

Why are you interested in serving on the Pell City Board of Education?	<p>I have had 5 kids in the Pell City Schools for 12 years and still have 2 in the system. I have been involved as a parent, volunteer, substitute and friend of many system employees over the years. I am very passionate about the schools here and especially the employees and students.</p> <p>In addition, I have taught college and graduate classes and I love education and teaching, myself. My law practice through the years also involved me in the education system through my work as a Guardian Ad Litem and representing students and their parents. In my current role as Director of Operations for a multi-state practice law firm, I manage a budget, human resources, legal and client compliance and physical facilities for my employer.</p> <p>I feel like I am uniquely suited to represent the students, parents and citizens of Pell City as someone who has seen the Pell City School System from all angles, someone who has the education and background to understand the law and procedures pertaining to the Alabama education system and someone who knows their way around a budget, facilities and HR issues.</p> <p>I would like to apply this knowledge, experience and passion to the task of making the Pell City School System one of the best systems in the nation and making our schools the best they can possibly be.</p>
List your prior involvement in the Pell City School System or other public or private school systems.	<p>I have 5 children, all of whom have attended Pell City Schools since 2013.</p> <p>I have volunteered to clean and perform maintenance on the Eden Elementary School playground and I have also performed work as a volunteer substitute teacher to assist teachers at Eden to attend funerals, special meals and the like.</p> <p>In the city of Birmingham, I volunteered in yearly clean-up efforts at various schools.</p> <p>I also served as the Director of my former church's private cover school from 2006-2009.</p>
Potential conflicts (Check all that apply. Does not disqualify from service)-I have children or relatives enrolled in the system.	<p>yes</p>
Potential conflicts (Check all that apply. Does not disqualify from service)-I have relatives employed by the system.	<p>yes</p>
Potential conflicts (Check all that apply. Does not disqualify from service)-I provide services or conduct business with the system.	<p>no</p>
Disclose any other potential conflicts that may arise during your service.	<p>The only conflict I can anticipate is that my wife works in the system and I have kids in the system but if any matter arose involving either my wife or my kids, I would obviously recuse myself of any official act or duty involving one of them (or any other conflict).</p> <p>Fortunately, as an attorney, I am accustomed to maintaining client confidentiality and I have no problems keeping information to myself and not disclosing it to even my wife if it is confidential or proprietary information. And prior to becoming an attorney, I did work for both a security contractor and later for the US Congress where I was required to sign NDA's. In the case of my security contractor work, I was required to sign a 25 year NDA that did not expire until 2020, which I steadfastly adhered to.</p>

What strengths, abilities, education, or experiences uniquely qualify you to serve? Include any significant contributions to Pell City and/or the community at large.

I have a law degree and have worked with education-related issues throughout my legal career, serving as a GAL, representing children in Family Court and in expulsion appeal hearings. I have taught college and graduate classes in criminal justice, criminology, business law, legal technology and healthcare law and I absolutely love teaching and every component of the education system.

During my time teaching criminal justice and criminology, I studied school violence and mass shootings and I have become very knowledgeable and passionate about the ways that systems approach the safety and security of their schools, staff and students.

In my current role as Director of Operations for a multi-state law firm, I have experience managing a budget, implementing major projects, managing facilities and I deal with Human Resources issues daily as that is one of my key areas of responsibility in addition to regulatory and client compliance and auditing.

In addition to my work experience, I have worked extensively with young people and schools both through my law practice and civic or church activities. For instance, during my time in criminal practice, I visited schools, churches and youth groups and talked to students and young people about avoiding trouble with the law, offered advice about common pitfalls I saw with young people such as "constructive possession" and how sometimes just being present with others engaged in criminal activity could cause them trouble.

I also had a fairly extensive "pro bono" practice during my time in solo practice and provided free or low-cost legal services to those involved in custody, family court proceedings, landlord/tenant and consumer contract disputes.

In Pell City, I have volunteered in and around the school system since 2015. When my daughter was in the debate program at PCHS, I volunteered to help with debate prep and practice and attended debate practices with the team to offer advice and participate in mock debates. I have volunteered with the "Reality Check" life skills program to help prepare students for the real world and I've also worked with Eden Elementary PTO on Eden's Field Day games, repainting the playground equipment and I've served as a volunteer substitute during times when many of the teachers and staff wanted to attend a funeral or to provide a special lunch for the staff.

In conclusion, I feel that my legal education, experience managing a business and dealing with budgets and HR issues, experience teaching and working in education and volunteering with schools and kids meshes quite well with my passion for education, kids, teachers and efficiency at all levels. I believe that any time you can find a meeting point between education, experience and passion in a person, you will find someone poised and ready to do great things.

What goals should the Pell City Board of Education prioritize over the next 3-5 years? Include things you think Pell City Schools are doing well and should be supported, and things you would seek to improve.

I believe the facilities upgrades over the last several years are one area that has gone really well and I think PCSS now has some top-tier schools and facilities. As the saying goes, however, if you're not running, you're standing still so I'd like to see this inertia continue into the future.

One thing with regard to facilities that I would like to improve that I alluded to above in the strengths and experiences section is the physical security aspect. While studying school shootings as an associate professor in criminology, I became indoctrinated in the best practices of school safety and I have noticed that some of the schools in our system could use some security upgrades. Eden, for instance, received new interior doors recently and they feature glass panels right next to the door handle that could be broken out and the door unlocked. I believe there are a number of upgrades that we could discuss with the PCPD and SCCSO in order to make the schools safer for the staff and students.

Another area that I think PCSS does really well but maybe also has some blindspots is with HR. Pell City Schools has some wonderfully engaged, hardworking, highly talented teachers on its staff. But I have both observed and been told by numerous teachers and admins that there is the occasional example of a faculty member who isn't working hard or performing well and often they either "fly under the radar" or are simply allowed to remain in place (or worse, sometimes just simply moved to another position). With my experience working in the sector and managing HR and compliance for my firm, I believe strongly in ensuring that everyone is pulling their weight. When inefficiency and non-performance is allowed to go unchecked, it not only hurts the students in that teacher's class, it also hurts the morale of the entire organization as the high performers have to sit and watch as someone is allowed to do less work than they do while not being addressed. That can become very toxic to the organization as a whole. I would like to see administrators and department heads empowered to address non-performance in a purposeful and productive way, ideally, that is consistent across all schools and departments.

APPLICANT RESUMES ARE WELCOME BUT NOT REQUIRED

The Pell City Board of Education Steering Committee will review resumes submitted with a candidate's application packet. Please attach resumes as PDF documents when submitting this application.

ATTACH RESUME

SIGNATURE

My signature below indicates I have read School Boards & Superintendents Roles & Responsibilities and I understand and am willing to assume the responsibilities of Board Member on the Pell City Board of Education. All personal and professional information provided herein is accurate to the best of my ability. I hereby authorize the City of Pell City to conduct investigation into my background and experience as deemed necessary for the purposes of evaluating my qualification for the position I am applying for, including contacting my employer and listed references.

Electronic signature



Date

03/11/2025

