



Questionnaire Response 2024

Jandel Crutchfield

for Place 2

Q1. Have you taught in a public school? If so, explain. If not, what experience qualifies you to hold this position?

I've served for 8 years as a school social worker in K-12 public schools. I helped to fill the gaps where students, parents, teachers, and leaders needed to find solutions to problems with student performance, discipline, and mental health. To accomplish this, I built coalitions between families, teachers, students, and leaders to achieve student goals. I found community and business resources to help students and families. I helped train staff on methods to address common emotional and behavioral challenges and intervened to support in their classrooms. I have implemented interventions around problem solving and mental health with students one on one, small group, and at the entire school level. That was some of the most rewarding work of my professional career. As a board member I would similarly listen to all of these stakeholders and build coalitions for positive outcomes. Not only do I understand the need to address both physical and mental well-being of our students, but I also have implemented mental health interventions in my career.

Q2. If you have children, where do/did they attend school in public school, private school, charter school, or homeschool?

My son is a 6th grader at Donna Shepard Leadership Academy in the Two Way Dual Language Program and my daughter is a 4th grade in the TWDL program at Erma Nash. We have been in the district 6 years, when I moved here for my job as a professor at the UT Arlington in the School of Social Work.

Q3. What is your vision for education in our district & community?

I hope to help Mansfield ISD Go For The W.I.N. The letters W.I.N. represent my 3 priorities.

W. Whole Child- Student academic outcomes are better when the experience of the whole child is a priority. When the student experience is characterized by physical, emotional, and social safety students thrive. For many students to meet state and local academic requirements, MISD must address all facets of student well-being including social and emotional wellness, mental health, safety, and belonging. Our students are worth more than their scores on assessments.

I. Invest In Staff- Teachers and Leaders are essential to improving student academic

outcomes. To continue being a great place to teach, we must not only give staff competitive pay, but also comprehensive support for the work they do. If we care about kids, we must also care about the teachers and leaders who serve them.

N. Non-Partisanship- The school experience for parents, staff, and students relies on high levels of transparency about data. This experience must be driven by non-partisan, data-based decision-making at the district and campus levels. MISD must be transparent with data and how decisions are made to build trust within the community. There are current gaps in performance, teacher and student satisfaction and retention across campuses. We must use data in a non-partisan way to close the gaps and patch the holes, so our district excellence extends to every single corner of MISD.

Q4. Incumbents: What accomplishment(s) are you most proud of as a school board member?

Q4. Challengers only (non-incumbents): What prompted you to run? What would you specifically like to achieve that would be in your capacity? *I am running to make sure the excellence in MISD extends to all corners, all schools, all students, and all staff in MISD. As we grow in MISD I want to make it clear what the standard for belonging and engagement must be for us to recruit and retain high quality teachers and paraprofessionals. I hope to make sure that the standard of belonging and engagement is present no matter what campus or building you work in at MISD.*

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? *Yes. MISD has a good reputation for fiscal management and I believe we can be creative about a higher dollar amount towards health insurance, in particular, supporting a culture of health. We need our teachers and their families to be well to give their best to the district and because they give so much of themselves, we must demonstrate how much we value them by making this a budget priority.*

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. *I think the strategy to address teacher burnout and increase teacher retention has to be comprehensive and rooted in what teachers say is important to them. We can't do just one thing and expect to have real change. So a package of initiatives can better address these issues from multiple avenues. First, I think incorporating teacher feedback into professional development plans can ensure teachers feel heard and feel that they are receiving training that really matters to*

them in their work. Secondly, I think ensuring teachers and paraprofessionals are compensated at a wage that allows them to live in the community where they work. As the district grows and costs increase, our teachers needs increase. Teachers spend many hours serving this district beyond work hours and deserve compensation for all of their work. Thirdly, I think teachers deserve autonomy in the classroom to be able to teach their students with creativity. While they must prepare students for testing and to remain aligned with TEKS, they should be able to incorporate innovative ideas where possible. A focus on healthcare (physical and mental) and teacher morale can also be addressed through ensuring a culture of belonging in MISD. Teachers belong because they are part of the MISD family and they should feel this.

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

Pressing needs at the campus level should be prioritized. As a board member asking the district staff to set priorities for campus needs within the budget, working with HR to give feedback on recruitment plans can be ways to ensure the campus level needs are met across positions.

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?

Our special education department is vital to MISD and our team of paraprofessionals work very hard. They deserve respect for their work and commitment as well as fair pay for time worked and the ability to earn extra pay for extra work. The budget document is more than just numbers, it demonstrates our values and paraprofessionals must be valued within MISD because we cannot be a great district without them. Increased training and centralized support for paras can also ensure they are equipped to do their work well. The culture of belonging for paraprofessionals in special education is also important to demonstrate respect for them as MISD employees.

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?

Students should get as much physical activity as possible during the school day, whether through more recess time or more physical education time. Movement could also be incorporated throughout the day at other strategic times. It's also important that a culture of health is emphasized at the campus level.

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? *Every student and staff member BELONGS in MISD simply because they are a part of the MISD family. You don't have to work at any particular campus or be any particular type of person to belong. You belong just because you are here. This must be the standard for district and for every single MISD campus and office. I will keep highlighting to fellow board members and district staff that the research links between belonging and academic excellence and teacher retention in discussions with Dr. Cantu about goal setting for the district. A student's sense of belonging has been shown to increase academic outcomes and promote mental health. Research also demonstrates that a teacher's sense of belonging leads to more creativity and a higher quality of life.*

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? *The school is often the best access point students may have for mental health services. As a social worker who worked in schools, I understand first hand the value of social work in schools. I provided not only mental health support for students but also for staff and parents struggling to find solutions to mental health challenges. Our teachers and counselors cannot be solely responsible for providing mental health to students. Currently our 7 crisis counselors in MISD are spread across the district. The budget should demonstrate the value we place on mental health by increasing the hiring of social workers and counselors for more campuses.*

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? *Choice exists already in MISD. MISD has been studying how to expand choice programs, and will open more (P-Tech program at Summit, another STEM elementary, another Two way dual language campus, etc) this fall. It must continue to make plans to expand these options so there are multiple options in all feeder patterns. Vouchers take money from MISD to pay for private schools and this would severely limit the district's ability to provide or grow choice programs that often require teachers to earn more training. So, rather than be a solution for more parent choice, vouchers would actually limit choice in MISD and potentially limit many aspects of hiring and retaining our teachers and paras.*

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. *I served on the bond committee that recommended the bond to the board. While MISD is a great place to live, learn, and teach it must continue to improve and be updated to keep pace with its already high level of excellence. This includes bringing all campuses, even our older ones, more closely on par with each other in terms of adequate space and technology. I think these things are well covered in the bond as well as the improvements for more fine arts space and an early childhood center. I think the bond projects touch every MISD campus.*

Campaign Links

website: jc4misd.com

fb: [@Go4theWIN](https://www.facebook.com/Go4theWIN)

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School Board Elections
Early Voting: April 22 - 30
Election Day: May 4, 2024