



**VOTER GUIDE  
FRISCO ISD  
FALL, 2020**

**FRISCO ISD  
CANDIDATES  
NOVEMBER 3, 2020**

**PLACE 4**

Sean Heatley  
Muni Janagarajan  
Dynette A. Davis  
Amit Kalra

**PLACE 5**

Debbie Gillespie

GALA North Texas has prepared information for Candidate Forums by obtaining information from candidate websites, Facebook campaign and personal pages, press releases and news articles. GALA North Texas has used its best effort to ensure the accuracy of all information. For information about this document or to report an error or request a change, contact [dawna@galanorthtexas.org](mailto:dawna@galanorthtexas.org).

PLEASE NOTE: THE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE WAS PREPARED PRIOR TO THE JUNE DECISION OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH DETERMINED THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964, WHICH PROHIBITS SEX DISCRIMINATION APPLIES TO DISCRIMINATION BASE ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY. CANDIDATE ANSWERS WERE LEFT IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE AS THEY INCLUDED INSIGHT INTO THE CANDIDATE'S BELIEFS.



## **PLACE 4**

**AMIT KALRA**



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**Background:** Life has prepared me for this role. I believe that education is the backbone of any country as it shapes future citizens. I want my son to be in a continuous learning and engaging educational environment. As an actively engaged father of an elementary school child, I have seen the strengths and weaknesses of our education system from Early Child Intervention through elementary school. I am confident my unique educational training background across four countries brings an unseen outlook towards different educational methods inclusive of in-person and online education.

**Education:** Bachelor's in Physical Therapy, University of Delhi  
Master's in Health Administration, Cal State Northridge  
Pursuing a Doctorate Degree from A.T. Still University, AZ

**Occupation:** Licensed Physical Therapist

### **Highlights of civic involvement/accomplishment:**

My civic engagement has been ongoing for decades and is an eternal part of me. I feel empty when I am not engaged in a civic activity. It's an honor to moderate multiple groups online to assist multiple families here in Dallas to connect with each other for social engagement and cultural exchange for over 3 years. For over 10 years I have been assisting students in finding accommodation, mentoring, career guidance and providing volunteering opportunities. My selfless contributions as a physical therapist on the sports field is ongoing as sports physical therapy is my first love. I am an elected board member of my community HOA and serve as the communications director. I have been a part of volunteer food drives and community feeding events. My biggest accomplishment is every time I am able to bring a smile to someone's face. That smile gives me the encouragement to continue on and on with my civic engagement. I am a recipient of the Presidential Voluntary Service Award. I have been involved in the National and International Abilympics in India. I have volunteered in organizations to assist children with special needs and the elderly. My dedication to community service has never been defined to serve a post, display social media attention, or to lead to a certain position, but has always been to do my deeds and move on to the next one.

### **If elected, what two issues would you give the most attention and resources?**

Upon election to office, the two issues that I would give the most attention and resources to would be towards teacher empowerment and training to help eliminate any technical challenges that they may have. Our technical challenges that have been exposed by the pandemic have demonstrated the need for incorporating technical learning from the elementary level. Second, I will focus on the identification of each child's specific needs, including children with special needs in regard to the expansion of the early childhood intervention program through classroom integration, successful implementation of the pre-K program, and development of new alternates to STAAR testing. We want our children to be good learned students who will shape a better future for our society.

### **Have you attended any school board meetings? If so, what have you learned about how a board member can be effective?**

Yes, I have attended school board meetings. An efficient school board member listens, acknowledges, and understands the needs of the community. Decisions are made by following the voice of the community members and the staff. The background of the school board member also influences the decisions. With the changes in the population demographics, it is necessary for the school board member to interpret the communities' needs and to demonstrate the importance of continuation or modification of existing methods to impart the highest quality of education to its students, managing the budget, and improve areas of concerns.



## VOTER GUIDE FRISCO ISD FALL, 2020

**AMIT KALRA**

### **GALA CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

**What would you, as a School Board Member, do to educate yourself about the diverse community you serve, including the LGBTQ community? Do you consider it a priority to ensure that District employees receive diversity training which includes information regarding issues facing LGBTQ youth?**

I am a healthcare professional. I see everyone equal irrespective of their race, religion or gender orientation. I have grown up in a diverse environment in different parts of the world. I understand the limitations LGBTQ community faces through the problems of my colleagues and friends. The acceptance of the LGBTQ community is increasing decade after decade and that is truly from efforts of the LGBTQ community to fight for its integration into the society. Diversity training is important, and I support it. True diversity training starts from homes. When people start respecting every human the same way irrespective of their gender orientation and celebrate each other's happiness, we will achieve a true immersion of diversity.

**Currently there is no state or federal law that protects LGBTQ+ individuals from employment discrimination. How will you ensure District hiring, firing and promotions will be conducted without regard to sexual orientation and gender identity? Would you be supportive of adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the District's non-discrimination policy as it relates to hiring? Why or why not?**

Hiring, promotions and firing should be based on qualifications and I support it 100%. By listening to the concerns and observing patterns of hiring, promotions and firing I will be able to identify if any of those patterns exist. I will take strict measures against anyone that is found guilty of such practices. Yes, I would support adding sexual orientation to the District's nondiscrimination policy. Everyone has the right to their self-identity and that's why I would support it.

**Hate speech is not regulated in the U.S. and social media is a popular forum for this speech to flourish. What responsibility do schools and the district have in protecting students from the hate speech of other students and staff?**

Hate speech can destroy the confidence of an individual. I am surprised after so many incidences of suicide amongst youth hate speech has not been regulated on the social media. It shows the failure of our representatives promises irrespective which party they are from as these deaths are happening in red states and blue states. I believe schools and staff have the biggest role to play in stopping this behavior at its onset. A three-strike rule to teach a child right from wrong and to ensure strict measures are taken against a repeat offender. Hate originates from a false sense of superiority of oneself over others. To achieve sadistic pleasure that person instigates his insecurities by instigating hate against someone they feel is inferior to them. This behavior needs to be punished at its onset otherwise it spills in to the society, then community, then state and then at a national level.

**Schools that have implemented anti-bullying policies that are LGBTQ+ inclusive report fewer problems with school safety. Area districts that have implemented such programs include Dallas, Ft Worth, and Little Elm. Do you support amending district bullying policies to be LGBTQ+ inclusive? Why or why not?**

Bullying is bullying. It doesn't have to be LGBTQ inclusive. A bad behavior is a bad behavior irrespective of who does it. What I would like to add would be social media hate speech reporting tools. Facebook does a very poor job at controlling it and has a shotgun approach of blocking the person as the only option. I have tried reporting hate incidents on it and I have been disappointed by their response every time.

**Why should members of the LGBTQ community support your candidacy?**

I ask you for your trust. I am a physical therapist and have worked with people of all age groups. I even provide pro bono services. Initially I knew of LG when I came to the US in 2007. Then I learnt about LGBTQ. I have seen how this community has faced challenges, rejections, suppression, and isolation. But through this adversity they have risen and done parades and embraced themselves for who they are. There are so many LGBTQ healthcare workers that I have worked with and if you ask anyone of them anywhere about how I am, I can bet you that they will tell you that I treat everyone with respect and dignity. I am standing up as a parent and healthcare worker in this race. I have no party affiliation backing my cause, yet I stand because I know I am standing for what is right. If you feel connected to me through my thoughts, I ask you for your VOTE to be your Voice. Smile. Vote Amit. :)

**PLACE 4**

**MUNI JANAGARAJAN**



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**Facebook:** Muni for FISD

**Background:** I firmly believe education is a great equalizer. We are fortunate to be blessed with a great school system in Frisco ISD, and I am running to build upon the District's academic excellence by providing leadership in areas of fiscal discipline, transparency and accountability, safety and security measures, and as a strong advocate for parents, teachers' welfare and growth, bringing effective tax rate to lower our property taxes.

**Education:** Masters degree in Computer Science  
Certified Project Management Professional (PMP) from Project Management Institute (PMI)

**Occupation:** Information Technology Professional

**Highlights of civic involvement/accomplishment:**

- Frisco Family Services, Volunteer
- Samaritan Inn, Volunteer
- Frisco Fastpacs, Volunteer
- Director, Richwoods HOA Board

**Platform:**

**Financial Stewardship**

- Transparency of the check book.
- Establish a Bond Oversight Committee.
- Increased engagement with taxpayers.
- Analyze creative ways to reduce bond debt and negotiate better value from our vendors.

**Transparency and Accountability**

- Regular Town Halls to discuss issues such as the budget, district initiatives and concerns of FISD community.
- Make myself available and easy to contact for the public.
- Keep promises / Honor my contract with the FISD community.

**Campus Safety**

- Foolproof student security, expand WATCH DOGS programs, form a Safety committee, introduce Parent Handbook.
- Revamp internal school campus safety policies.
- Hire more school resource officers and counselors.

**Champion for Teachers**

- Institutionalize pay increase, enhance incentives, protect pension plans, and enhance maternity benefits.
- Support a pro-teacher agenda.
- Expand professional education opportunities for teachers.
- Tenure Bonuses to keep our great teachers and to show our gratitude for staying with FISD.

**CANDIDATE MUNI JANAGARAJAN DID NOT RESPOND TO GALA'S CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE.**

**PLACE 4**

**DYNETTE A. DAVIS**



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**Facebook:** Dynette A. Davis for Frisco ISD Trustee Place 4

**Background:** I decided to run for office, so that I can lend my experience as an educator, community leader and entrepreneur to Frisco ISD and our current board. Since relocating from Illinois to Frisco ISD in 2012, I have held several PTA board leadership positions and have celebrated accomplishments such as becoming a Texas PTA Lifetime Member in 2019.

**Education:** Ed.D, Higher Education, Concordia University, Chicago, Illinois, 2021  
Certificate, Womens's Entrepreneurship, Cornell University, 2019  
M.Ed., Curriculum and Instruction, Concordia University, Chicago, Illinois, 2012  
B.S., Child Psychology, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois, 2009

**Occupation:** Self-Employed/Education Consultant, Dymensions Educational Consulting LLC

**Highlights of civic involvement/accomplishment:**

- Taylor Elementary PTA Board Member, Membership Chair, 08/2012 – 06/2014
- Fowler Middle School PTA Board Member, Programs Chair, 08/2014 – 06/2016
- Fowler Middle School PTA Board Member, Membership Chair, 08/2016 – 06/2018
- Liberty High School Band Booster, Special Events Chair, 2019 – 2020
- Texas PTA Honorary Life Member, May 19, 2019
- Clean It & Green It Team Leader, 2017, 2018, 2019
- Collin College Marketing and Entrepreneurship, Committee Member, 2017 – 2019

**If elected, what two issues would you give the most attention and resources?**

My family has called Frisco ISD home for the past 8 years. My children continue to grow daily with all that they are being offered academically, as well as the arts – which is what they participate in for extra-curricular activities. Being the fastest growing district in the country and growing well, is that sets Frisco ISD apart from other districts. With our continued rapid growth, one issue that I would like to give attention and extend my knowledge of is diversity, inclusion. I believe that it is important to recognize and prepare for the various cultures that have decided to make Frisco ISD home. The traits and characteristics that make each family unique should be included in our leadership, classrooms and throughout our community. Another issues that I would like to see in our district is teacher retention. Our teacher training program is second to none. I would like to lend my experience to opportunities that will create ways to retain teachers, once they have been trained out of college.

**Have you attended any school board meetings? If so, what have you learned about how a board member can be effective?**

I have attended school board meetings for the past 5 years, as a parent and PTA board member for different schools. I have learned that there are so many pieces that have to come together to make up the opportunities that our families receive. Board members are the ingredient that makes everything come together. Their collaborative efforts and display of unity is what makes them a remarkable team.

**CANDIDATE DYNETTE A. DAVIS DID NOT RESPOND TO GALA'S CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE.**

**PLACE 4**

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**SEAN HEATLEY**



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**WITHDREW FROM RACE DUE TO FAMILY HEALTH ISSUES.**

**PLACE 5**

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**DEBBIE GILLESPIE**



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**Website:** -

**Facebook:** Debbie Gillespie, Frisco ISD Board Trustee

**TRUSTEE GILLESPIE IS RUNNING UNOPPOSED.**