

Candidate Name: Dr. Pankaj Jain

Candidate E-mail (will not be included on the CGA website unless you indicate you'd like it to be)

PankajForCoppell@gmail.com (you can include it)

Do you have a website you'd like to have included with your responses on the CGA website?

<https://www.facebook.com/ProfPankajJain/>

Tell us a little about yourself and why you've decided to run for a school board position

I am a professor at UNT in the departments of Anthropology and Philosophy & Religion. I observe the high school students from across the state arrive at UNT. My decision to run for the Place 3 on the board was motivated by wanting to see students at Coppell ISD achieve more. I see that in Plano, University Park, Dallas, and in Southlake, there are many schools/ISDs that continue to be ahead of Coppell. We in Coppell take great pride in our schools and school district. I also know that we barely make the top 10 for the Dallas-Fort Worth schools, barely make it into top 50 in Texas, and barely in top 400 in the nation. I would rather be in top three of Dallas area, top 10 in Texas, and top 50 in the nation.

What unique qualities would you bring to the school board?

With two Gifted and Talented kids in CISD schools, I am deeply invested in CISD from elementary to high school levels. With an undergraduate degree in computer science and doctorate in religion, I am also uniquely qualified to understand the importance of STEM as well as humanities and social sciences.

How have you been involved with Coppell ISD prior to running for school board?

I have given several academic presentations to CISD students at elementary, middle, and high school levels. My wife and I have participated and volunteered in various CISD events at Town Center Elementary, Mockingbird Elementary, CMS North, CMS East, and the high school.

What do you see as the biggest challenges for the district in the next five years?

While most of the discussions are about the growth, I see that development is being sacrificed or ignored. We are concerned about the quantity/number of students entering our schools but the bigger challenge is to maintain and upgrade the quality of our teaching. Our challenge is to recognize that every child should exceed our expectations and emerge as a gifted and talented child.

Are you in support of the Coppell ISD bond that has been proposed?

No because the process of forming the bond committee and deciding the budget was not collaborative and transparent enough. Every parent that I have met in last couple of months is taken by surprise upon hearing about the bond.

How important is serving the needs of gifted kids?

Gifted kids are a blessing for our community and they should be served and encouraged in every way because they have the potential to emerge as the innovative leaders of the world to help solve the most pressing problems.

How does Coppell ISD currently serve gifted kids and how does that compare to other districts?

Compared to other districts such as Plano, Coppell ISD does not serve gifted kids sufficiently. Several STEM and other clubs and activities are begging for funding (as parents have told me). Even activities such as DI (Destination Imagination) is poorly funded by Coppell ISD (compared to Plano and elsewhere). We in CISD pay high property taxes and yet the funding is not properly allocated in correct priority.