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## VOTERS GUIDE

**Nonpartisan**

MAY 1, 2021, LOCAL ELECTION

FRISCO CITY COUNCIL & ISD

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Early voting: April 19-27

Election Day Polls: May 1 – 7 am to 7 pm

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### ABOUT THIS VOTERS GUIDE

This Voters Guide is published by the League of Women Voters of Collin County to help citizens prepare to cast an informed vote. The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

This guide is available online at [www.LWVCollin.org](http://www.LWVCollin.org), along with guides for other offices that include all or part of Collin County. Candidate responses for all races are also available at [www.VOTE411.org](http://www.VOTE411.org), where you can enter an address and view a personalized ballot with races specific to that address.

Questionnaires were sent to all candidates for each office, whether or not the race is contested. Candidate replies were subject to a character limit and are printed without editing or verification. If a candidate did not respond by the deadline, "No response received" is printed. Candidates were asked to avoid references to their opponents. Photos are included for candidates who provided them.

This Voters Guide is organized by office sought, with candidates listed in alphabetical order.

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<p>League of Women Voters is a Nonpartisan Organization The LWV never supports or opposes candidates for office or political parties, and any use of the League of Women Voters name in campaign advertising or literature has not been authorized by the League.</p>
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## Frisco City Council

3-year term, elected citywide. Must be at least 18 years old, a United States citizen, a qualified voter, and a resident of the city. The City Council establishes city policy through ordinances and resolutions.

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## Questions

**Strategic:** What actions should the City Council take to ensure a thriving community in the long-term?

**Economy:** What types of businesses would you like to attract to the city, if any, and what should be done to support existing businesses?

**Finance:** What would you like to change, if anything, about the city budget and taxation?

**Diversity:** What will you do to ensure that diverse populations feel welcome and safe in the city and have a voice in city government?

**Services:** What changes should be made, if any, to city services? What would it take to make these changes?

**Pandemic:** How should the City Council balance safety and the economy during the pandemic?

**Other issues:** What other important issues are facing the City Council, and how would you address them?

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## John Keating Frisco City Council, Place 1



**Education:** Senior Executives in State and Local Government, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University; Bachelor Degree, Mass Communication, Towson University; Associate Degree, Criminal Justice, Central Texas College.

**Experience:** Served on Frisco City Council since 2010; Frisco Chamber of Commerce "Leadership Frisco" program; Frisco "Citizen Police Academy;" Pepsi "Valor Leadership Award;" Congressman Sam Johnson's "Congressional Veteran Commendation;" US Army veteran.

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**Strategic:** I'm proud to provide leadership to Frisco City Council's Top Ten strategic goals for 2021. These goals are in addition to our core responsibilities including public safety, roads & infrastructure, and a low tax rate: Master Plan Grand Park; build a Performing Arts Center with community partners; develop a Reinvestment Strategy to maintain a vibrant city; Venture Capital Growth for new opportunities and innovation; World Cup 2026 in north Texas; Traffic Reinvestment; Trail Connectivity; Entertainment Districts; Bring Tourism Back; State Legislative Strategy as we advocate for our residents.

**Economy:** The Frisco success story is still being written! Frisco is about 70% built-out and growing exponentially. We've certainly become champions of public-private partnerships, and we've cracked the code for working with top global brands, resulting in significant private investment while minimizing our need to spend taxpayer dollars to attract world-class facilities, events, and destinations. Moving forward, I will continue to support innovative solutions and opportunities, such as a premium data center with secure transmission and storage capabilities.

**Finance:** I propose increasing the current Frisco Homestead Exemption from 10% to 20%. We know our property valuations will increase dramatically, given the demand for single-family homes in Frisco. Those who have made a long-term investment in Frisco with the purchase of a home will benefit, while we maintain our current tax rate. Commercial development, including apartments, will continue to pay their fair share. Frisco has demonstrated commercial incentives can translate into Homestead Exemptions for our citizens.

**Diversity:** Over the last ten years, Frisco has grown from a quiet ranch town to a city of thousands of young families. We have responded well, with parks, great schools, and dozens of businesses providing services to these new families. We also have thriving populations of retirees, empty nesters, and millennials. City leadership must remain focused on the needs and interests of all of those demographic clusters, while recognizing our growing cultural diversity. We must continue to provide relevant services, jobs, and consumer opportunities as we strive to be a vibrant community for all residents.

**Services:** Delivering efficient, effective and accountable city services is one of our top priorities, and services provided are driven by the needs of the citizens. Our goal is a safe and prepared community, with a sustainable and vibrant economy. City staff works to find a balance between services provided and citizen satisfaction with the service, so it's critical we attract and retain quality employees. Having met and worked with so many City of Frisco employees, I know we have the best staff anywhere. They are resourceful, innovative and dedicated stewards of our hard earned tax dollars.

**Pandemic:** I've always said Public Safety is our #1 priority, and this past year has taught us to expand our thinking to include public health. To date, Frisco has vaccinated about 46,000 residents! 2021 will be about returning to work, school, and enjoying social events as we return to "normal." I also look forward to welcoming back our nearly 6 million annual visitors, all with the confidence as one of the safest cities in America!

**Other issues:** Frisco must stand steadfast against reckless and irresponsible fiscal policies. Leaders at all levels of government must remain vigilant to preserve Texas' strong economy. The biggest threat to Frisco's success is inflated property taxes, loss of cohesion between the city, the school district, the business community and our neighborhoods. Using tax dollars to fund well-meaning projects like public transportation and public housing, add to our debt burden and lead to an unsustainable tax rate. We need to focus on small government, local control, and quality services -- needs not wants!

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**JP Schade**  
**Frisco City Council, Place 1**



**Education:** Bachelor of Science in Communication from Weber State University FAA Dispatcher Certificate, IFOD Dallas

**Experience:** Rotary Club of Columbus Indiana reporter/scribe, past chairman of LDS YSA Conference for Greater Chicago, financial/membership clerk Ogden 7th YSA Ward, local government news reporter and anchor for WRZQ 107.3 FM Columbus, Indiana

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**Strategic:** I want to focus on improving city mobility and recreation by continuing to expand the comprehensive trail system and make the city more bike friendly. If we are going to be a city that celebrates "Progress in Motion" we should look at opportunities for private investment and partnerships to attract mass transit solutions. Long-term financially, I believe we need to have a six month reserve for our rainy day fund. And I'd like to look long-term at the financial and standard of care benefit possibilities for having an occupational health and wellness clinic for the over 1,500 city employees.

**Economy:** I hope we target businesses that can fit and compliment the city's highly educated, disciplined and executive-oriented workforce. Health and Wellness, Medical Technology, Aerospace and Health Care are just a few of the sectors I'd like to see come to Frisco. Our existing companies play a crucial role in supporting the local economy and neighborhoods we live in. To support them as a city, I'm committed to maintaining the current

infrastructure(water, sewer, electricity)but also prepare for next generation broadband networks.

**Finance:** I am committed to continuing the reputation of Frisco as having some of the lowest property taxes in North Texas. But I am realistic that in order to to continue the level of customer service and quality for city employees and departments, we may need to look at a mechanism to marginally increase revenue, that may include legislative lobbying at a state level. I believe in lean government but I also believe in adequately funding city departments and giving first responders the tools they need. I'd also like for us as a city, when resources permit, to pay down existing debt.

**Diversity:** Since 2018, close to 30,000 new residents have moved into Frisco, bringing diverse cultural and religious heritage to enhance the quality of life within the city. With that rapid growth, many residents may look for connection to the city. One concept I can speak of is holding a multi-day event highlighting residents' global heritage through food, art and education. It could be a boon to downtown businesses. I also feel a mayoral or city council multi-faith board that meets quarterly could help improve interfaith relations and educate city leaders on what challenges their worshipers are facing

**Services:** Residential recycling is very popular with city residents, but introducing a commercial recycling option for business might be beneficial to look at. It could be one small way that we can reduce landfill usage plus reduce the hassle of a small business having to deal with the challenge of recycling. The new library is long overdue and I want to thank the voters of Frisco for collectively supporting the construction of it. The selection of books and resources is a little limited with the lack of space in the current library, but the new library construction will address that.

**Pandemic:** Continue to allow businesses the options to require masks to protect patrons and workers. Encourage people to support local restaurants through a concept called "Takeout Tuesday." Where the establishments could offer premium offerings for takeout at a value price. I can't wait till I get the COVID-19 vaccine. In my mind, for each person who gets that vaccine, it helps a business gain confidence for employees and the customers they serve. Residents have great ability to choose, but for me there is NO question that a safe and effective vaccine is one step in helping restore confidence.

**Other issues:** There is a strong possibility over the next couple of years, we will say goodbye to multiple members of our city management team to retirement. I want to be focused on find new administrators who have vision, fiscal discipline and collaboration. We need to review our emergency response plans and better prepare or future catastrophes whether they be man made or Mother Nature. And as a journalist by profession, I want to continue to improve our communication processes and be proactive with new ways to connect with our residents as city leaders.

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**Karen Cunningham**  
**Frisco City Council, Place 3**



**Education:** Bachelor Degree in Business, Northwestern State University, Natchitoches, LA

**Experience:** Business Owner/Human Resources Consultant since 2012 with 27 years experience in Human Resources; certified as a Senior Human Resources Professional (SPHR) and SHRM Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP)

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**Strategic:** The City of Frisco has reached 75% of its initial build out. Additionally, 97% of the land in Frisco has property zoning in place. The number of multi-family units zoned should be monitored continuously to find opportunities in which we can reduce or remove units from the plans. This should be a continuous and ongoing effort to find ways to reduce density where possible. Several new parks currently are in the concept or planning phases. We must ensure that these open spaces provide a variety of recreational experiences to meet our community's needs.

**Economy:** We need to continue to attract a wide variety of businesses to Frisco - commercial, retail, restaurants, entertainment venues and more. Available land up and down the North Dallas Tollway provides corporate development opportunities within our community that will increase the non-residential tax base and employment opportunities within our city. We must also continue to focus efforts on existing businesses to ensure owning a business in Frisco is economically advantageous for business owners. Working with the city to open a business in Frisco should be a smooth and efficient process as well.

**Finance:** The City of Frisco continues to maintain one of the lowest tax rates in our area at 0.4466. While I do not feel anything needs to be changed at this time, we need to continue to manage our budget conservatively, work to increase our non-residential tax base, properly fund Fire and Police to maintain strong public safety, and continue to explore additional opportunities for tax exemptions.

**Diversity:** Frisco is a very diverse community. Our residents represent a broad spectrum of racial, cultural, religious and other backgrounds. This richness of diversity should be both a

point of pride and an area of focus. Frisco's growth over the past 15 years from approximately 70,000 to over 200,000 residents, provides both an opportunity and responsibility to embrace our diverse community and work together to create a community for all. Many residents seek more active engagement within our community. Additional opportunities for residents to serve should be explored and implemented.

**Services:** Growth is a continuous process for individuals and entities. Frisco has grown significantly over the past 20 years. With that comes opportunities to develop and expand city services, review, update and create ordinances to address current needs, and identify opportunities to become more effective and efficient in our services and programs for residents and businesses. This isn't a one-time process but something that should always be a focus for city staff and elected city leaders. Continued discussions and considerations should be given to animal services and programs as well.

**Pandemic:** We need to continue to support local businesses and our economy by finding ways to keep businesses open while still protecting the residents of our community. For those who choose to participate, the Covid vaccine is becoming more readily available to residents each day. The City of Frisco's Covid vaccine operation is safe and efficient and is offering a solution to those who are eligible. The eligibility will continue to expand as the program continues.

**Other issues:** Accountability and transparency are baseline expectations of any local government. The City's residents entrust elected officials to serve in the residents' best interest. This public stewardship ensures that public funds are utilized responsibly on behalf of our residents while understanding that the foundation of the City's decision-making process is the betterment of our community as a whole.

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**Sai Krishna**  
**Frisco City Council, Place 3**



**Education:** Sai Krishna arrived in the United States in 2003 as a high school drop-out from India. With grit and ambition, started B.S. in Nursing from the California University of Pennsylvania in 2009 and later graduated with an MBA in Health Systems Management

**Experience:** My family built and donated a 100-bed maternity hospital in my hometown. My education, experience as a floor nurse, telephonic nurse, and case management nurse.

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**Strategic:** If we want to ensure a thriving community, we must always focus on creating common sense, community-oriented solutions that bring people together. To keep the community active and healthy, we can create more green spaces and develop new parks, trails, and courts. To keep our local businesses going and growing, we should invest in our small business owners and promote their work. We need to always emphasize modernization with city services and resources. We must be able to adapt with ease, and that requires long-term thinking and planning when considering any issue in the city.

**Economy:** I would like to explore the tourism business in Frisco, as well as look into bringing in more companies and jobs within city limits. Bringing more jobs into Frisco would definitely help our residents who still have long daily commutes. To support existing businesses, I plan to provide incentives for business owners through assistance and promotion. I want to increase entrepreneurship for small businesses, especially for those owned and operated by women. I'd like to encourage home-based businesses as well. Our economy should be a level playing field.

**Finance:** In my opinion, there are a lot of gray areas in the city budget that need addressing. There is a lot of unnecessary expenditure. We need to seriously emphasize cost analysis, and focus on appropriately distributing our money depending on the particular situation and need. No matter the amount, we should always use our money wisely, and put it towards the issues our residents face every day. I'd like to see more funds going towards developing natural, green spaces in Frisco, as well as creating mobile libraries for our residents.

**Diversity:** Frisco is a grand melting pot. We must be a city that is welcoming for everyone, where residents respect one another and our differences. Whether that be through the education children receive in school, training within businesses, or our own exploring with legislation - equality, respect, and care are must-haves. I will always listen to the people. I intend to conduct neighborhood coffee talks to check in with residents and hear from them directly about the issues and stories that matter most. Also, we must build fairness and trust and improve safety in community-police interactions.

**Services:** My focus is with modernization. I would emphasize cybersecurity and create a stronger integrated app for city services. To make these changes, we would need to explore our allocation of the budget for our city's digital landscape. We can focus on upgrading our services to make them as straightforward, effective, and convenient as possible. It is imperative that we are always up to date, integrating technology whenever it is possible.

**Pandemic:** Our economy can succeed, but safety-wise, we should still request people to do their part in wearing masks and socially distancing until a certain amount of our residents are vaccinated. Our vaccine rollout needs to be fast, convenient, and reliable, and we must make sure that our hospitals are never short on resources or personnel. Going forwards, we should create our own pandemic playbook. Our response this past year definitely could have been better, and with a thorough, detailed plan, it will be. We're so close to the finish line. Safety is key for our post-pandemic success as a city.

**Other issues:** Another important issue still facing the city is the closed, contaminated Exide Technologies battery recycling plant grounds. We should accelerate soil testing, follow the

proper cleaning guidelines, and work with the EPA and the CDC to seriously address an issue that's been overlooked and plaguing our city for far too long. I also see room for improvement with our air and ground transportation to emergency rooms. For this, we would need to look into our essential services, as well as focus on resolving our traffic concerns through city/school planning and infrastructure.

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**Angelia Pelham**  
**Frisco City Council, Place 3**



**Education:** B.S. Degree in Communication/Psychology from Florida State University, Tallahassee FL Masters Degree in Human Resources Management from Rollins College, Winter Park FL

**Experience:** I'm a 30-year corporate executive with Fortune 50 experience having held positions such as Director at Walt Disney World, Vice President at Frito-Lay and PepsiCo, Vice President at Main Event and Executive Vice President/Chief HR Officer at Cinemark

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**Strategic:** Success starts with vision. The goal of any leadership team is to cast a broad vision with a focus on strategic planning so citizens can understand the goals. Frisco's vision is to remain a vital, desirable, and resilient community. Our comprehensive plan for future development serves as a strategic outline for how the city will grow long-term, while creating a sense of place; driving strong economic growth; developing attractive entertainment options; building desirable neighborhoods as our community continues to grow.

**Economy:** Industry diversification is critical for sustained economic growth. While we continue to target Fortune 100 corporations; we must also invite mid-sized high-growth companies to the table as well. Revenue size is certainly important from a tax and economic perspective, but our primary goal must be to create more high-paying employment opportunities for our residents. Our economic development team has done well reaching the core leadership of large and small businesses, but also must now include their Human Resource department, as our future workforce demands have changed.

**Finance:** I'm proud of the work that our city staff has done in creating an operating budget linking city revenue and expenditures with the mission of the city, and in the best interest of the residents of Frisco. Our fiscally conservative approach during one of the most economically challenging years our country has faced allowed us to maintain our reserve balances at a level sufficient to preserve our financial positioning with little to no disruption in the operation of our city.

**Diversity:** Frisco has grown significantly over the years and our population demographics continue to become more diverse. Approximately 40% of our population is made up of people of color with Indian Americans and African Americans making up most of this segment. As a council member, I would be very intentional about reaching out to these groups to ensure we have incorporated their perspectives into city solutions through structured forums and an online Resident Engagement Survey.

**Services:** I believe Frisco provides public services to our residents in alignment with the mission of our city. While there will always be room for continuous improvement, I especially applaud our Frisco First Responders and their tireless efforts to keep our families, schools, businesses, and communities safe. As the saying goes, they run in when everyone else is running out!

**Pandemic:** Balancing safety while returning to our normal daily activities will take patience and careful planning. Frisco effectively administered 32,000 doses of the vaccine and will administer over 40,000 by the end of the month. As we continue to increase the vaccination rate and build herd immunity, we must continue to reopen our community with caution, while allowing our citizens and our business community to determine the best approach for themselves.

**Other issues:** One of our immediate challenges is to stimulate and restore economic growth through tourism, which suffered tremendously because of the COVID-19 shutdown. Tourism brought six million visitors to our city annually and contributed \$1.2 B to our economy. I will support a plan to revitalize Frisco's economic base through tourism to stimulate revenues resulting in job creation and growing small businesses.

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**Jennifer White**  
**Frisco City Council, Place 3**

No response received

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**Frisco ISD Board of Trustees**

3-year term, elected district wide. Must be at least 18 years old, a United States citizen, a qualified voter, and a resident of the District. The Board of Trustees makes all final decisions regarding school district priorities, policies, personnel, textbooks, expenditures, and growth management. Trustees adopt a budget, levy taxes, and submit bond issues to finance construction projects.

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## Question (Uncontested Races)

**Priorities:** Even though your race is not contested, please share your priorities for the next term and how you will address them.

## Questions (Contested Races)

**Motivation:** Why do you want to serve on the school board, and what qualities would you bring to this position?

**Finance:** What concerns do you have about the district's finances, and how would you address them?

**Goals:** What would you like to accomplish as a school district trustee?

**Teachers:** What should your district do to attract and retain good teachers?

**Diversity:** How would you help diverse populations in the school district reach their full potential? What initiatives should be implemented, if any, to address the needs of specific populations?

**Pandemic:** What will be your approach to ensure safe and effective learning in the district during the pandemic?

**Other issues:** What other important issues are facing the school district, and how would you address them?

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### John Classe Frisco ISD Trustee, Place 6 Uncontested



**Education:** BA Economics, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

**Experience:** A 20-year Frisco resident, I first joined the board of trustees in 2014 and was elected president by my colleagues in both 2017 and 2018. I am a graduate of Leadership Frisco Class XVI and a Leadership TASB Master Trustee.

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**Priorities:** Moving forward, our primary focus is recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In the post-vaccine world, it is imperative that we assess the effect this year has had on our students academically and continue to identify mental and emotional support needs for our staff and students. Resources allocated federally for pandemic recovery will be key. In order to keep pace with growth and continue enhancing student achievement, we remain focused on the 87th Texas Legislature now underway. We will continue to engage our legislative partners to build on the momentum generated in the previous session.

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**René Archambault**  
**Frisco ISD Trustee, Place 7**



**Education:** Southern Methodist University - Masters in Education, Education Policy and Leadership (2015) Texas Christian University - Bachelor's in Business Administration (1999)

**Experience:** Elected to FISD Board of Trustees in 2018 FISD Board VP (current) FISD Long Range Planning Committee FISD Insight Class of 2018 Frisco Education Foundation Advisory Board Frisco Council of PTA's Ambassador Member Frisco FastPacs Governing Board

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**Motivation:** Public Education is the great American equalizer. Over 90% of children are educated in public schools. In order for students, teachers, and staff to remain the focus of every decision, every initiative, and every priority, there is nothing more important than measured, experienced, non-political leadership on a public school board to help fulfill the mission and vision of a school district. I am running for re-election to the FISD Board to continue to bring these qualities to the board and to build upon the successes of our school district during my first term serving as a Trustee.

**Finance:** Frisco ISD is an incredibly well managed district. During my first term of service, the district achieved exceptional financial transparency ratings: FIRST rating of Superior Achievement, Transparency Star from the Comptroller, Standard & Poor's AA+ rating, Moody's Aa1 Rating, and was ranked a Five-Star TXSmartSchool. We also passed a TRE and Bond election in 2018, yielding the first overall tax rate reduction in 8 years (one of the lowest in N. Texas), which allowed us to expand student opportunities, lower class sizes, expand guidance and counseling, and put more funding into the classroom.

**Goals:** During my second term, my priorities will include the following: Covid-19 recovery (related to academics and mental health support), expansion in student opportunities and programming, keeping class sizes low while managing growth, teacher/staff support and retention, bond oversight, increasing resources for special education, maintaining the district's low tax rate and exceptional financial transparency/management ratings, the completion of the community based accountability system/strategic plan, and meaningful advocacy alongside our state legislators for the betterment of public education.

**Teachers:** Fisd has over 8,300 incredible teachers and staff members. Our goal is to provide the tools that they need to fulfill our mission to "know every child by name and need." We work to keep salaries and benefits competitive, and have made meaningful increases in these areas over the last 3 years. I have always voted to increase salaries (our last increase was 4.9%, the largest in 15 years), to provide retention/incentive bonuses, and supply stipends. I have also supported every measure to reduce class sizes and to hire testing coordinators and counselors so that teachers can focus on teaching.

**Diversity:** Fisd is proud of the diversity in our district. Equity, access, and representation for all students is crucial to our board. I have supported myriad initiatives that address cultural awareness, equity, training, and recruitment/retention of diverse staff members/teachers in my first term, and will continue to do so. Fisd created a diversity task force in '18 and hired our first DEI specialist in '20 to support the expansion of support systems and equitable instructional practices, and to ensure equitable access to a robust curriculum that supports the growth and development for all learners.

**Pandemic:** Our board has balanced staying future focused while working to solve the daily challenges that COVID-19 has presented. Quality student outcomes, and creating a safe and physically and mentally healthy environment for teachers, staff, and students remained our top priority. The next 3 years will present COVID-19 recovery related challenges with both academic progress and mental health support, and our board will need to balance these areas with both resource allocation and support as our staff continues to work on the individualized needs of each and every one of our learners. This is goal #1.

**Other issues:** Continuing to manage growth as we welcome thousands of new students per year is a priority. Since joining the board in '18, we have authorized projects (new campuses and specialized structures) in order to balance class size and expansion of student opportunity and programming. We've opened 4 new campuses in the last 3 years and have 3 campuses (2 high schools and 1 elementary school) in progress right now. We anticipate another 15k-20k learners joining us before we're at build out and we want every future student to have the same excellence in education that students have today in Frisco ISD.

**Evelyn Brooks**  
**Frisco ISD Trustee, Place 7**

No response received

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**Your vote is your voice. Be heard.**