

Interview Assessment #2

Name of Professional: Rene Archambault

Profession: President of Trustee Board for FISD

Company: Frisco Independent School District

Date of Interview: 7/6/2021

Assessment:

This week I met with Rene Archambault, the newly re-elected president of the Board of Trustees for FISD. I had met Mrs. Archambault when I had helped work on her campaign during the last school year. She also assisted me and my mentor on our Austin capitol trip last year. We had met for coffee to discuss what I'd like to get out of my ISM 2 experience as well as any up-and-coming elections/ campaigns and district projects I could potentially be a part of. I had also spoken to her about getting a letter of recommendation for a congressional leadership committee I planned on applying for at the time.

Much like my discussion with Tracy Gamble the week prior, the first thing we discussed was her and John Classe's swearing-in ceremony and school board meeting. I had already gotten a citizen's perspective on how the meeting went but I was glad to talk to one of the actual board members to get their thoughts on the meeting's proceedings. One of the primary things Mrs. Archambault mentioned was how deeply disappointed she was in the behavior of adults at these meetings. Compared to the previous board meeting where grown adults were yelling slurs and racist intensities at students speaking during public comment this meeting was relatively tame but still extremely aggressive. She stressed how board meetings used to be a place where parents, students, and staff with legitimate concerns or issues could finally be heard and make a difference in the district but now they are used for people to push their harmful and hate-filled ideology and agenda, that most of the time has little to nothing to do with the actual school district or education of FISD students. It was disheartening to see the senseless anger that these parents had in regards to the state mask mandate or the idea of critical race theory in the district. These were both issues however that the district had already spoken on or had absolutely no hand in deciding. Like in the case of including CRT in the district's curriculum, the district had already released several statements that they never intended on including it and even if they wanted to they would be unable to because that would have to come from the official Texas education board. Same thing with the district mask mandate. The school board already decided early in the summer that masks would be optional for returning students this year and that legally they could not mandate them because of the executive order from Governor Greg Abbott several months prior. So these parents were yelling at the board members for nothing they had control over or things that they had already spoken about.

Lastly, Mrs. Archambault and I discussed my future involvement in the district in the form of potential committees or campaigns I would be able to work on. This summer

there will be two more board member positions that will be up for reelection and I intend on being a part of those campaigns. I also learned about the Legislative Leadership Committee for FISD. There are only ten student positions available but appointments are made every odd number school year in August and September. I decided to complete an application and got a personal recommendation from Mrs. Archambault herself so hopefully, I will be able to be a part of that committee. I also expressed some interest in applying for the Congressional Youth Advisory Council, or CYAC, under Representative Van Taylor to Mrs. Archambault. She greatly encouraged me to pursue that idea and that she would write me a letter of recommendation for the application. I also obtained one from Coach Goff. I have yet to hear back from Rep. Van Taylor's office but I hope to hear back soon to see if I got into the program.