



**VOTER GUIDE
ALLEN ISD
FALL, 2020**

**ALLEN ISD
CANDIDATES
NOVEMBER 3, 2020**

PLACE 6

Polly Montgomery
Sathya Sastry

PLACE 3

Kevin Cameron

PLACE 7

Vatsa Ramanathan

GALA North Texas has prepared information for Candidate Forums by obtaining information from candidate websites, Facebook campaign and personal pages, press releases and news articles. GALA North Texas has used its best effort to ensure the accuracy of all information. For information about this document or to report an error or request a change, contact dawna@galanorthtexas.org.

PLEASE NOTE: THE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE WAS PREPARED PRIOR TO THE JUNE DECISION OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH DETERMINED THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, WHICH PROHIBITS SEX DISCRIMINATION APPLIES TO DISCRIMINATION BASE ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY. CANDIDATE ANSWERS WERE LEFT IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE AS THEY INCLUDED INSIGHT INTO THE CANDIDATE'S BELIEFS.

PLACE 6

POLLY MONTGOMERY



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Background: Polly has served as a teacher, administrator, coordinator, and college professor for over 37 years. From her first job as a self-contained special education teacher in a rural Texas district, she knew her passion was for students who needed something more. As a middle school and elementary classroom teacher, she constantly looked for ways for all students to experience success. As a campus administrator, her focus was always on meeting the needs of students, parents, and teachers. A voice for lifelong education, Polly will make sure that an educator's heart and passion becomes part of the culture of Allen ISD School Board.-

Education: Bachelor of Science in Home Economics – University of Texas in Austin
Master of Education - Texas A&M University in Commerce
Doctor of Education - Dallas Baptist University

Occupation: Retired public educator, Adjunct Professor Dallas Baptist University

Highlights of civic involvement/accomplishment:

- Church Volunteer
- Tornado Relief and Support - Rowlett, TX (volunteer clean-up and hygiene supplies)
- Project Kids - Allen ISD
- As an educator, coordinated numerous community projects at various campuses in Garland ISD and Allen ISD, including school supply drives, clothing drives, food drives, diaper drives, Toys for Tots, Operation Christmas Child, Texas Scholars
- Board Member Cornerstone Ranch
- Weekend Food Backpacks for school aged children
- Puppy Raiser - Southeastern Guide Dogs
- Sunday School Teacher - adult, youth, preschool

If elected, what two issues would you give the most attention and resources?

There are two areas that I would focus on if elected as a trustee of Allen ISD: school safety and academic and social skills remediation. School Safety: Due to the pandemic, parents, students, and staff need assurance that the buildings are safe and protective measures are being taken to keep those on campuses safe and healthy. In addition, the district must continue to follow and review appropriate protocols for campus access that supports safe and secure schools. While the schools cannot provide a 100% guarantee on anything, I will work hard and make it a priority to ensure that the campuses are following prescribed CDC, state of Texas, county, and city protocols to protect students and staff.

Academic and Social Remediation: Due to being on remote learning for 6 months, many students may be academically lagging and/or be in need social skills remediation. It will be a goal to support finding out where students are with their academic and social skill needs and then creating supports that help to develop, support, and accelerate their individual developmental needs at a pace that supports continual improvement and development.



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POLLY MONTGOMERY

Have you attended any school board meetings? If so, what have you learned about how a board member can be effective?

I have attended multiple school board meetings over the last 25+ years. When I was unable to physically attend, I have attended remotely and always review not only the posted agendas but the board book prior to the meetings. My goal in attending these important meetings is to make sure that as a former employee of the district, I was well informed of policy, supports, and new trends. As a retired district employee and citizen of Allen, my goal is to make sure that I stay informed with how the district is operating from an academic standpoint as well as financial.

I have listened and learned from former trustees that to be an effective trustee, one must be an active listener, be willing to learn from recommendations, be able to discern information, and read and study all action and informational items noted in the board book. It is my goal as a potential trustee of Allen ISD to follow, pursue, learn, and achieve what is best for students and staff of Allen ISD.

As you look around the country, what innovative ideas would you recommend for improving classroom performance?

Innovative instruction is directly impacted by well trained, highly qualified, empathetic, enthusiastic, and creative teachers. An innovative teacher knows how to engage, dig deeper, and pull reluctant learners into an interactive learning environment for settings that involve face to face learning as well as the online platform. These teachers also know when and where to leverage appropriate technology to enhance individual student learning. Caring and concerned professional educators care for their students from an academic standpoint but also from a personal and social aspect as well. They see their students as their responsibility and will do whatever it takes to support learning and academic success.

CANDIDATE POLLY MONTGOMERY DID NOT RESPOND TO GALA'S CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE.

PLACE 6

SATHYA SASTRY



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Background: have lived in the Allen City for over 18 years. I have contributed to the Allen ISD Strategic planning committees for the successful planning of programs in the Allen Schools. I have recently completed the Allen ISD Leadership program that exposes participants to the working of Allen Schools, Allen board, and programs supporting Allen Schools. I am involved with the Allen Community programs such as Capital Improvement planning, Parks Foundation, Allen Sunrise Rotary Club, Citizen on Patrol program from the Allen Police Department. I have ideas that can take Allen ISD a notch above for employment, education, and community confidence. With the knowledge, experience, and involvement with the Allen community, I can continue to contribute and work with the Allen School Board Trustees for an awesome School District.

Education: Master of Engineering, Major in Digital Signal Processing at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, India
Bachelor of Engineering, Major in Electrical Engineering at Visvesvaraya College of Engineering, Bangalore, India

Occupation: Employed

Highlights of civic involvement/accomplishment:

- Member of Allen ISD Project Kids Committee 2020
- Member of SOAR 2030
- Member of Strategic planning committee Allen ISD in 2012
- Member of Allen Parks Foundation - Ambassador program
- Board of Director, Allen Sunrise Rotary Club
- Member of Capital improvement plan to improve Allen Library
- Member of Allen ISD Bond committee (SOAR) 2019
- Member of Citizen on Patrol (COP)
- Allen Rotary Christmas Parade and Rotary Flag Program
- DFW Hindu Temple
- DFW Vidya Vikas School
- The Bridge Homeless Recovery Center
- Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America
- Mallige Kannada Association of North Texas (MKANT)
- Feed My Starving Children
- Allen Recycle days
- BMW Dallas Marathon

Platform:

Education for the Future

Education is a complex human behavior. There are many facets and components involved in an individual to learn. The environment in which the students will work, live, and participate has been evolving, and forecasting future needs is a challenge. Education for Future-Ready Skills should enable students to excel in their lives. I will work to support education that is timeless and focus on Whole Child Development. 'Timeless Education' provides skills and ability to the next generation to apply in different environments and changes in life. Teachers and staff need to be trained to support transformative education. Education for the future includes the transformation of the system for learning and should not limit the learning to students only.



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Sathya Sastry

Transparency

The critical part of TRUST is transparency. Anything that is not explained well and disclosed to stakeholders will degenerate the trust developed over time. I will stand by TRUST. Every citizen in Allen is a stakeholder for AISD and has a right to be informed, notified, and provided details on the operations, financials, future plans, and proposals. It is necessary to have public sessions to educate and explain the details. As an Allen ISD board trustee, I will work to establish programs to improve transparency through information sessions to the public. We have seen other ISDs financially struggling, cutting essential spending. The Fund reserve for school is very important. Funds for teachers, staff, and supplies for educating students are essential part of this reserve. I will work with the budget team to increase this reserve year over year without an increase in tax rates.

Overall Student development

The Graduate Profile guides student education in Allen. I was part of the team that defined Allen Vision, Mission, and Graduate profile during the 2012 strategic planning meeting. Students are enabled to be academically prepared for college. Empowered Learning to include College, Career, Military Readiness (CCMR) for every graduating student. My priority will be to guide these programs to create opportunities for students to be responsible citizens.

Improved Learning Environment

The learning environment has to be free from distractions and external stress for students, teachers, and staff. Keeping school children and staff safe is "NON-NEGOTIABLE" and is one of the highest priorities. Proactively identifying and stopping violence is key. Teachers, Staff, School infrastructure and facilities are essential components of the learning environment. As an Allen ISD trustee, I will work to establish programs to improve our learning environment.

Teachers and Staff welfare

Teachers and staff are pillars of education. Dedication and sacrifice from teachers mostly go unpublished. The benefits to the teachers include training, healthcare, and dental. Allen ISD provides a clinic open to teachers and staff. As an AISD trustee, I will work to initiate programs that enhance welfare to be an attraction for future teachers and staff.

Lower Tax Rates

Allen ISD is continuously striving to bring down the tax rates. Property values are increasing and that causes us to give back to the state increased property tax. As a strong advocate for better school finances, I will work on liaising with our lawmakers to revise the school funding mechanism so as to provide tax relief while preserving the high quality of education in our district.

CANDIDATE SATHYA SASTRY DID NOT RESPOND TO GALA'S CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE.

PLACE 3

KEVIN CAMERON



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Website: -

Facebook: -

TRUSTEE CAMERON IS RUNNING UNOPPOSED.

Kevin Cameron was appointed and sworn into the Allen ISD Board of Trustees – Place 3 on August 26, 2019. He graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 1994. He has worked for the City of Allen as an IT Project Manager since 2012. Allen residents since 1999, Kevin and his wife, Shelley have been engaged in Allen schools since their triplet sons (Class of 2020) and daughter (Class of 2024) started Kindergarten.

Kevin is a 2019 Allen ISD Leadership Academy graduate and has served as PTA President, Allen Council of PTA Board Legislative Chair, WatchDOGS Coordinator, Project Kids Team Member, Tennis Booster Club President and Secretary. Kevin also serves as Membership Chair for the Texas Association of Governmental Information Technology Managers (TAGITM).

PLACE 7

VATSA RAMANATHAN



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Website: -

Facebook: -

TRUSTEE RAMANATHAN IS RUNNING UNOPPOSED.

Srivatsa (Vatsa) Ramanathan was appointed and sworn into the Allen ISD Board of Trustees – Place 7 – in June 2017. He was elected to the seat in May 2018. Ramanathan graduated from Sri Jayachamarajendra College of Engineering, Mysore, India with a Bachelor of Engineering Degree in Computer Science in 1992. He works for Fujitsu Network Communications in Richardson since 1998. Ramanathan has been a resident of Allen since 1999. Vatsa and his wife, Shubha Srivatsa have two daughters.

He is a graduate of the 2010 Leadership Allen class and serves on a variety of community boards and organizations including: Vice president of Allen Parks Foundation; Board member of Allen Public Library and the Friends of the Library Endowment Fund; the Allen USA Celebration advisory committee; the Public Safety Capital Improvement Project Committee for the City of Allen; and the Allen Sunrise Rotary Club.

In the schools, he has served as a member of the Allen ISD Strategic Planning committee and Allen ISD's Project Kids. He is president of the Mallige Kannada Association of North Texas, serves on the board of trustees for the Sri Sharada School in Mysore, India and he runs the Rivercrest Private School in Allen.