer on all campuses. Our fiscal responsibility is most noted with our decrease in the tax rate by \$.18 this past year.

**Q5. MISD contributes \$250/month towards health insurance. We rank #39 out of 45 school districts in our area. Would you support compensating teachers more in the coming years either through bigger raises and/or through increasing monthly contributions to healthcare costs?**

*Recognizing the importance of attracting and retaining quality educators, I advocate for competitive teacher compensation. This involves exploring ways to increase salaries and benefits, thereby ensuring that MISD remains a desirable destination for top teaching talent.*

**Q6. What are your initiatives to combat teacher burnout & to increase teacher retention? In the 2022-2023 school year, MISD's turnover rate was at 17.80%, which was a 3.8% increase from the prior year.**

*To combat teacher burnout, I propose implementing mentorship programs, offering professional development focused on innovative teaching methods, and ensuring a supportive work environment. Additionally, recognizing and rewarding teacher excellence, providing classroom support personnel, and ensuring substitute coverage for teachers can all significantly enhance retention.*

**Q7. How will you support more hiring for the campus level (e.g., teachers, administration, cafeteria personnel, custodial crew, and mental health professionals)?**

*I support empowering campus-level leaders to make hiring decisions that best fit their specific needs. This involves providing them with adequate resources and flexibility, and ensuring they have access to a diverse pool of highly qualified candidates. MISD supports bringing these candidates to our district with relationships with universities as well as promoting our district to past graduates. Maintaining the high standards and a strong reputation for a desirable workplace will work toward recruiting great candidates.*

**Q8. We have lost a lot of paraprofessionals, specifically in the Special Education Department. Many paraprofessionals have left the district for higher paying jobs outside of our District, if not education altogether. What would you do to support our students and staff in the Special Education Department?**

*The Special Education Department is crucial for addressing diverse student needs. I advocate for increasing resources, providing specialized training for staff, and ensuring that these students receive the tailored support they need for a successful educational experience. I feel this is one of the most important places for improvement currently in our district.*

**Q9. Do you think P.E. classes held twice per week is sufficient for elementary students? Would you support more recess time for this age group?** *I support enhancing physical education and increasing recess time in elementary schools. Research shows physical activity is essential for student health and well-being and contributes to their overall academic and social development. I support more recess time.*

**Q10. How will you ensure all student populations feel a sense of belonging regardless of a student's economic status, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, & gender identity?** *Creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all students is paramount. This includes implementing programs that celebrate diversity, provide equal opportunities, and ensure every student feels valued and supported in their educational journey. This starts with ensuring that teachers and staff value every student and supports them through their challenges and differences.*

**Q11. Poor mental health has become a nationwide problem among young people. However, each campus only has one designated student support counselor, who is assigned to service multiple campuses. How can we provide more (or improve) mental health services? What is the role of schools in providing support for students who are struggling with mental health?** *I prioritize improving mental health services in our schools. This includes increasing the number of counselors, providing more comprehensive mental health training for staff, and creating initiatives that support students' emotional and psychological well-being. I support creative measures that could allow additional staff on campus' such as supporting internships for graduate programs as this has been proven effective in other districts. The schools are where we have the most opportunity to catch early signs of mental health struggles to be able to intervene. It is also the ideal place to help students get access to alternative resource options such as telehealth.*

**Q12. The 88th Texas Legislature met in regular session in 2023, followed by four special sessions. Given the continued call for parent choice & vouchers for private schools, what are your thoughts on how this would affect Mansfield ISD? What new innovations & initiatives should MISD implement?** *While recognizing the importance of parent choice, my focus is on strengthening MISD's public schools. I support innovative programs that enhance our educational offerings, ensuring that MISD remains a top choice for families. Vouchers would negatively impact MISD and this change on the state level would take funding from our students on every campus. While I support a parents choice, I also support equal standards and financial transparency across public and private schools.*

**Q13. With the \$777 million school bond election, also occurring in May, what are your thoughts on the projects included in the five propositions versus projects that were not included.** *Regarding the \$777 million bond, I advocate for responsible financial management, ensuring that every dollar is spent effectively to improve and support our schools. This bond will focus on critical infrastructure needs and resources that directly enhance student learning. When over 90 community members, staff, parents, and administrators come together and spend countless hours reviewing every project presented I find great comfort in the decisions made regarding the projects to be included in the bond. I believe the best decisions were made with the resources available. These propositions will touch every student in MISD today and for years to come.*

### **Campaign Links**

website: [www.newsom4misd.net](http://www.newsom4misd.net)

fb: [@Newsom4SchoolBoard](https://www.facebook.com/Newsom4SchoolBoard)

Michelle Newsom for MISD School Board Trustee

email: [VotingEducators@gmail.com](mailto:VotingEducators@gmail.com)

website: <https://VotingEducators.weebly.com/>

facebook: [@MansfieldOrganizationOfVotingEducators](https://www.facebook.com/MansfieldOrganizationOfVotingEducators)



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