

June 12, 2023

Dear TODA Officers and Membership,

I am a retired orchestra director who really isn't retired at all. I literally go everywhere throughout the Houston area mentoring and encouraging young or struggling teachers. This will be my 51st year teaching and my 25th year conducting the String Orchestra at the Houston Youth Symphony. Putting it mildly, I've pretty much seen it ALL - remarkable teaching to "oh my goodness what are they thinking?!" I've always been a devoted follower of both TODA and TMEA, I've presented clinics at both, and I also served as TMEA Orchestra VP. All that and a bag of chips, this letter is to BRAG on Sean Kime and to let you know how very capable he is to serve on the TODA board.

I met Sean when he was in high school and he would drive across town to attend All-State Clinics at Austin HS in Fort Bend ISD. Later, he student taught with me and he was so remarkable that we hired him. He has what it takes to be very successful for a long, long time as he just continues to improve. In 2015, he left FBISD to obtain his Master's Degree in Conducting with the illustrious Dr. Clifton Evans. After that, he worked in Alief ISD at a low-income high school, where even there he excelled. I am so excited that he will be joining the Seven Lakes HS Orchestra team this Fall, and they are very blessed to have him.

Sean has incredible music skills, which he has worked really hard to refine. He has never taken the easy road when it comes to work and does what is best for the kids and for the program. He is a worker bee. Even when he is exhausted, he still gives his heart and soul. He is gifted with technology and furthermore, the dude is "Smart as a Whip." My high school was very diverse and he absolutely gave 100% to every child in the program. While Sean and I have very different political viewpoints, we have never berated each other regarding our differences and I can tell you exactly why: we unconditionally love and care for EVERYONE, both adults and students. I think this is truly the hallmark of good servant leadership. People have a right to their belief systems and we should work to make them all feel welcome. None of us are omniscient, and we all need to love and to be loved. Sean does this on a daily basis, and I am so proud of him for that.

Please for Heaven's sake, let's get this guy on the board - he is a keeper! I am available for further dialogue and ready to cheer him to the finish line. Thanks to each of you for your dedication to our organization.

Warmest regards,


Carolyn Vandiver aka "Vandiva"

carolynmcmillanvandiver@gmail.com

(713) 805-5305