



Eanes ISD Board Of Trustees Voter Guide

presented by EANES *for* EQUITY

May 2025
Local Election

Eanes for Equity is proud to present our 2025 Eanes ISD Board of Trustees Candidate Voter Guide. We thank the candidates who welcomed the opportunity to answer four equity-related questions from our community. Our goal is to ask timely questions that will help our community make well-informed decisions. In this upcoming election two seats are on the ballot:

- **Place 6 candidates are Heather Sheffield (incumbent) and Catherine Walker.**
- **Place 7 candidates are Robert Morrow and John Troy (Ellen Balthazar did not seek re-election).**

The candidates' answers are unedited, and we encourage our readers to do their own due diligence as candidate claims have not been independently verified. In addition to utilizing E4E's Voter Guide, we encourage you to seek out other voter guides, candidate forums, and meeting opportunities. The last page of Voter Guide contains links to candidate campaign pages and voting information.



Heather Sheffield
Place 6



Catherine Walker
Place 6



John Troy
Place 7

Candidate did not
respond to this
year's request to
participate

Robert Morrow
Place 7

This election is unique as all four candidates have run for Eanes ISD Board of Trustees in prior elections: Catherine Walker in 2024, Robert Morrow in 2024 & 2023, Heather Sheffield in 2022 & 2019 (elected), and John Troy in 2020. You may view past voter guides here: eanes4equity.org/voter-guide

Early Voting
April 22 - April 29, 2025

Election Day
Saturday, May 3, 2025

Eanes for Equity is a parent-led 501(c)(3) non-profit community organization, independent of Eanes ISD. As such, our organization does not endorse candidates. Please see eanes4equity.org for more information.

Our Vision: Where we want to go

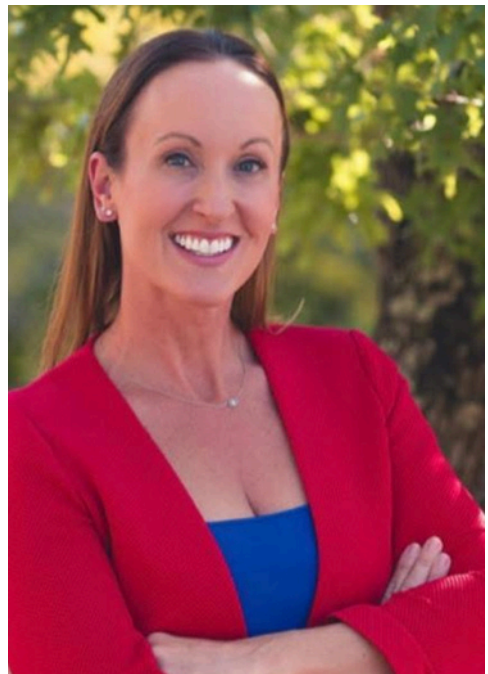
We envision an equitable Eanes ISD community where everyone can reach their full potential in the district and beyond.

Our Mission: How we work to get there

We foster equity through community conversations that create belonging. We celebrate our diversity, build connections, interrupt injustice, & collaborate with students, families, EISD staff, & School Board.

Q1

What have you done within the last 6 months to support Eanes (a) students and (b) staff?



**Heather
Sheffield**
Place 6

Throughout my nearly six years on the EISD School Board—I’ve remained committed to supporting our students, staff, and community. I currently serve as board liaison on the Long-Range Facility Planning and Legislative Committees, helping guide strategic decisions and advocate for our district’s needs. I regularly visit classrooms and attend sporting events, fine arts performances, special education events, and student competitions. I show up not only to support, but to understand our programs—because to keep them among the best, we must know how they serve students. I listen to and learn from teachers, staff, cafeteria workers, parents, and community members. I also collaborate with trustees, superintendents, and educators across Texas to bring back best practices. These conversations help me make informed decisions that reflect both our community’s values and the evolving needs of public education. As a Rotarian, I’m proud to help honor our educators by presenting monthly checks to our Educators of the Month—a small gesture of appreciation for their big impact. And as a WHS JV baseball mom, you’ll often find me working the concession stand and cheering at Woerner Field.



**Catherine
Walker**
Place 6

As a parent of two students in elementary school and one student in middle school, I’ve spent the last six months listening, learning, and advocating for both students and staff. I’ve met with teachers, attended school board meetings, and studied budget documents to understand the challenges we face. I’ve heard concerns about class sizes, planning time, and professional support. I’ve also spoken with parents across the district—many with students in specialized programs—to understand how we can better serve every child. I’m running to bring fiscal discipline that prioritizes what happens in the classroom, not overhead. I believe we can reduce waste and redirect those dollars to teacher pay, student programs, and academic resources that directly benefit our educators and kids. My campaign has already helped raise awareness about financial decisions that impact teachers and students, and I’ll continue advocating for smarter investments in their success.



John Troy
Place 7

Over the past six months, I’ve been deeply involved in supporting both students and staff across Eanes ISD. At the campus level, I’ve regularly volunteered in the Barton Creek Elementary library and at our recent Book Fair, working directly with students and our librarian. At the district level, I serve on the Executive Committee of the Eanes Education Foundation Board, helping to raise critical funds to retain high-quality teachers and staff—one of the most important factors in student success.

I also worked to support the district’s Spanish Immersion program by securing \$915,000 in pledged donations from nearly 300 families in order to offset short-term costs while we pursued a long-term funding solution. While the board ultimately chose to end the program, our effort was driven by a commitment to keeping valuable educational opportunities available to Eanes students, while also doing our part to help address the district’s budget challenges.

I am deeply committed to our district and have been actively involved since my oldest daughter started kindergarten. I look forward to continuing to support the students and staff of Eanes ISD for years to come.

Q2

Educational equity means that every child receives what they need to develop their full academic and social potential. From your perspective, what key factors currently limit students from achieving their full potential in Eanes?



**Heather
Sheffield**
Place 6

While Eanes benefits from strong academic and athletic performance and an engaged community, students still face challenges—especially around mental health, driven by high expectations and pressure to excel. Early identification and support for diverse learners, particularly those needing special education services, is critical. A whole-child approach that prioritizes wellness alongside academics helps us support mental health and guide students toward discovering their passions and pursuing personalized pathways to success. I’ve championed earlier interventions and helped expand our team of mental health counselors to ensure students have access to needed support. We’ve also grown the TLC program, but more work remains. We must expand post-secondary and career pathways for ALL students. While Westlake excels in AP, I’ve consistently pushed to grow dual credit and Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs that provide hands-on, relevant experiences. Now more than ever, we need experienced leadership that understands our strengths and challenges—and can move us forward with innovation and fiscal responsibility. I remain committed to building on this progress.



**Catherine
Walker**
Place 6

Eanes has many strengths, but we must be honest about where we’re falling short. First, our teacher turnover is double the national average. When we lose experienced educators, it affects every student’s learning. Second, we’ve seen academic declines—SAT scores are down 100 points over five years and nearly 30% of third graders aren’t meeting math grade level goals. These trends show we need to strengthen early intervention, retain great teachers, and ensure we’re supporting all learners, including those who need more time or different approaches. Educational equity also means making sure every student feels seen and supported—whether in a general ed, special ed, or advanced program. That means improving communication, better training, and consistent expectations across schools. Eanes is a high-performing district, but our responsibility is to help every student reach their full potential, not just those already thriving. I’m committed to ensuring our schools deliver on that promise.



John Troy
Place 7

I believe an excellent education expands opportunities, unlocks potential, and empowers children to pursue successful lives of their own choosing. This process hinges, however, on recognizing the unique needs of each student and striving to meet them. We must ensure that all students — regardless of any factor — feel supported, challenged, valued, and respected as a member of the Eanes community. Mental health is a critical part of this process as well. As pressures on students grow, we must ensure they have the resources and support needed to thrive academically and socially.

Additionally, great teachers are the foundation of student success, and we must continue prioritizing both competitive pay and a supportive teaching environment in order to improve recruitment and retention efforts, especially given that Austin’s high cost of living means many of our teachers and staff are commuting further and further to work in our district. By fostering strong relationships between educators, families, and the community, we can create an environment where every student has the opportunity to excel.

Q3

At the state and national level, uncertainty about education funding including special education programs has caused concern. How will you protect Eanes students in special education programs?



**Heather
Sheffield**
Place 6

As a trustee and former member of the Special Education Parent Working Group, I strongly believe in inclusive practices, well-supported staff, and ongoing collaboration with families to help every student thrive. I'm deeply committed to protecting and strengthening special education. I've advocated at the state and federal levels for sustainable funding and for protecting the rights of students and families under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Despite ongoing threats to the Department of Education, I remain focused on keeping special education a district priority. I've been closely involved with the Texas Education Agency and State Board of Education, giving me a strong understanding of the systems and policies that shape service delivery. I regularly engage with legislators and collaborate with other districts to amplify our collective voice. I will continue to prioritize student needs while actively pursuing additional staff, training and resources through grants and partnerships to enhance programs and services. We've come too far and worked too hard to go back now.



**Catherine
Walker**
Place 6

I am deeply committed to advocating for students in special education—this is personal to me as a parent of three children with dyslexia, two of whom have bilateral hearing loss and wear hearing aids. As a CFO, I care about where our money goes. For example: this year, plant maintenance and operations expenses are likely to exceed \$11 million—\$750,000 more than initially budgeted. Yet this spending doesn't fund instruction, teacher resources, or curriculum. At the same time, families face delays, inconsistent support, or unclear communication. That's not acceptable. My approach is threefold: First, bring greater accountability to how special education funds are spent—ensuring dollars go to the classroom, not overhead. Second, ensure students make academic progress. If they aren't, we must reassess and adjust. Kids can't spend year over year in a curriculum that doesn't meet their learning needs. Third, advocate for stronger partnerships with teachers and families so students get the support they deserve. That means timely evaluations, staffing stability, and that educators have the tools and training to succeed. I'll work hard to ensure every student has an opportunity to thrive.



John Troy
Place 7

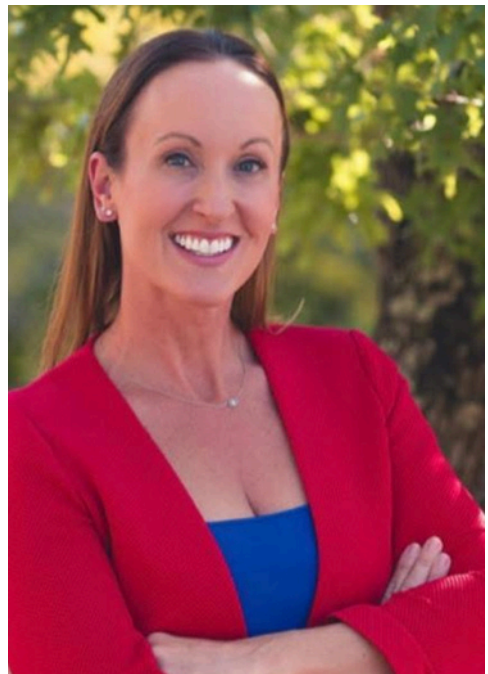
As a parent of three children, two of whom have IEPs and receive special education services, I have seen the impact that strong special education programs have firsthand. Every student deserves the resources and support necessary to reach their full potential, and we must remain steadfast in prioritizing special education—especially in the face of funding uncertainties.

This means not only advocating for sufficient funding but also ensuring that we allocate our resources wisely to protect these vital programs. When necessary, we should explore efficiencies elsewhere and collaborate with community partners to supplement support. Likewise, we must invest in our special education staff by providing the training, tools, and resources they need to serve students effectively.

Equally critical is strong communication and collaboration between families and educators. Parents know their children best, and working together with teachers and specialists ensures that every student's unique needs are met. By keeping special education a priority, we can uphold our commitment to serving all students, regardless of their individual needs, and create an environment where every child can thrive.

Q4

When disagreements arise - whether with board members, district administration, parents, or various segments of the Eanes community – how do you approach and navigate these disagreements? Please describe your strategies for engaging in constructive dialogue and finding a path forward.



**Heather
Sheffield**
Place 6

I understand our district is entrusted with the community's most valued assets—our children and tax dollars. With that responsibility, I believe it's essential to prioritize what's best for both students and staff. Even when perspectives differ, we can often find common ground by refocusing on student well-being and academic growth. I prioritize respectful, transparent communication—listening carefully, engaging in honest dialogue, and encouraging civil discourse, even when conversations are challenging. I avoid personal attacks or inflammatory language and work to keep discussions constructive and forward-looking. I rely on objective data and evidence-based practices—not just personal opinion—to guide thoughtful, effective decisions. I also believe in following board policies and procedures, which help ensure discussions remain structured, fair, and grounded in good governance. Ultimately, my goal is to foster an environment where every voice is heard, differences are respected, and we move forward together with a shared commitment to the success of every student in Eanes ISD.



**Catherine
Walker**
Place 6

I believe disagreement can be productive—if we are transparent and listen with respect and engage with openness. I believe in solving problems, and the first step is seeking to understand. That means asking questions, listening to different perspectives, and finding areas of common ground. I've led many diverse teams in my 25 year career, and now as a CFO, often balancing competing interests to reach consensus. I use that same approach in our community. Eanes is made up of passionate, caring people who want the best for kids—even if we disagree on how to get there. I will always bring transparency, civility, and data to the table. When there's tension, I'll stay focused on what's best for students and committed to working collaboratively. We don't move forward by drawing lines—we move forward by building bridges. That's the kind of leadership I'll bring to our board.



John Troy
Place 7

As a dad of three, a small business owner, and a longtime resident of this district for 11 years, I know firsthand that strong communities are built on open, respectful dialogue—even when we don't see eye to eye. In both my business and personal life, I've learned that the best way to navigate disagreements is to listen first. Understanding different perspectives, asking thoughtful questions, and ensuring people feel heard creates a foundation for meaningful conversation and problem-solving.

When making decisions, I focus on facts, transparency, and, most importantly, what is best for our students. Not every issue will result in unanimous agreement, but we can still approach discussions with respect and a shared commitment to our schools. As a board member, I would take that responsibility seriously—setting a positive example, fostering collaboration, and working toward solutions that strengthen our district for all families.

Voting Resources



Ballot Information

Eanes ISD Trustee Board Election
www.eanesisd.net/board/election

For your custom ballot & voter guide
vote411.org

When & Where to Vote

Last Day to Register: April 6, 2025

Early Voting: April 22 - Apr 29, 2025

Election Day: Saturday, May 3, 2025

Election Day Locations:
www.votetravis.com

Candidate Websites

Place 6

Heather Sheffield
<https://heatherforeanes.com>

Catherine Walker
<https://www.catherinewalkerforeanes.com>

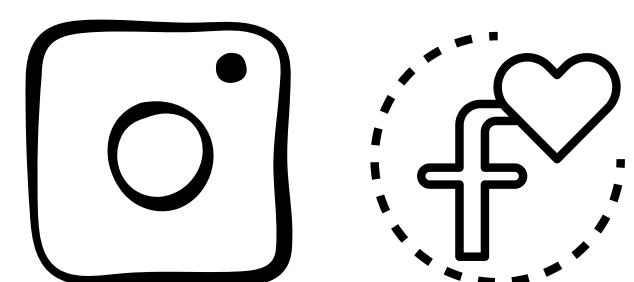
Place 7

John Troy
<https://www.johntroy.org>

Robert Morrow

Eanes for Equity is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Please consider donating to support our community efforts (like this voter guide), checking out our events, signing up for our newsletter, following us on social media, and sharing with your friends.

We appreciate your support!



www.betterunite.com/e4e2025

www.eanes4equity.org

@eanes4equity