

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 once approved by the Board.

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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 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, Dec. 8 at Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Blvd.

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 10 at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center to address items on the agenda. President **Rhonda L. Faust** called the meeting to order. Dekaney High School Navy JROTC Cadet Cmdr. **Armando Lopez**, Cadet Lt. j.g. **Zakobe Blueford**, Cadet Lt. **Nahuel Zapata** and Cadet Chief Petty Officer **Carl Koulavongsa** presented the colors and pledges of allegiance.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney E. Watson** announced the Give the Gift of Reading campaign – a partnership between the district and the Spring ISD Education Foundation that supports the district's goal of improving literacy for all students. [See "Strong Literacy Foundation for All" video.](#)

Elementary students districtwide are invited to attend a winter wonderland event on Dec. 17 where they will be given a gift-wrapped book of their own to enjoy during winter break.

"We're asking our community to partner with us to make sure that during the holiday season our students are able to go home with a book," Watson said. "It is amazing how many kids love reading but when they go home they don't have books to read. Our focus is really on making sure we put books in their hands."

Watson explained the details of the campaign and how community members can help supply the books that will be needed to support the effort.

Those interested in contributing to the Give the Gift of Reading campaign are encouraged to make a donation directly to the Spring ISD Education Foundation by visiting www.give2springkids.org and selecting Give the Gift of Reading. A donation of \$10 supports one student, a \$50 donation supports five students and a \$100 donation supports ten students; however any amount will be accepted. All donations are tax-deductible.

Last, Watson congratulated Spring High School on winning the District 15-6A Championship for the first time and commended both the Spring High Lions and Westfield Mustangs for advancing to the state playoffs. "We are excited about both of these schools moving forward in the playoffs," Watson said. "We wish them both the best."



Rodney E. Watson, Ph.D.

President's Remarks

Board President **Rhonda Faust** thanked members of the Spring High School Clarinet Ensemble - **Christian Gonzalez, Melvin Vega, Nick Delacerda** and **Diego Rojas** - for their performance before the board meeting. The quartet played several selections in the foyer of the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center as members of the community were arriving.

In honor of Veterans Day, Faust also thanked members of the "Spring ISD family" who have served in the military.



Rhonda L. Faust, J.D.

Recognitions

Since January 1984, the Board has recognized students and staff for major accomplishments beyond the District with Points of Pride awards.



Campus music directors, student musicians and district administrators joined the Board of Trustees in the horseshoe for a congratulatory photo.

Seven Spring ISD Music Groups Are Recognized Nationally

Seven Spring ISD music organizations have been named as winners in the Foundation for Music Education's 2015 Mark of Excellence Competition, in which groups submit performance recordings to be judged against other entries from across the country.

The following groups received Points of Pride awards by the Board of Trustees for their national achievement.

National Winners:

- Dueitt Middle School Symphonic Band, **Christopher Gonzales**, conductor
- Spring High School Wind Ensemble, **Gabe Musella**, conductor
- Spring High School Women's Chorale, **David Landgrebe** and **Chelsea Berner**, conductors
- Spring High School Percussion Ensemble, **JD Guzman**, conductor

Commended Winners:

- Bailey Middle School Women's Concert Choir, **Christine Johnson**, conductor
- Spring High School Chorale, **David Landgrebe**, conductor
- Spring High School Jazz Ensemble, **JD Guzman**, conductor

"To give some context to the impressiveness of this achievement, the 10 choral groups selected as Mark of Excellence winners this year were competing against a field of more than 190 ensembles nationwide," said **Tiffany Davila-Dunne**, chief communications officer.

This year's results also represent the 16th time Spring High School has been recognized since the competition started in 2008 – that's more times than any other high school in the country. Spring is also the only high school in the nation to have had both band and choir groups recognized in consecutive years.

The Mark of Excellence Competition offers middle school and high school bands, choirs, and orchestras the opportunity to earn national recognition for their musical achievements. The competition is operated through the Foundation for Music Education, a volunteer organization that strives to provide support and advancement of music education through student scholarships and educator training programs throughout the United States.

Public Hearing

District Receives Perfect Score in Financial Accountability

The Spring Independent School District received the highest rating possible from the Financial Accountability Rating System of Texas for the district's 2013-14 fiscal year. Commonly referred to as School FIRST, the objective of the rating system is to assess the quality of financial management in Texas public schools.

Ann Westbrook, chief financial officer, said the district received the highest possible score in each category resulting in a perfect score overall and a rating of Passed.

The School FIRST rating system used to assess the 2013-14 year consists of seven base indicators that analyze trends related to financial management efficiencies. The first four indicators are answered with either a "yes" or "no" answer while the remaining indicators are assigned a point value. Each indicator is weighted equally with the exception of the first four. Failure to comply with any of these four indicators results in an automatic failure.

A copy of the report is online at www.springisd.org. Printed copies are available from the finance office upon request.

Action Items

District Targeted Improvement Plan Focuses on EVERY CHILD 2020 Imperatives

The Board approved the District Targeted Improvement Plan for the 2015-16 school year. **Dr. Lupita Hinojosa**, chief academics officer, said the plan aligns with EVERY CHILD 2020 imperatives and focuses on the subpopulation groups of Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language, Career and Technical Education, and Special Education students. Hinojosa said the district has identified the key issues that need to be addressed, the root causes, and developed comprehensive strategies to address the identified issues.

Achieve 3000 Students FIRST Grant

The Board approved acceptance of the Achieve 3000 Students First grant valued at \$196,400. The grant will go toward the cost of the Achieve 3000 web-based literacy program with the district covering the remaining cost of \$49,400 as part of the agreement.

The grant will allow middle and high school students access to a literacy solution that focuses on increasing students' Lexile levels and providing them with the skills they need to become independent readers of complex text. The user-friendly program can be accessed on computers and also through applications on Google Chrome and Apple devices.

Bond Refunding is Expected to Save District Over \$19 Million

With the Board's approval, the district will begin taking advantage of a bond refunding opportunity that will result in savings of more than \$19 million on the 2006, 2007 and 2008 bond series.

The principal amount of these bonds is \$144 million at current interest rates between 4.5 percent and 5 percent. The anticipated refunding bonds would be refunded and issued at a principal amount of approximately \$132 million with much lower interest rates between 2.7 percent and 2.9 percent. The estimated savings in debt service payments over the remaining life of the bonds is just under \$20 million with a present value of \$16 million, representing a savings of over 11 percent.

In Other Action the Board Approved:

- 2015-16 targeted school improvement plans for Major, Hirsch and Lewis elementary schools;
- Interlocal agreement with Harris County Department of Education for occupational therapy and physical therapy;
- Education Affiliation Agreement with Lone Star College System to allow college of education students to participate in classroom observations at Dueitt Middle School;
- 2015-16 First Budget Review;
- Ratification of facility purchases: YMCA Building, 17125 Ella Blvd., and One Park Centre Building, 14450 T. C. Jester Blvd.;
- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2015 and the Independent Auditor's Report;
- Requests for Proposals for retail natural gas supply services and workers' compensation third-party administration; 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, disabling condition, age, color, religion, national origin, military status, or any other legally protected status in making decisions regarding staff members or students.