

Dr. Angela Dominguez, Superintendent

Donna Independent School District, Donna, Texas

INTRODUCTION

Education & Experience

Dr. Angela Dominguez is a dedicated and accomplished educational leader with 29 years of experience in Texas public education. She holds a Doctor of Education in the Cooperative Superintendency Program from The University of Texas at Austin, a Master's in Educational Leadership from Texas A&M Kingsville, and a Bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College.

She has served in a variety of leadership roles including superintendent, deputy superintendent, assistant superintendent, chief of schools, executive director, and campus principal, bringing a comprehensive understanding of both instructional leadership and district operations.

Since being named superintendent of Donna ISD in 2021, the first female superintendent in the district's 100 plus year history, Dr. Dominguez has led with a bold, student centered vision grounded in a five year strategic plan and the district's Number One Student Outcome. This outcome ensures every student graduates on time, prepared for college, career, or military service.

Outstanding Achievements

Student Outcomes and Academic Growth

Under Dr. Dominguez's leadership, Donna ISD has demonstrated significant academic progress and measurable student success:

- District performance increased from the 19th percentile in 2021 to the 72nd percentile in 2024
- Graduation rate reached 96 percent in 2022 to 2023
- College, Career, and Military Readiness increased from 61 percent to 90 percent
- TSI and college readiness indicators improved from 8 percent to 55 percent

These gains reflect a focused, systemwide approach to instruction, intervention, and student support.

Early Childhood Expansion and Family Support

A cornerstone of her leadership is the expansion of early childhood opportunities through partnerships with Hidalgo County Head Start and Early Head Start. These programs provide access beginning as early as six weeks old and include wraparound services such as health screenings, nutrition, and family support.

This work ensures students enter school ready to learn while strengthening support systems for families across the community.

Innovative Schools and Student Centered Design

Dr. Dominguez has led the development of innovative, choice based campuses aligned to student interests and community input, including:

- Discovery Academies including Rivas Primary and Caceres Intermediate
- Fine Arts Academy at Adame
- Science and Sports Academies at Ochoa and Stainke

These schools provide engaging, specialized learning environments that increase enrollment, improve engagement, and support academic achievement.

Career and Technical Education Expansion

Donna ISD has expanded pathways to workforce readiness through:

- 21 programs of study
- 33 industry certifications
- More than 3,400 certifications earned since 2021
- Launch of an 18 plus program designed to support workforce readiness for diverse learners

Students benefit from structured pathways, real world experiences, and alignment to regional workforce needs.

Governance, Finance, and Operational Excellence

Dr. Dominguez has strengthened district operations and governance through:

- A perfect score of 100 on the FIRST financial accountability rating for multiple consecutive years
- Passage of a 120 million dollar bond in 2023, the largest in district history
- Strategic use of ESSER funds to modernize infrastructure and technology
- Increased average daily attendance and improved operational efficiency

She works closely with the Donna ISD Board of Trustees, recognized as the 2024 TASA Outstanding School Board of the Year, to ensure alignment and accountability.

Recognition and Leadership

Dr. Dominguez has received numerous recognitions, including:

- Region One Superintendent of the Year
- Superintendent to Watch by the National School Public Relations Association for 2024 to 2025
- Graduate of the Holdsworth Leadership Program in 2024
- Friend of Education Award from the Texas State Teachers Association

She is an active presenter and thought leader at state and national conferences, sharing best practices in governance, bilingual education, leadership development, and school transformation.

AN INTERVIEW

Tell us about how you see today's superintendent.

Today's superintendent must be both a visionary and a systems leader. The role requires clarity of purpose and the ability to align every aspect of the organization, including instruction, operations, and community engagement, to a common goal. It also requires visibility and trust. Superintendents must be present in their schools and communities, listening to stakeholders and ensuring that decisions reflect the needs of students and families. Ultimately, the work is about building systems that produce consistent, high quality outcomes for all students.

What new understandings did you acquire after your first few years in the role?

One of the most important lessons I have learned is that clarity and alignment drive results. When a district has a clear strategic plan and every team understands how their work connects to student outcomes, progress accelerates. I have also learned that sustainable improvement requires strong systems, not isolated initiatives. By focusing on building systems that support instruction, student services, and family engagement, we have been able to create more consistent and measurable progress across the district.

Share an idea or practice that has been impactful in your district.

A key practice has been maintaining a relentless focus on our Number One Student Outcome and aligning all work to our five year strategic plan. This approach ensures that resources, decisions, and initiatives are focused and intentional. We have also prioritized building partnerships, whether through early childhood programs, workforce connections, or community engagement, because student success does not happen in isolation. When schools, families, and the community are aligned, outcomes improve.

Conclusion

Dr. Angela Dominguez is redefining what success looks like in public education through strategic alignment, innovative programming, and a relentless focus on student outcomes. Her leadership ensures that every student in Donna ISD is prepared to graduate on time and succeed in college, career, or military service.