

The **Springboard** e-newsletter is provided as a community service to inform the public of actions during the monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees. The official minutes from the meeting will be posted online at [www.springisd.org](http://www.springisd.org) once approved by the Board.

## Trustees

**Deborah Jensen, Ph.D.**  
President

**Chris Bell**  
Vice President

**Rhonda Newhouse, M.Ed.**  
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**Justine Durant**  
Assistant Secretary

**Rhonda L. Faust, J.D.**

**Donald Davis**

**Jana Gonzales**

## Public Participation is Welcomed

Citizens who want to speak at a Board meeting are asked to register at least 15 minutes prior to the time when the meeting is scheduled to begin.

For more information, go online at [www.springisd.org](http://www.springisd.org) and click on the Public Participation at Board Meetings link under General Info.

**The next regular Board meeting will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12 at Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Blvd.**

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 8 at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center to address items on the agenda. President **Rhonda L. Faust** called the meeting to order. Westfield High School JROTC Cadets **Austin Johnson, Valerie Hernandez, Tre Pardue, Faith Jones-Jackson** and **Gabriela Rios** presented the colors and pledges of allegiance.

## Swearing in Elected Trustees; Election of Officers



Trustee Donald Davis, Position 6

Trustee Jana Gonzales, Position 7

Board Trustee Jana Gonzales was re-elected to Position 7 and Donald Davis was elected to serve in Position 6 during the General Election on Nov. 3. They were administered the oath of office at the beginning of the board meeting.

Following the swearing-in ceremony, the board elected officers. **Dr. Deborah Jensen** will serve as president, **Chris Bell** as vice president, **Rhonda Newhouse** as secretary and **Justine Durant** as assistant secretary.

Jensen immediately assumed her new role and began officiating the meeting.

## Recognitions



Westfield football players, coaches and district administrators joined the Board of Trustees in the horseshoe for a congratulatory photo.

### Westfield Mustang Quarterback Invited to Play in 2016 Semper Fidelis Bowl

Westfield High School Mustang Quarterback **Dillon Sterling-Cole** has been invited to play in the 2016 Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl. This year's game, the fifth annual Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl, will be played on Jan. 3, 2016 at the StubHub Center in Carson, California, and will also air live on the Fox Sports 1 network. Players for the game are chosen from across the country based on their pursuit of excellence both on the playing field and in the classroom. Sterling-Cole's honorary team jersey was presented to him during a special ceremony conducted by United States Marine Corps officers.

### Two Westfield Mustang Football Players Invited to Play in 2016 Under Armour Game

Two Westfield High School Mustangs, Defensive Lineman **Ed Oliver** and Wide Receiver **Tyrie Cleveland**, have been invited to play in the 2016 Under Armour All-America Game. The ninth annual Under Armour All-America football game is scheduled to take place Saturday, Jan. 2, 2016 at the Orlando Citrus Bowl and will air live on ESPN2. Oliver and Cleveland will be among an elite group of about 90 football players from across the nation invited to participate this year.



Carl Wunsche Sr. High School administrators joined the Team of Eight in the horseshoe for a celebratory photo.

### Wunsche Academy Designated as a Breaking Ranks School

The Board of Trustees presented **Bob Thompson**, Carl Wunsche Sr. High School principal, and his team a Points of Pride award for being designated as a Breaking Ranks School. Wunsche is one of only 18 middle and high schools nationwide selected by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP) and the Center for Secondary School Redesign (CSSR) to present stories of successful implementation of the Breaking Ranks Framework strategies and techniques. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP) and the Center for Secondary School Redesign (CSSR) "Breakthrough Schools" are selected based on their implementation of strategies aligned with three core focus areas: collaborative leadership; personalization of student learning; and a rigorous dedication to curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

In mid-November, the school received its Breaking Ranks banner. Thompson and members of his team will also present a 90-minute program at the Breaking Ranks 2016 School Showcase facilitated by nationally recognized experts from CSSR, as part of the NAASP Conference, Feb. 25-27 in Orlando, FL. The School Showcase will take place on Thursday, Feb. 25, during the conference.

## Spotlight



Erica Tickle is pictured with her holiday artwork and accepting board congratulations.

### Smith Fourth Grader Takes First Place in Superintendent's Holiday Card Competition

**Erica Tickle**, a fourth grader at Smith Elementary School, has been named the first place winner of the Spring ISD Superintendent's 2015 Holiday Art Card Contest. Her cool, blue snowman design will be featured on the cover of the district's 2015 holiday card.

Second and third place awards went to **Deborah Thomas**, Wells Middle School eighth grader, and **Oralia Cantu**, Westfield High School, tenth grader, respectively. Monetary prizes included \$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second, and \$250 for third.

Ten additional finalists each received a \$25 prize. They are **Riley Owens**, Winship Elementary; **Sidney San**, Early College Academy; **Fatima Ibanez**, Claughton Middle School; **Bailee Sweat**, Duettt Middle School; **Darian Paul**, Twin Creeks Middle School; **Miguel Gutierrez**, Spring High School; **Mackenzie Berryman**, Roberson Middle School; **Charlie Vega**, Reynolds Elementary; **Noelani Shai**, Hirsch Elementary; and **Alexandrea Otieno**, Booker Elementary

The contest is coordinated annually by the district's Performing and Visual Arts (PVA) department. For the first time this year, PVA worked with Design-a-Card to manage the selection process. Almost every campus in the district participated with about 4,000 designs submitted. Campus winners are available for purchase online. Go to [http://designacard.org/contest/?school\\_district=656](http://designacard.org/contest/?school_district=656). [Holiday card finalists slideshow.](#)

## Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney E. Watson** congratulated newly elected trustees **Donald Davis** and **Jana Gonzales**. "We are happy to have you, and appreciate all the dedication and service that you will be providing our community," Watson said.

He also extended congratulations to both the Westfield and Spring High School football programs - student athletes and coaches - on completing memorable seasons.

Watson updated the board on results of a recent recruitment fair, which supports the district's push to ensure the No Child Left Behind requirements for highly qualified teachers are being met.

"About 150 candidates were present at the recruitment fair on Saturday, and we were able to offer 30 contracts to fill current vacancies and about 50 letters of intent," Watson said. "Those last 50 teachers will go directly into our candidate pool so that as positions become available, we already have a strong person to consider for the position."

While referencing the district's mission to ensure students are ready to compete in a global society, Watson introduced a video of how Twin Creek Middle School is using technology to bring the world closer to home. [See video.](#)

In conclusion, Watson took the opportunity to wish the board and community a very happy holiday.



Rodney E. Watson, Ph.D.

## President's Remarks

As **Dr. Deborah Jensen** assumed her new role as president of the board she began her remarks by stating that school boards in Texas are defined as a "body corporate" that comes together to work as a team, find consensus and support the outcome of votes taken.

"It has been a privilege working with the Board of Trustees. I have really appreciated the teamwork that we are developing on our board. One of Spring's core values is 'We win as a team,' and you won't find another group of people who take that to heart as much as we do. Additionally, she emphasized another core value when she said the board bases its decisions on what is best for students.

In closing, Jensen commended past-president **Rhonda Faust** for her expertise in a variety of fields that are important to the board. "She has a legal background, she has been a child advocate at the Texas legislature, and she regularly does very complex negotiations on a national scale," Jensen said. "She cares so deeply about the students and the staff in Spring, as we all do, but she is a phenomenal person in that way."



Deborah Jensen, Ph.D.

In conclusion, Jensen used a comparison from U.S. history when she talked about the Revolutionary War era "summer soldiers" who were willing to sign up when things were going well but didn't stay for the long haul.

"I will tell you that what you have up here are people who have been through Valley Forge. We are not summer soldiers, we stick with it," Jensen said. "We are excited about how we have come through this winter. And we are excited about the future of Spring ISD," Jensen said.

## Presentation

### Progress Being Made Toward Meeting NCLB Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements

Spring ISD Chief of Human Resources **Deeone McKeithan** reported that the district is close to having 100% of its teachers meeting the federal No Child Left Behind Highly Qualified Teacher requirements. Three elementary campuses - Bammel, Booker and Clark Primary - have one teacher each who are in the process of meeting the requirements. The district often hires very competent teachers from out of state who meet their former state's requirements as being highly qualified. Once they are hired and move to Spring to work, they immediately begin the process of meeting Texas state requirements.

## Action Items

### \$20,000 ExxonMobil Grant to Expand STEM Programs at Six Schools

The Board approved acceptance of a \$20,000 grant from ExxonMobil for expanding the Science, Engineering, Communication and Mathematics Enrichment (SECME) program at several schools this year.

The grant is in addition to \$15,000 provided by ExxonMobil last year to fund SECME projects at Dekaney and Spring high schools, Roberson Middle School and Northgate Crossing and Ponderosa elementary schools. Three more elementary schools - Heritage, Hoyland and Jenkins - will benefit from the expanded program this year.

"This grant is important for us to offer an engaging, hands-on, minds-on approach that helps students take ownership of their learning process and provides them with opportunities to explore, collaborate and become problem solvers," said **Dr. Lupita Hinojosa**, chief academic officer.

Hinojosa emphasized the importance of problem-solving and collaboration as skills for 21st century learners who will likely end up in adult careers that don't even exist today. Last year students developed these skills while building mousetraps, bridges and bottle rockets. This year, with the additional funding, they will build robots as part of an established, well-supported district robotics program.

SECME concepts are embedded in each school's curriculum and instruction, although participants do work on their projects and participate in workshops and competitions after-school and on weekends throughout the year. Hinojosa said the district has seen math and science scores improve and parent involvement increase at participating schools since SECME was implemented last year. Student confidence has also seen an upswing as students successfully competed at district, regional and national levels.

"Northgate Crossing took first and second and third place at the national level - a great accomplishment in just one year," said **Dr. Neelam Singh**, secondary science director and SECME coordinator.

### In Other Action the Board Approved:

- An interlocal agreement between Lone Star College System and Spring ISD to allow district facilities to be used for the Lone Star College System's Transportation Institute;
- Resolution to vote for Katherine (Toni) Trumbull to serve on the Harris County Appraisal District Board of Directors;
- Ratification of the year-to-date Financial Report of actual revenues and expenditures;
- Renewal of a match grant with Gulf Coast Workforce Board to be used for the childcare centers at Carl Wunsche Sr. High School and Westfield High School; and
- Taxpayer refunds.



Spring Independent School District is an equal opportunity employer. The Board of Trustees and its agents, officers and staff members shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, age, color, religion, national origin, military status, or any other legally protected status in making decisions regarding staff members or students.