

# **Dena Dixon**

## **How long have you lived in Prosper?**

20 years

## **Do you currently have children attending Prosper ISD schools?**

Not currently. My youngest child graduated from PHS in 2021, and hope to one day have grandchildren in PISD!

## **Do you have children who graduated from Prosper ISD?**

Yes, I have had four children in PISD, two of whom attended K-12

## **What is your history of involvement in the district/community?**

We moved to Prosper in 2003 with our four children and had children in the district for 18 years. I have been a youth coach, classroom volunteer at several campuses, class representative and board member for three high school booster clubs, as well as a PISD substitute teacher. I have also supported and volunteered for many of the benevolence organizations that benefit the families of our community and school district, such as Bed Start, Prosper Ladies Association and Cornerstone. I am also a Youth Mentor for the Prosper Young Ladies Association, a service league for our PISD high schoolers. I helped with the initial PISD Bond in 2007 and also supported the PISD Bond of 2019. I have taught preschool in Prosper and volunteer in the Children's Ministry of our church's Prosper Campus. Currently, I am serving my first term on our school board and serve on the Legislative Advocacy, Zoning, Finance, and Connections subcommittees, with over 80 hours of training and continuing education. The experience and relationships I have built over the years with families and staff of PISD and Town and local leadership are instrumental in meeting the needs of our families and maintaining effective communication and a beneficial working relationship.

## **Why are you running for school board?**

My decision to run for PISD School Board in 2020 did not come lightly. After much prayer and discussion, my family and I decided it was the time to serve in a greater capacity in the area I've been passionate about for many years – education. I've always worked behind the scenes from budgets, volunteering, coordinating projects to communication and now that my children are older, I feel such experience is vital to our district. It's not only the number of years that I've had children within PISD that sets me apart from other candidates, but more importantly the involvement and relationships I have cultivated over the past 20 years with families and staff of PISD and Town and local leadership that are instrumental in maintaining effective communication and strategies to best serve the needs of our growing district. The past two and

half years serving on our board have been some of the most challenging years in our educational history and some of the most heartbreaking locally. I feel even more strongly now that my experience in our district and community is imperative and necessary to unite our district's history with our future endeavors to keep Prosper ISD among the top districts in the state.

**In your opinion, what is the most important decision facing the district today? How would you address it?**

I think there are many challenges to consider with the rapid and continuous growth of our district: construction of new schools, hiring and retaining great teachers and staff, rezoning, capacity and safety concerns, maintaining a focus on a positive school climate, staying up to date with innovative, yet appropriate, curriculum and academic programs and of course, funding. It is important for board members to ensure the leaders within the district are equipped in every way possible to ensure our teachers and students can be successful. I want to partner with current board members to make policy decisions that are in the best interest of all students, commit to develop the "whole child" through the promotion of programs that enrich every student's education, help create a culture of respect and kindness among students, and continue to develop vital relationships to serve as an advocate at the local and state level for public education.

**Prosper is one of the fastest-growing districts in the state and nation. What is the best way to address that growth and how do we fund the needed buildings to accommodate students?**

Prosper ISD has shown fiscal responsibility both in management of the Maintenance and Operations budget as well as the Interest and Sinking Funds budget. They have successfully continued to not only meet the needs of our students during a time of unprecedented growth but have remained committed to creating a first-class learning environment for our students, as evidenced by all the campuses we are building each year. Despite continued challenges with state funding, Prosper ISD has prioritized funds to support the instructional needs of all students and has also maintained competitive salaries to attract the best teachers and staff to effectively staff all campuses. Additionally, Prosper ISD is rare among districts by prioritizing student safety and security within the budget by having a police officer on every campus. We live in an outstanding community that overwhelmingly supported and passed the 2019 Bond that enabled us to build new schools at the rate that we have, including two new elementaries, an Early Childhood Center and our third high school opening next year.





