

CLEAR CREEK COUNCIL OF PTAS - 2020 CCISD TRUSTEE CANDIDATE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

<u>Questions</u>	MICHELLE DAVIS District 2	WILLIAM STROMEYER District 2	WIN WEBER District 2 (Incumbent)	JASON CLARK District 3	ARTURO SANCHEZ District 3 (Incumbent)
<u>Are you a member of PTA, or have you been in the past? How do you support PTA?</u>	Candidate did not provide replies before our publication deadline.	I am a member of the Whitcomb PTA. I attend the events and participate with my child in the fundraisers.	I am a member of Clear Creek H.S. PTA, Clear Creek Int., Space Center Int., Ferguson, McWhirter, Robinson and Special Education. I am a past PTA president for G.W. Robinson Elementary. I support PTA by promoting it at every opportunity. I am enthralled with the notion of providing resources to and creating participation opportunities for families. Education, advocacy, care-giver participation, and student support are what PTA is all about. The organization is impressive. It provides resources from the national, state and local level to any campus and yet PTA recognizes that each campus has a unique personality and needs. I am a major fan!	My family has had PTA membership with my son and daughter's elementary schools. I believe a great way to support a PTA is to recognize their efforts at the school board meetings. Each meeting could highlight a different local campus' PTA's initiatives and hard work.	I am proud to support PTAs through the Falcon CommYOUity VIP membership which includes Armand Bayou Elementary, Brookwood Elementary, Clear Lake City Elementary, Falcon Pass Elementary, Robinson Elementary, Whitcomb Elementary, Clear Lake Intermediate, Space Center Intermediate and Clear Lake High School. In addition, I am a PTA member at North Pointe Elementary, Ward Elementary, Clear Brook High School and the Special Education PTA (SEPTA). My membership in PTA dates back to 2013, the year my oldest child began kindergarten. My support for PTAs extends beyond attending meetings and sponsored events, such as school carnivals, festivals, and book sales to include actively volunteering with WatchDogs, Makerspace and other PTA sponsored activities. In fact, volunteering with the PTA is a family commitment as my wife as served in many roles from Executive Board member to CCCC delegate. I appreciate the chance to speak with PTA leaders at different district events and value their insight to needs, challenges and perspectives from their respective campuses. I believe PTAs are the backbone of parent involvement and engagement at our schools. PTAs provide resources and support that enhance student learning and extend resources that would otherwise be unavailable.

Currently, we have some odd school zones where kids are almost literally being driven past one school to get to another, or in some cases crossing a highway to get to school. Also, some middle schools are split up and feed into two different high schools. How can you foster a community with school zones so spread out and split up? What are your thoughts on rezoning? When and why should it happen?

With the way the district is laid out, zoning two intermediates to one high school is not practical. In some areas it may make perfect sense, but in others it the intermediate sits right in the middle of two high schools (Brookside for example). While this may not foster the sense of small town community that exists in other places, it can help create a friendly and community atmosphere for CCISD as a whole.

Driving past one school to get to a different one is certainly problematic, but sometimes necessary. While the drive for that family/neighborhood may be longer, it means the drive for a different neighborhood while also long, isn't overly long. As part of 2nd and all of 3rd grade in CCISD, I was on a bus for over 45 minutes each way. We passed multiple schools in the process. 4th and 5th grade were slightly better but still not great. This continued into intermediate school. We need to avoid situations like this, so it may mean a neighborhood having a slightly further drive to prevent another neighborhood from having a 45 minute drive. As a side, the area I grew up in no longer has such extreme drives thanks to the hard work of previous board members and administration.

Zoning needs to be re-examined from time to time, probably every 5 years or so. Part of this is the needs of the district change, some neighborhoods experience re-birth as others continue to age. The amount of kids in an area is in flux and we need to keep our schools balanced for the size they are built.

How Boundaries are Decided A Boundary Committee is formed any time the populations at our schools become inconsistent with best serving students. In the tradition of big problem solving, CCISD creates committees that are composed primarily of community members with data provided by CCISD administration. The Boundary Committee is probably the longest standing committees. Community members come from all over the district and work hard to present the best boundaries for all students. As the committee works, it seeks input from CCISD families, presents preliminary findings to the Board of Trustees and then makes a final recommendation. Board Trustees, who have been provided with supporting data over a period of weeks, vote whether to accept the recommendation. **Our Weber Family History** I am not the only parent who feels I could write a book on split feeder patterns. I live in Nassau Bay. Here is some of my campus tour through the district. I have talked about this puzzle many times. A former board member and former Boundary Committee Member, Ken Baliker, often remarked that the problem with boundaries is that the students do not live where the schools are. First, let me mention that our family has not moved from our home during this journey, and my in-laws lived three doors down from us, with the same school zones. I have one niece and one nephew who started at McWhirter Elementary. The nephew who attended McWhirter was rezoned to Falcon Pass Elementary with both of my children. (Falcon Pass is primarily a feeder to Clear Lake H.S.) After two years at Falcon Pass, my children were re-zoned to Robinson Elementary, a brand-new campus.

I believe that parents should have the option to send their child to a closer neighborhood school. Safety is also a natural concern when creating zones and crossing highways should be avoided whenever possible. Before making recommendations to changing the current school zones, I would like to study the current zoning plan and discuss the reasoning behind the current zoning structure.

CCISD's model includes elementary schools in neighborhoods across our 103 square mile district that feed into nearby intermediate and high schools. The district works with demographers to gain valuable insight when considering the need for new schools and future growth in communities served by CCISD. It is difficult to maintain the same enrollment levels and zones as families with children graduate from our high schools and go on to college. This is an ongoing challenge for the district and changes to school boundaries are only considered when enrollment levels at our schools are forecasted to exceed or are below capacity. Changes to school boundaries is difficult and can be disruptive. I believe the district's approach to forming and using a School Boundary Advisory Committee (SBAC) is an effective way to ensuring transparency and involving members from across the district. I believe adjustments to school boundaries are dependent on changes to campus enrollment that impacts the district's ability to maintain the teacher to student ratio in our classrooms.

(When Robinson opened, most of it was a feeder to Clear Lake H.S. and then changed to Clear Falls H.S..) Two nieces, two nephews and both of my children attended Space Center Intermediate, (which is primarily a feeder to Clear Lake H. S.). After Space Center one nephew, two nieces and both of my children attended Clear Creek H.S., (the other nephew went to Clear Horizons H.S.). Every campus we attended was met with students, parents and teachers who wondered why we were there since we lived in Nassau Bay. While our zoned elementary campus has changed several times, we have remained zoned to Space Center Intermediate and Clear Creek H.S.. When my children were at Falcon Pass, I walked up to the front doors during Homecoming season to see a banner prominently displayed on the school "Beat Creek!" I marched myself into the office and let everyone know that some Falcon Pass students were zoned to Creek and had family already there. At Space Center, "Beat Creek" t-shirts were proudly displayed and sold at the school store. Once again, I marched to the office. In high school, my son could not convince a teacher that Robinson was a feeder school to Creek. Even harder than saying goodbye to friends before moving into a new campus there was a sense of invisibility for some of the Nassau Bay kids. **My Observations as a Parent** As a parent of children who are not gifted transition people, I have been alarmed and angry with Nassau Bay boundary switches. However, some of my wise family and neighbors gave me a new idea. It seems that sometimes the students adapt to the changes very well. I also learned that the kids in this disjointed "feeder path" tend to be very involved in activities and come to

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			<p>know other kids all over the district. Like other communities, Nassau Bay has a mix of school choices. Some families home school, private school, and public school. Activities outside of school, like Scouts, baseball, and swim, are where the kids come together. I cannot think of one time when one of my children was invited to a party, competed in swim, or played in an Orchestra competition when they did not know others outside their immediate group. As a parent, that network has given me peace of mind. It is also nice for me to have a network of parent friends across the district. <u>The Work I Have Done</u> Even though I see advantages for students who do not have a consistent feeder path, I am still watchful and vocal for students and families experiencing these transitions. I am a loud and clear voice relating our Weber experience and concern every time boundary changes or feeder paths comes up on the Board. Since I have been on the Board, some very good changes have happened. Campuses are more aware of the feeder paths of their students. For examples, when elementary campuses have alumni celebrations, they are mindful to do their best to invite all alumni and high school graduation stages routinely include elementary school principals representing every feeder school for graduating seniors.</p>		
<p><u>Given the time commitment being on the CCISD Board requires, including the many meetings and workshops that happen during school and business hours, will you have the time/and does your</u></p>		<p>My job is quite flexible with regards to what I can do timewise. I work an additional job as well that allows me to somewhat set a schedule, so I will be able to work around any commitments I need to in order to serve this community.</p>	<p>Trustees and the superintendent try to warn candidates how much time it takes to properly serve, however, every time a new board member begins the work, it is always a surprise. Apart from our workshop meetings, regular board meetings and special meetings, we serve on special committees. Our Policy and Finance committees meet weekdays at 7:30am. Our Executive Board also meets on a weekday</p>	<p>I have time budgeted into my work schedule that would allow me to attend meetings during the school and business hours. As a board member, I will always work to represent CCISD students and that includes attending meetings and workshops that benefit the children of our school district.</p>	<p>I am fortunate to work for an employer that allows me to flex my hours throughout a workday, work week and pay period. This has provided me the flexibility to support multiple district committee meetings, serve on the Clear Creek Education Foundation, attend coffee talks, campus meetings, groundbreaking ceremonies, ribbon cuttings, special meetings, board training</p>

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<p><u>job allow you to attend all of these meetings to represent the children of CCISD well?</u></p>			<p>morning. Most of the other committees meet at lunch or in the afternoon. To prepare for full board and committee meetings, as well as just keeping up to date, there are hundreds of pages of reading each week. And then, of course, we are invited to many district and community events, (including seven high school graduation ceremonies). I am self employed and have over ten years of proof that I keep up with my homework and make the meetings.</p>		<p>and campus visits over the past 3.5 years. The chance to participate in activities and meetings during the school day provides direct visibility into the district's work in action, in addition to those meetings and events that happen in the evenings. I think this is paramount to being an effective board member. I am prepared to continue serving and am committed to representing the students, families, teachers, staff and community of District 3.</p>
<p><u>What do you think are the best ways to address gun safety in our schools?</u></p>		<p>I think we currently do a fine job of addressing the issues of gun safety and violence in schools. There will never be a perfect answer, so making sure we are prepared for any potential problems is the best we can do.</p>	<p>Trustees swear an oath to follow state law. I have heard from various law enforcement officers that in an active shooter event it can take extra time to locate the threat if weapons are displayed by people who are not wearing uniforms distinctly identifying them as law enforcement. If a law on any subject contradicts campus safety, we advocate our position with our state representatives. We continue to keep up to date on best campus safety practices.</p>	<p>Each campus needs a strong counseling program that is supported by the district to help educate students and provide parent resources as it relates to gun safety. The counselors working in conjunction with police officers would be an effective partnership to educate our students. Additionally, providing students with access to mental health experts and student support counselors should also be considered.</p>	<p>We must continue to address gun safety in our schools by focusing on safety protocols that provide the training necessary for students, teachers and campus staff to recognize, practice, respond and follow procedures that help keep our schools safe. In addition, we must continue to provide support for each child's social, emotional and mental health as part of our comprehensive plan. The formation of CCISD's School Safety Network links the district's Safe Schools, Student Guidance and Counseling, and Galveston County Sheriff's Department (Sherriff's Liaison Officers) – to provide an evidence-based, comprehensive safety program. I believe we must continue to follow the recommendations provided by the School Safety Committee and request regular updates on our progress toward completing/implementing the committee's recommendations, as well as focus on consistent implementation of the policies, procedures, and facility improvements that are critical to supporting student safety.</p>

What, in your opinion, are the most crucial funding priorities and challenges for the district?

The last bond passed was mainly to update many of our older schools. This is important and will keep being the most important issue we have. As a district there is not much room for new growth, so now we must maintain or replace existing structures. Once this round of construction is complete the majority of buildings will be less than 30 years old or renovated within the last 15. Additionally technology is ever more important. COVID has taught us that we must be prepared for anything to happen in order to continue education. I am proud of the response we have had and allocation of funds to ensure all students have devices that need them and are able to access the internet. Funding will continue to come from residential taxes in the area. We do not have the large business base of many of our neighbors, so it is important that the residents of CCISD understand that in order to keep our district successful money must be invested from time to time.

In 2019, the 86th Texas Legislature working with the Texas Commission on Public School Finance, restructured funding in a body of work named House Bill 3. A crucial funding priority is to maintain that funding. Another priority is to ensure there are no new unfunded state mandates

Competitive salaries for teachers should always be a top priority for CCISD. There is no substitute for high quality teachers and instruction. Attracting and retaining high quality teachers should be the first priority. Additionally, COVID has created an environment where we need to educate a large portion of our students virtually. We must take an equitable approach to educating our virtual students by providing the necessary resources to be successful. WIFI devices and computers need to be distributed as necessary to ensure all students can reach the curriculum and instruction to be successful.

As we continue to evaluate and assess the impacts of COVID-19 to our district's budget and unplanned spending, it is critical that we continue to track our expenses to meet the safety and health of our students, teachers and administrators. Beyond additional requirements, technology and teaching units required to establish and support Clear Connections, the potential impact of reduced enrollment beyond this calendar year, could create a larger deficit to the district's overall budget. We must advocate for the continued full funding of HB3 during the upcoming legislative session and we must continue to challenge ourselves to look for potential costs savings and efficiencies across the district. We must continue to advocate for the staffing needed for improved student achievement as set forth in the district's strategic plan. Additionally, transitioning from a superintendent who has provided 13 years of continuity during this time will challenge the cabinet, administration and staff to provide the needed support to the new superintendent as she/he joins the district and serves as the new leader for CCISD. Finally, focusing on opportunities to attract and bring back students that have left CCISD is a positive challenge I believe the district is poised to address. Through surveys, focus groups and collaboration with our non-profit partners, I believe we can identify ways to ensure families are more comfortable and confident in the district's health protocols and ultimately return more students to our brick and mortar school program.

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<p><u>Currently CCISD is ranked 6th in the Houston area, 46th in Texas. What are your ideas to get CCISD back on top?</u></p>		<p>We must be able to retain our faculty who seek options elsewhere. Teachers are what makes schools successful. This may mean studying pay rates against other nearby districts and adjusting accordingly.</p>	<p>CCISD trustees have an aspirational vision in that our work is not complete until every student reaches her or his personal potential every day. The Niche metrics include some great factors, but they are not weighted the same as CCISD Community Based Accountability Standards. For example, Niche lists state test scores in the two highest factor values, while the CCISD community ranks STAAR test scores as the lowest indicator of student success. Trustees set periodic superintendent targets for student growth that are within the framework of our 2020-2025 strategic plan. As we follow the progress of these targets, we can make sure District resources are focused on success. CCISD has a solid plan to make sure students are ready to launch to success and lead beyond high school.</p>	<p>While these statistics paint a picture we don't want to see, we should also celebrate the academic successes we do have. Our GT programming, AP courses, dual credit partnership, and our students' college acceptance rates are all top notch. Students in CCISD get a top quality education. That being said, the public reporting is vitally important to maintain college entrance rates, attract families to the community, etc. So, it is important that our administration has a firm working knowledge of the metrics used to calculate the rankings and specifically address critical issues to impact those metrics. I am not advocating for teaching to tests, but I am advocating for programming our system to perform well in the ways assessed by the public.</p>	<p>The implementation of CCISD's new Strategic Plan, combined with the selection of a new superintendent, continued program audits, assessments and reviews, and focused attention on measurable outcomes provide a framework where the board and district leadership can work together to make CCISD an even better district. I believe we can learn and benchmark with other high performing districts in Texas and when possible, with other high-ranking districts across the country. I believe we should maintain a strong focus on student achievement for all children tied to clearly defined goals, measurable outcomes and review our progress through regular program updates. I am certain we will continue fostering a culture where district-wide professional learning communities are supported, and instructional leaders actively focus on strategies that enable all students to achieve, contribute and lead with integrity.</p>
<p><u>CCISD finds itself in a potentially difficult financial situation this year. Student enrollment is down at exactly the time when more teachers and staff are required due to Covid-19. The State has temporarily extended certain "Hold Harmless" protections that allow districts with lower than expected enrollments to maintain State</u></p>		<p>Budget cuts in certain areas may be necessary come 2021. Enrollment may stay down as many families have opted to find alternatives due to the ongoing pandemic. Additionally the state can continue to be lobbied to renew the protection, as many of the large districts are facing this exact same problem</p>	<p>Now is not the first time in recent history that CCISD and other districts across the state have faced financial shortfall. In 2011 CCISD state funding was cut by 17.5 million dollars while saddled with new mandatory student testing. Looking to the good sense and creativity of our community and our administration we managed the storm with a little more grey hair but without layoffs or program cuts. Our administration is taking every opportunity to itemize COVID-19 costs to the district while looking for possible reimbursement. We will manage this storm with advocacy and grace as is the CCISD way.</p>	<p>First, we need to make our schools as successful and attractive as possible. This will keep families moving into the area. This will boost our enrollment over time, so that when Hold Harmless provisions expire at the end of the semester, we are not negatively affected. That being said, we would be very short-sighted not to be thinking about ways to address the funding shortfalls. We need to look at the effectiveness of various programs to see if money can be saved to address the shortfalls and look at alternative revenue options. However, classroom teaching positions must be preserved. There is no greater asset than a good teacher. So,</p>	<p>Advocating for full funding during the upcoming legislative session has never been more important. CCISD's continued involvement with the Gulf Coast Area Association of School Boards provides a shared set of priorities for the legislative session that are important for our region, including advocating for continued support and full funding of HB3. The district will champion hold harmless funding for the entire 2020-21 academic year and pursue options to offset additional costs related to COVID-19. The current decrease in student enrollment provides an opportunity to understand why they have not returned</p>

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<p><u>funding. How do you propose CCISD should make up this shortfall when these protections expire in December?</u></p>				<p>other means of trimming expenses must be prioritized.</p>	<p>this school year and determine whether the district can reassure families about the protocols in place in brick and mortar, resulting in their return. I support the district's tracking of all COVID-19 related expenses and advocate for protections until we understand new costs and expenses because of COVID-19. I remain a proponent of closely monitoring all district expenditures and am confident district leadership will evaluate and propose alternate ways of reducing the funding shortfall. From an advocacy perspective, PTAs also provide an important voice during the legislative session and will be valuable advocates of a legislative strategy that secures the needed funding and resources to ensure our schools can provide the best instructional environment possible for our students and teachers.</p>
<p><u>Recently the State of Texas was found to be in violation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act because it capped the number of students receiving special education at 8.5%. The national average of students needing special education is closer to 14%. Statewide, the number of students in Special Education is now over 9%. How do you plan to identify and support those students who have</u></p>		<p>As a district we do an exceptional job early on in the education process of evaluating students. The learning from home option will make this more difficult of course, as teachers are unable to see the kids performance on a daily basis. Testing should continue through older ages to help determine someone that maybe isn't getting the help they need.</p>	<p>CCISD special education enrollment increased from 9.5% in the 2013-2014 school year to 10.4% in the 2018-2019. This increase exceeds the state average and is set out in the 2018- 2019 CCISD Community Based Accountability Report. In 2018 CCISD trustees brought in the Gibson Education Consulting & Research Group, an outside professional audit company, to find areas in special education that can be improved. Gibson recommended 27 improvements which are being employed in a phased process. Progress on these recommendations were presented to the Board of Trustees at the regular meeting, August 2020. (This meeting may be accessed from the video archive on the CCISD website.) 22 recommendations from the Gibson audit are complete and the remaining 5 are on track for completion by</p>	<p>I have a son that is in a special needs program in CCISD. This issue is important to me and close to my heart. CCISD has recently hired a new director of special education who brings knowledge and experience running a sound special education program on her campus. I am confident in her ability to apply the same special education leadership to the district as a whole. As a board member, we must support the new director and special education with funding and resources while maintaining program oversight.</p>	<p>CCISD's total student enrollment as of October 9, 2020 is 40,755 with students receiving Special Education totaling 4,745 (or 11.6%) as of August 17, 2020. As a board member, it is important that I ask questions, track metrics, and ensure our district policies are supporting the identification of students with special education needs in the least restrictive environment possible so that we don't have children "falling through the cracks." We also need to review the progress being made regarding the Gibson Report's recommendations. It is critical to understand any barriers to our continued support and identification of students who should be receiving special services. Ensuring our district's Response to Intervention (RtI) framework is consistently implemented at every</p>

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<p><u>“fallen through the cracks” and ensure they receive the education they need?</u></p>			<p>June 2022. Parents across the district belong to SEPTA, the special education PTA and SEPAC, a district special education committee. These two groups help spotlight concerns and make positive changes. Like all district programs, improvement is a continuing effort and expectation. The better we meet the needs of students, the better the district.</p>		<p>school, including full implementation of all key components of the RtI is an important step to making sure our early intervention is effective and equitable. This is especially critical as we serve students both virtually and in person. I support the continued staffing, training and use of digital instructional resources to provide students and families access to learning tools at home. Our work and collaboration with CCISD’s Special Education PTA (SEPTA) has proven to be a valuable resource and voice for families with children in special education. SEPTA’s insight, perspective and advocacy provides families much needed support and helps district leaders consider ways to continue improving special education services in CCISD.</p>
<p><u>School choice basically allows public education funds to follow students to the schools of their choice—whether that’s a public school, private school, charter school, home school or any other learning environment parents choose for their kids. What are your feelings about school choice? Should parents be allowed to use a tax “voucher” to pay for private or homeschooling? Why or why not?</u></p>		<p>Taxes are paid as part of the community. It’s something you invest in and directly affects property value. Allowing that to be pulled out yet still enjoying the beneficial value associated with it is not correct. I support parents doing what is best for their kids with regards to education, but not at the expense of the community they live in.</p>	<p>Each child has unique learning needs. I believe that most parents are equipped to choose the best educational environment for their child. I support funding systems that are in the best interest of children and do not divert dollars from public education. I oppose voucher systems that take public tax dollars from public school children. Texas Public Schools welcome every student into their doors to learn. Public school is woven into our earliest values as Texas citizens. The Texas Almanac notes that public school was a priority with early Texas settlers, and funding began in 1850. TexasAlmanac.com, A Brief History of Public Education, COPYRIGHT 2018 TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.</p>	<p>I am a proponent of parental choice within the public school system. I am for open enrollment in public schools and allowing transfers to the greatest extent possible. When it comes to a voucher system within the State, I am not for removing public funding from public schools to funnel it to organizations that do not have public oversight.</p>	<p>The State of Texas’ current formula determines the funding allocated to each school district that without the continued support from local taxes, would not be sufficient to provide instruction to meet the needs of all students in public schools. Public schools are mandated to serve all and must meet the needs of students including free and reduced meals, textbooks, assessment/evaluation for special services and access to remediation programs. Significant reform would have to occur at the state level that addresses the stark differences of how funding is allocated to make vouchers viable. While providing choice can be especially attractive to families who choose not to enroll their children in public schools, under the current model, I believe vouchers would ultimately drain</p>

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					<p>much needed resources from public education.</p>
<p><u>In the most recent Texas legislative session, HB 281 was written to address taxpayer funded lobbying. The way the bill was written, it would have included removing PTAs from school campuses. This bill may come back. What are your thoughts on this?</u></p>		<p>Each school should be allowed to operate a PTA, booster club, or similar groups with the goal of helping that school. This is primarily the families that attend that school and they should be allowed to help it for their kids.</p>	<p>I am a strong supporter of education and advocacy for students through PTA. PTA pays attention to issues affecting children and works hard on initiatives to improve student health and well-being. A few of these initiatives are special education funding, meaningful assessment, human trafficking legislation, limiting youth access to tobacco products and mental health support for students. House Bill 281 reached past PTA to other organizations who make it their business to educate school districts and communities regarding public education, such as the work of the Texas Association of School Boards. Texas PTA did a great job educating law makers about the House Bill 281 fallout to public schools and got a good result.</p>	<p>Broadly speaking, parent and community support is vital to the success of a school and district. Every high school athletic program relies on booster clubs to provide those extra touches athletes rely upon. In the same way, PTAs play a vital role in our schools and should not be overlooked. While PTAs operate independently and have their own 403c, they are not subverting or supplanting school operations; they supplement them. Not all districts are lucky enough to have parents active enough to keep their PTAs running. A district should absolutely be allowed to work cooperatively with the PTA in the best interest of students.</p>	<p>PTAs play an important role across CCISD. The number of volunteer hours alone, not to mention the additional funding raised throughout the school year, provide valuable support to our students and teachers. There is no doubt that removing PTAs from school campuses would significantly limit the ability to achieve "Every Child. One Voice." I believe PTAs reflect the heart, mind and character of volunteers committed to all students' success and should be protected as an on-campus resource. There are no better advocates for our children.</p>