

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.

Trustees

Deborah Jensen, Ph.D.
President

Chris Bell
Vice President

Rhonda Newhouse, M.Ed.
Secretary

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 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, May 10 at Bammel Middle School, 16711 Ella Blvd.



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.

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 12 at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center to address items on the agenda. President **Dr. Deborah Jensen** called the meeting to order. Dekaney High School Navy JROTC Cadets **Arionna Knox, Armando Lopez, Zakobe Blueford, Jason Reyes** and **Carl Koulavongsa** presented the colors and read the pledges of allegiance.

Recognitions

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

Spring High Wind Ensemble Featured at the Music for All National Festival

The Spring High School Wind Ensemble was honored by the Board for being selected to perform at the Music for All National Festival. The non-profit "Music for All" organization has supported music making across the country since 1975, with a range of annual competitions and events. All the groups performing at the festival are selected by audition, and this year, 40 ensembles from 20 states were chosen to gather in Indianapolis for a weekend of performances, master classes and other special events.

Spring High School's Wind Ensemble, directed by **Gabe Musella**, was one of this year's featured bands along with the other ensembles from Spring High that were also invited to perform: the Spring High School Clarinet Quartet, Saxophone Quartet, Tuba/Euphonium Quartet, and Percussion Ensemble.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney E. Watson** reported on the district's testing progress, which will continue into May with additional students taking the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR). "Over 60 percent of our students will be involved in taking the test. This is a time for our students to demonstrate some of the mastery that they have learned in classes throughout the year."



Rodney E. Watson

Watson said the district is excited about the Little Free Library program that is underway districtwide. "As you know, part of our strategic plan – Every Child 2020 – focuses on the love of reading. We're working on that initiative by implementing free libraries," Watson said.

Every Spring ISD elementary campus will receive its own Little Free Library complete with a set of books. The libraries are expected to be erected outside all schools by the end of the school year, just in time for summer break. Watson encouraged the audience to visit the district website to learn more about that opportunity.

Next, Watson talked about the district's excitement over the renovation of the One Park Centre facility located at 14450 T. C. Jester into a new campus for the Early College Academy. "Not only is the district administration excited about the move, but so are the Early College students who will be attending there next school year," Watson said. *See story and video link below.*

In closing, he thanked the Spring community and district employees for their support of the Spring ISD Stampede buyers group that purchases student projects annually at the Spring Livestock Show and Fair. "We were able to once again walk away with a grand champion steer," Watson said.

He also reminded the board that graduation will be an all-day event on May 28 at the Berry Center and the May board meeting will be moved to Bammel Middle School, as usual, to accommodate a large number of student recognitions.

Trustees Remarks

At each regular board meeting, during Opening Remarks each board member is given the opportunity to share information with those present.



President **Deborah Jensen** invited Trustees who attended the National Association of School Boards conference in Boston April 9-11 to share their experiences.

Trustee **Rhonda Faust** presented at one of the sessions on the importance of fine arts programs in education. "I had the privilege of speaking as a person that has worn two hats. I matriculated through our fine arts programs, and now sit on the board as a trustee, I am able to pull from those experiences to see what impact that had on my personal and professional successes," Faust said. "Also, I am able to see the impact that fine arts is having on our students: low instances of disciplinary referrals, high instances of academic achievement and very, very high levels of parent involvement. It was really an honor and a privilege to be able to speak on a subject that makes so much common sense to me as a trustee and a former fine arts student."

Vice President **Chris Bell** also commented on the fine arts session and expressed appreciation for the recognition Spring received nationally for its commitment to the arts. "We hear a lot about STEM, but remember we have got to drop that "A" in there to bring it all together – STEAM," Bell said. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics.

Jensen said one of her biggest concerns is achievement gaps. While attending sessions about how other districts ameliorate these issues, she was pleased to learn that "we are really doing some wonderful efforts already in Spring." She went on to say, "we absolutely have to be concerned about the little ones from birth to kindergarten. If we really want our school system to be equitable, we have to partner with community institutions that take care of little children and also the parents of very small ones."

Assistant Secretary **Justine Durant** shared Jensen's concern about early childhood education. "We have to not just look at prekindergarten, which has always been a passion of mine, but we have to start earlier." Durant shared ideas from the conference for reaching young children and their parents by taking education into the community where they reside.

Trustee **Donald Davis** attended several sessions, including an orientation for first-time board members. He said he was "very impressed with what I learned is being done at the preschool level with STEM education."

Secretary **Rhonda Newhouse** said there was much discussion throughout the conference about bridging the achievement gap and creating equity for schools and students. She was pleased to learn that Spring has already implemented or is in the process of implementing many of the programs and strategies discussed at the conference. She thanked the district administration for their leadership, which made it possible for trustees to "give information to other districts across the country, as to how we are progressing and the programs that we are using."

Although Trustee **Jana Gonzales** did not attend the conference, she represented the board at the 65th Annual Spring Livestock Show and Fair held that same weekend. She reported that the show went extremely well with support from the district and community. She was especially impressed by the way the students from each high school meshed together and demonstrated teamwork. "I want to commend all of our schools out there that are teaching our children the right things," Gonzales said.

Action Items



Early College Academy students pause from their "demo day" activities to pose for a picture in what will be their new home next school year.

Construction Management-at-Risk Method to be Used for T.C. Jester Transformation

During the Board Work Session, March 31, trustees unanimously approved the use of a Construction Management-at-Risk method for transforming the One Park Centre building located at 14450 T. C. Jester into a new campus for the Early College Academy, which is currently housed in portable buildings.

Mark Miranda, Spring ISD chief operations officer, said this decision will enable the district to open the facility in time for school to start in August.

"We made a decision toward the end of last year to do something for that school, and I am excited to report that the outcome for this facility and our students is going to be even better than we first anticipated," said Miranda.



Initial plans for the renovation only included the first two floors of the three-story building. Working with PBK Architects and the district's Chief Financial Officer **Ann Westbrook**, the district determined that it would indeed be possible to also renovate the third floor for additional instructional space by using available funds from the general budget and residual bond project money.

"We thought it made good sense and brought additional value to the district to use a professional contractor to complete the third-floor build out, especially since funding is available to do so," Miranda said.

The first two floors will be reconfigured into conventional classrooms, while the third floor will feature an open concept where exercise equipment can be used to meet the students physical education requirements. Additionally, the top floor will include computer labs. The total cost for the construction project – \$4.7 million – also allows for food service upgrades. The district has contracted with Balfour Beatty to manage the construction project.

"We purchased the building originally at \$35 per square foot, which was a great value. There is nothing out there in the current market that comes close to the \$35 per square foot that we paid for this building originally," said Miranda.

When the project is completed, the total cost, including the cost of the building, will be \$6.3 million. "Compared to the estimated cost of purchasing property and building a brand new building from scratch – a conservative estimate is \$12.3 million – this is at least a \$6 million savings for the district," Miranda said. "And we are going to get this done by the next school year, which is a huge benefit to our students."

Students at the academy participated in "demo day" at the T.C. Jester facility recently and were excited about the opportunity for their school to have a new campus. See [Demo Day video](#).

In other action the Board Approved:

- 2016-17 Instructional Materials Allotment and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) certification;
- Second reading of proposed revisions to local Board Policies CH, DH and EIC;
- Requests for Proposals for motor fuel and athletic equipment and supplies; and
- Taxpayer refunds.