

Application for the Vacant Place 7 Trustee Position

The CISD Board of Trustees is accepting applications for the possible appointment of an individual to fill the vacant Place 7 Trustee position from from Monday, October 24 at 8 a.m. until Tuesday, November 1 at 5 p.m. Anyone interested in applying for a potential appointment to the open seat must meet the requirements listed below and in [District Policy BBA \(LEGAL\)](#), and will be required to resign from any conflicting commitments, including, but not limited to, other district committees and nonprofits, PTOs, or booster clubs.

According to Texas law, CISD Trustees may either (1) call a special election to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term, (2) appoint a replacement for the Place 7 Trustee position through the May 6, 2023 election or (3) allow the position to remain vacant until the May 6, 2023, election. In any event, the unexpired term for CISD Trustee Place 7 will be on the May 6, 2023, ballot to fill the remainder of the term. Place 7 will then be up for election for its full three-year term during the May 4, 2024 election.

Applicants must meet the Board of Trustees qualifications, which generally are:

- A U.S. Citizen
- 18-years-old at the start date of the Term of Service
- A resident of the district for 6 months before the application deadline
- A resident of the state of Texas for 12 months before the application deadline
- Be registered to vote

Email *

J.LE.WATERS@GMAIL.COM

Applicant's First and Last Name *

Julie Waters

Address *

252 E Bethel Road

City *

Coppell

Zip Code *

75019

Phone Number *

832-461-5865

Do you have children currently enrolled in Coppell ISD? *

Yes

No

If yes, please list your child's schools/ and grades below: *

Joshua Waters, Pinkerton, 2nd grade; Daniel Waters, Pinkerton, kindergarten

Untitled Section

Do you have children who have graduated from Coppell ISD? *

Yes

No

Why would you like to be part of the CISD Board of Trustees? *

Coppell is the place I call home. I want to raise my kids here, and I want my kids to raise their kids here. In fact, when ExxonMobil recently announced it was relocating its headquarters to Houston, my husband resigned from a prominent position there so that we could stay in Coppell.

Education is incredibly important to me. My parents are immigrants to the US from Vietnam, and we have always had a huge emphasis on education. I grew up in a small, rural west Texas town. It was so small we didn't even have a stop light. The educational opportunities were limited; so on my own I found ways to take college courses in neighboring cities. AP was not an option at my school. At 15, I took summer courses at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls. That is where I met my husband, Benjamin. He grew up in Nocona, TX, also a very small town.

At 16, I got my first car and drove through 30 miles of farm land and ranches, to take courses at a community college. When I graduated valedictorian of my class (which was very small - 25 students), I had accumulated a semester's worth of college courses. Then I went to Texas A&M University and got an undergraduate degree in Speech Communications. Next, I went to Boston University for law school while my husband got his PhD and MBA from MIT. Lastly, I attended Dallas Theological Seminary and got a Master's of Theology which required two years of Greek and Hebrew. So I am a bit of an education junkie. I love learning, and I love kids.

As an attorney, I first worked with abused and neglected kids in the CPS system. Then, I started a nonprofit that works with teenaged trafficking victims. My career has always focused on children and teenagers; it has been my joy to watch them grow and learn. Therefore, I would love to combine my two passions of education and children by serving on the Board of Trustees.

What is your understanding of the role of School Board Trustee? *

The School Board of Trustees work collectively to serve the best interests of students and staff of Coppell; this is accomplished by implementing the core values found in the Strategic Design. Decisions made by the School Board must be made through the lens of working together, to create profound learning experiences for each child, while nurturing meaningful relationships, to positively impact our world.

Also, the School Board is entrusted with the important fiscal responsibility of handling taxpayers' investment. The annual budget that is approved by the Board must reflect the wants and needs of the community in an equitable manner. The School Board is tasked with allocating taxpayers' funds judiciously and making wise decisions related to bonds.

The School Board is also in charge of hiring a superintendent and evaluating his or her progress.

Briefly describe your education background and qualifications. *

Texas A&M Undergraduate degree, Speech Communications
Boston University School of Law, Doctor of Jurisprudence (JD)
Dallas Theological Seminary, Master's of Theology (ThM)

If you are currently employed, briefly describe your position. *

I am currently the founder and director of Free the Captives, an anti-human trafficking nonprofit. See below for more information.

Briefly describe your volunteer experience/involvement in CISD. *

I have done a great amount of volunteering on the Pinkerton PTO, which includes serving as a room parent for two years and one year on the Spiritwear committee. I have organized kinder playdates for incoming kindergarteners, worked in the Pinkerton garden and helped organize books in the library.

My most rewarding accomplishment is developing the UIL Academics A+ competition at Pinkerton. This year is the full launch with five events including number sense, chess puzzle, creative writing, story telling and music memory; over 50 Pinkerton students participated.

I am personally coaching creative writing, story telling and music memory. Each Tuesday, 18 to 20 students come to my house along with their parents, and we learn about composers such as Bach and Beethoven, focus on creative writing and practice public speaking. I get parents involved by breaking the kids up into small group and having the parents help lead the games. It is so fun and rewarding to see second and third graders recognize different classical composers! They are also developing important public speaking skills that will last a lifetime.

I am also organizing the UIL meet where the students will compete on Nov. 29, 2022 at the Cozby Library.

What strengths do you bring to this position? *

My strengths come from being an attorney, founder of a nonprofit and a community advocate for the last 17 years.

In 2011, I founded Free the Captives, an anti-trafficking nonprofit in Houston, TX. At that point in time, most anti-trafficking was focused on international trafficking, and American girls that were being trafficked were falling through the cracks. I started my nonprofit to serve this population.

Free the Captives works with law enforcement to rescue girls from trafficking. Then, we provide holistic services to help the girls, some as young as 12 years old, rebuild their lives. We provide mentoring, tutoring, housing assistance, job preparation, therapy, support groups, furnish apartments, and more. I have even been available at the hospital when it was time for them to deliver their babies because no one else was there for them. Because my nonprofit has been able to provide comprehensive services, we have developed long term relationships with them.

As a community advocate for teenaged sex trafficking survivors in Houston, I have collectively engaged numerous stakeholders from the FBI, Houston Police Department, Harris County DA's Office and the Harris County Sheriff's Office in the fight against human trafficking. I developed relationships with three Harris County District Attorneys and two Harris County Sheriffs over the course of 10 years that lead to joint press conferences, speaking engagements, and the enactment of anti-trafficking policies that made it more difficult for buyers and traffickers to operate in Houston.

I have also mobilized tens of thousands of Houstonians over the course of my career. I organized and led an annual human trafficking conference for eight years that pulled in the top anti-trafficking leaders in Houston and the nation. I have also organized five 5K races to raise awareness and funds for my nonprofit; over 3500 people participated. I have also hosted and led numerous other educational trainings, events, and programs.

Besides educating people about human trafficking, I also provided them with ways to get involved. I led letter writing campaigns to local officials that resulted in Houstonians mailing in more than 8,000 letters. These letters paved the way for stronger protections for trafficking victims and more police stings on buyers. I also coordinated and funded Free the Captives billboards, TV and radio campaigns in partnership with Harris County Sheriff Adrian Garcia that educated millions of Houstonians.

One of the most successful community engagement events that I hosted and led was the "We See You Rally" on one of the most notorious streets in Houston for sex trafficking. The event started off with a huge on-site press conference where I spoke alongside former Astros legend Lance Berkman, Houston Police Department Chief of Police Art Acevedo, Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez, District Attorney Kim Ogg, and County Attorney Vince Ryan. Then, I organized about 400 community members holding signs and standing on the sidewalks where traffickers normally sold their girls. We disrupted sex trafficking for two days; no girls or women were sold during our rally.

My anti-trafficking work has been featured on many different radio and TV stations as well as newspapers. I have been interviewed for CBS Radio Houston's MIX 96.5 & Sports Radio 610, KSBJ, Fox 26 Houston, CBS KHOU Houston, ABC13 Houston, Houston Chronicle, and The Wall Street Journal.

I have raised over \$3.9 million for my nonprofit through private donations from churches, businesses,

foundations and individuals. One of my biggest financial accomplishments was spearheading our successful capital campaign, which resulted in purchasing Free the Captives facilities for \$1.1 million in cash. Throughout my fundraising efforts, I have organized two golf tournaments, two Moscow Ballet performances which staged the Nutcracker Ballet, three annual luncheons with silent auctions, four Christmas markets, a masquerade ball, a fashion show, five 5K races and several art shows. For each of these events, I oversaw marketing, sales, logistics, operations, set-up, and tear down.

Besides fundraising, I have also created three businesses to provide jobs and job training for my trafficking survivors. One of these businesses was employing our trafficking survivors to make candles. From 2015 to 2019, the sales generated from those candles totaled \$279,381.

The skills I have developed from being in charge of my nonprofit's finances will allow me to serve Coppell ISD in two ways:

1. Stewardship: I have always operated my nonprofit from the standpoint that the donors have provided these funds, and I need to utilize them in the best manner possible. Frugality played a key role in being able to pay for our facilities in cash, and we now have a healthy cash reserve that allows us to cut back on fundraising events.
2. Fundraising: I have become adept at fundraising and can help Coppell ISD schools or parents raise funds efficiently, which might be able to help the budget's deficit.

Here in Coppell and Irving, I have become quite involved in the community. I live in and serve on the Creekview HOA. I have served on the HOA Board's nominating committee. I also organize the HOA's annual Easter egg hunt in our backyard near the creek, the HOA's annual chili cook-off and Halloween costume parade, and the Christmas light decorating contest. I also started and manage the monthly ladies' Bunco night for the neighborhood. Our HOA has a large number of young families, and it has been a joy developing strong community with our neighbors. My family also attends Irving Bible Church, where I teach second grade Sunday school and organized a children's clothing swap.

As an attorney, I have developed strong analytical skills and the ability to communicate effectively. As a non-profit leader, I have rescued teenaged sex trafficking victims, collectively engaged community and government officials, and raised and managed \$3.9 million in assets. As a citizen of Coppell, I have developed authentic relationships with my neighbors by serving on my HOA and with the parents and children of Pinkerton through creating the UIL Academics program and serving on the PTO. These are the strengths I would bring to the Board of Trustees. I believe in working collaboratively and getting things done.

What is your vision for education in our community? *

In collaboration with the community, students and staff, the School Board will collectively engage all stakeholders as we journey towards goals that positively impact our children in Coppell. This impact goes beyond Coppell; it impacts our world as our schools mold and develop these young minds into tomorrow's leaders and influencers.

My vision includes investing in teachers so that they can produce great teaching, by listening to their desires and needs and providing them with the necessary tools to be successful. My family includes many educators so I am keenly aware of the issues that they face and the incredible impact that they have had on students throughout the years.

My vision for Coppell ISD is for an environment that fosters strong positive relationships that are authentic. This means investing in each other, and taking the time to really listen and learn before making a judgment. Authenticity means bringing down the barriers and having an openness to all stakeholders.

Lastly, success is different for everyone. There are many ways for students to be successful, and it is important to highlight all of those accomplishments.

What do you see as the most significant challenge facing CISD? *

There are several challenges facing CISD:

- (1) In the 2022-2023 general operating budget, there is a \$9.7 million deficit. This current deficit seems very concerning given that district's 2020-2021 budget with a \$7 million deficit was a huge focus in the recent past.
- (2) 965 students transferred out of Coppell ISD in 2021-2022, even as new development is growing the district. The number of students leaving the district for other districts or private/charter schools each year is an area which needs further examination and proposed remedies.
- (3) The teacher shortage is also very concerning. My goal would be to listen and learn from our teachers in order to retain them.

School Board Trustees spend an average of 12-15 hours per month executing their duties, with some months requiring substantially more. Are you prepared to make this time commitment? *

Yes

No

Briefly describe why you believe you have sufficient time to devote to this position: *

Due to covid, much of my work with my non-profit has moved to virtual so I have ample time to devote to school board responsibilities.

Do you or your spouse have any material interest in, or are either of you or your immediate family members employed by CISD or any company that does business with or receives funds from CISD? If yes, please describe. If no, please type no. *

No

Please provide three references. Please share the name, email address, phone number and your relationship to the reference below. *

Christine Sanders, christinecpa@yahoo.com, 214-763-6084, Free the Captives' Board Member
Katie Pascoe, katiepascoe@gmail.com, 214-923-5428, Friend
Vanessa Zertuche, vzas17@gmail.com, 214-724-1407, PTO President

I understand that this position is only until the May 6, 2023 election. The unexpired term for CISD Trustee Place 7 will be on the May 6, 2023 ballot to fill the remainder of the term. The regular three-year Place 7 term will also be on the May 4, 2024 Ballot. *

I understand.

CERTIFICATION OF APPLICANT I hereby certify that the foregoing and any attached statements are true, accurate and complete. I agree that any misstatement, misrepresentation, or omission of a fact may result in my disqualification for appointment. Typing my full name below serves as my signature *

Julie Le Waters

