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## **Place 1 RRISD School Board Trustee Candidate Forum hosted by Round Rock ISD Council of PTAs**

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We're getting ready for the Facebook Live. All right, we're going live on Facebook.

Good evening everyone, and welcome to the Round Rock ISD Council of PTAs school board trustee candidate forum for Place one. I am Snehal Phirke the president of Round Rock ISD Council of PTAs, a non-commercial non-sectarian non-partisan association that does not endorse any candidate or political party. I would like to welcome our special guests today. Our Texas PTA president Suzi Kennon And Texas PTA president elect Marisol Randle. Thank you for being here today.

Our advocacy committee represents our learning communities and the questions for these forums were sourced from our community. As you know, PTA is the oldest and largest child advocacy organization in the nation with the mission to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. One candidate notified us just shortly ago that he would not be joining us for this forum. We will proceed with this forum as planned with one candidate. However the candidate not present will have the opportunity to provide answers to the questions that will be shared publicly. I want to underscore that proceeding with only one candidate does not imply endorsement of or support for the lone candidate present. With that I present to you our Council PTA Advocacy chair Heather Lawrence.

Hello, and thanks to the candidates, viewers and our Texas and Round Rock ISD Council volunteers for joining us today. I will also be the timekeeper for today's forum. It is my honor to introduce you to our moderator for these forums Mrs. Maria Medina Milner. Mrs. Milner is a notable and accomplished voter engagement and community outreach leader in Central Texas. She leads and develops nonpartisan comprehensive community voter engagement outreach and partnership programs across all communities and school districts. She is also the third year founding leader of equity and inclusion in a leading voter engagement organization. As a Latinx cultural consultant Mrs. Milner co-founded VOCES Tejas in 2017, presenting regularly on the topic of Latinx voter outreach to communities throughout the Texas Hill Country. She is a spokesperson and panelist on the topic of voter engagement and history at numerous events. She is often featured as a nonpartisan voter outreach leader on media programs throughout the Austin area including regular guest spots on Univision. We thank Mrs Milner for lending her time and expertise to the candidate forums. And with that, the candidates are in your good hands. Mrs. Milner?

Thank you to the Round Rock ISD Council of PTAs for the invitation to moderate tonight's forum. I'd like to take this moment to remind our audience that when we discuss an office such as School Board District Board of trustee that we're discussing down ballot voting. Down ballot voting is a process of voting for offices that are often attached to a major election office such as voting for presidential and congressional offices. I'd like to introduce to you to the candidate for Place one here today Kim Boen. She'll be giving a two minute candidate statement and a 90 second closing statement. You'll be given one minute to answer each question, Ms Boen. Our timekeeper will hold up a yellow card at the 30

second mark and a red card when your time is over. In the event that the candidate loses their web access we ask that they quickly re-enter this forum after re-entering the webinar. You'll be allowed to answer the questions that you missed time permitting. So let's begin with the two-minute statement from Kim Boen. Miss Boen?

Thank you, and thank you so much for being here tonight. A little about me and how I got to this position of running for school board. I moved to Round Rock ISD in 1976. I was in the seventh grade. I attended Round Rock Middle School, which is now CD Folks. It was the only Middle School. I then attended Grisham Middle School and eighth grade. We were bused back to Round Rock High School where I graduated in 1981 the year before Westwood opened. I've seen much much growth in this district and this district has a very huge place in my heart. I came back to raise my children here because of the education and the opportunities that I received. I have had three well have three children that have all graduated from Round Rock ISD, and I was lucky enough to be able to teach in this district for 33 years. I retired two years ago. Well third school year. And rested up and now ready to give back to the community by serving on the board. I feel feel like I can bring a lot to this board and to this District. I have an understanding and most importantly my heart is with the students and the children of this District. And parents, students, community, is what grows a child and it takes all of us and we're a team and we're a partnership. And as a board member. I want to be part of that team.

Thank you. Let's get on with the questions from the community. The first question fo you would be, when considering the responsibilities of a trustee. Please tell us what your strengths and areas of growth are. Ms Boen?

My strengths is in positive leadership. I also have no problem asking questions or speaking what I believe to be in the best interest. Doesn't mean I always am listen to, but I have a voice and I feel that all voices should be a very respectful voice. I don't even know that I answered that correctly.

All right. Well if we're ready the second question is, In the past year, the district has both created the Counseling and Behavioral Health Services Department and approved the formation of an ISD Police Department. What are two ways you foresee these entities working together in order to improve school safety, Miss Boen?

Great question! Having been in the district, and having since 1994 having an SRO program in the district and knowing that we have four different departments representing this District. We have had a need for a police department. I do support the police department. One thing I did is I asked Jeff Yarbrough. I want to know what are the qualifications. The qualifications should be very very high strict rigorous, because we should be able to be very picky. I believe that the police department and the very much needed, Mental health Wellness aspect that we now have will be greatly and needed tremendously for this District.

Thank you. The third question is how do you work to improve equity initiatives in terms of testing, student achievement, and learning in the district for all students?

I believe first that all students should have the same opportunities and all of the same experiences. Which would be a quality. Equity is to make sure that all students have the opportunities and have are treated and have equal, equitable outcomes. And I think it's very important that we make sure that we provide the resources where they're needed. If we have areas where more resources are needed on

other campuses and that's where we need to provide those resources. As far as testing I believe, I believe that all students in Round Rock ISD should have the same opportunities. It doesn't matter where they live in this District because they are all our students.

Ms Boen, What are your thoughts on using TEA's A through F accountability rating to evaluate campus and student achievement?

Interesting question. Personally, as an educator I do not like the rating. I believe that a STAAR test is a one-day four-hour snapshot. And it is not the tool that we should evaluate the whole child, social emotional, academic, learning, because we are more than just one test. I believe in accountability. There absolutely should be accountability. As for students and Educators and School District. But I do not believe that the method that's used by TEA in the A through F rating is a good one.

Thank you. Our fifth question is, given that children of color and SPED populations are disproportionately targeted for discipline and police intervention in schools, what will you do to ensure that the newly formed Round Rock ISD Police will be held accountable for disproportionate targeting of certain groups. What sort of auditing and remediation would you support?

First and foremost I think policy and procedure should be set. We have the opportunity in this District to create a Statewide model or a department and the model that we create, I believe, should include walking along a student. The student finds themselves. This discipline should be held at the campus level. Just regular discipline. I'm talking beyond when the state law requires a police officer to be involved. And I believe that through our social workers and our mental health advocacy that we have and we have the officers that we are requiring above and beyond training that we can walk besides children and we can walk with them through any troubles that they may have not just in and out of of judicial system. that We need what's best for our students of all colors. and of all areas.

Ms Boen, the community would like to know, How do you envision the district balance the needs, the district's balance the needs, of students and teachers mental well-being and academic achievements?

As in with COVID?

In general, how would you, how would you see the district be able to do for both students and teachers with their mental well-being and the riggers of academic achievement?

Right now every teacher in this District, in this state, in this country,. deserves the utmost respect they are working many many hours. We know there's going to be gaps in learning. And we know that we are going to have to address those gaps. The legislature will be back in session in January. We will see what they bring to us. Currently I'm not you know, it's like when we have students that come to our classrooms. They're at all different levels, and we have to do what we need to do for each individual child. And with our achievement gaps and with with the unknown, we do not know the gaps and we do not know what the state is going to do, come January, we need to be open to that and work together for all students.

One of the important aspects of the board is to decide boundary changes in our growing district. In February 2020, the board voted to make changes. How would you want to improve the process, if at all?

Well having moved here in 1976. We have been, changing boundaries since then. As I said, I went to Round Rock middle school. I went to Grisham, my brother never even went to any of the same schools that I went to. Because of growth I believe that, we know, boundaries change because of growth and we know we are still growing. So we need to make decision. that are going to hopefully not disturb, as few as possible, but we know we have to do it. We've had to do it for the last 45 years. I've not been in that, yet. But I know that it's a very touchy subject, and we'll do the best that we possibly can, for everyone involved.

Now for a question on Growth. With the current overcrowding at a number of our high schools, could you please share your thoughts and comments on the priority of new high schools to be built in both the east (off Grimes, Old Settlers area) and the West in the area of Pearson Ridge?

Right now I believe with COVID and the after have we've lost what 700 student? And we know that we had a bond fail in 2017. I think we need to be very very cautious and the way that we move forward. That we build first where growth is most needed. We know we need East and West. We know it's going to happen, but I think we need to move cautiously. And making sure that we're able to, the bonds when it does come up, that we can support it, as a community. But absolutely we've we we're growing and we have to prepare and plan for growth.

Thank you, Ms Boen. The Board of Trustees is responsible for hiring and evaluating the superintendent for our district. Share with us two qualities that you believe a superintendent must possess and why you feel they are important for this position.

As a board member, yes, hiring and evaluating the superintendent is very important. I believe that a superintendent should be someone that unifies all staff, parents, community and students. And works for the best interest of all children. And someone that manages this district. And brings positive outcomes for this district. We know that this next board will be a very important board that will hire the next superintendent as everything is right now and we need to make sure that our district continues to be a destination district and that businesses and that people around this country want to come to this district because we know It's the best.

For our last question, for some students virtual learning is working while other students learn best in the classroom. How should the district balance virtual and in-person learning going forward?

Good question. We are considered a big district. And I had someone ask me the other day, well, we are in the same district with Hutto. Well, no, we're not as far as student populations. We are a very large district and TEA dictates how large districts open throughout this COVID reopening as opposed to smaller districts. So having being a large district, we have students struggling. We have teachers struggling and it's not good for all students. It's not good for most students. And I feel that, the sooner that we can get our kids back in the classroom with some normalcy, especially the ones that are struggling that that's what's best for students. And I hope every week things progress so that we can.

Thank you Ms. Boen for answering those tough questions from across our learning communities. We're now going to have a minute and a half for your closing statement. We'll hold the same yellow card at 30 seconds remaining and a red card to ask you to stop.

Ms. Boen, would you like to close?

Yes. Why am I a good candidate for Place One On The Board of Trustees? I have a heart for students. I have experience in Round Rock ISD. I have built relationships with parents, with teachers, with community members across this District. And I feel that I can represent all of you as parents very well. And that I do not, my job is to represent. And to represent you and your children and the needs of all children. And I also encourage anyone that would have any questions for me. Anything that they if they've heard something and they want it clarified. And they believe maybe what they've heard. I would encourage them to reach out to me, talk to me, meet me and find out from me who I am and how I can best represent all students in this District. Thank you.

Thank you to our willing candidate Ms. Bowen for her participation in this voter event. The PTA applauds your willingness to serve the community, schools, parents, teachers, administrators and students of Round Rock ISD. Please remember that early voting starts on Tuesday, October 13th. And election day is Tuesday, November 3rd. This forum will be posted on the Round Rock Council of PTA's website [rrisdpta.org](http://rrisdpta.org). That's our [RRISDPTA.ORG](http://RRISDPTA.ORG) and our social media along with the other place forms as they occur. Candidate bio information will also be posted and following the forums, the candidate will have the opportunity to answer the questions posed to the other place forums in written form. Please watch Facebook for Place 2 which starts at 7 pm and stay tuned for Place 7 tomorrow at 6 pm and place 6 at 7 pm. Thank you and good night.