

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
- Donald Davis**
- Rhonda L. Faust, J.D.**
- 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 9 at Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Blvd.

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 11 at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center to address items on the agenda. After Vice President **Chris Bell** called the meeting to order, Dekaney High School Navy JROTC Cadets **Carl Koulavongsa, Arionna Knox, Tanisha Stewart** and **Taisha Stewart** presented the colors and led the pledges of allegiance. President **Dr. Deborah Jensen** joined the meeting later in the evening.

Recognitions

Since January 1984, the Board has presented ABCD awards to individuals or groups that go Above and Beyond the Call of Duty, while Points of Pride awards are presented to students and staff for major accomplishments beyond the District.

Points of Pride Awards



Spring Early College Academy administrators and faculty join the Board of Trustees and Superintendent Dr. Rodney Watson in the horseshoe for a celebratory photo. Pictured at right, Board Vice President Chris Bell congratulates Dr. Rene Garganta, principal.

Spring Early College Earns AVID Schoolwide Site of Distinction

The Board awarded a Points of Pride award to the Spring Early College Academy for receiving national recognition as an AVID Schoolwide Site of Distinction.

Under the leadership of **Dr. Rene Garganta**, principal, Early College has excelled at preparing students for college and other post-secondary opportunities. The AVID program is one component of that process and focuses on using instruction, systems, leadership and the school's culture to emphasize all of the strengths needed to excel in college, including time management and study skills.

"The academy was one of only 104 schools in the nation to receive this recognition," said **Dr. Lupita Hinojosa**, chief school leadership and student support services officer. "We are particularly proud of this honor as it represents the highest level of AVID implementation fidelity, demonstrating excellence in instructional practice and promotion of college readiness, not just through the AVID program but schoolwide."

Garganta introduced some staff members who work closely with the program: **Faith Ripple**, AVID I teacher, **Kristine Guidry**, academic dean/associate principal for instruction; **April McAdoo**, AVID III and IV teacher and AVID coordinator; **Z Ahmed**, physics and AVID teacher. "The award is amazing and reflects a lot of hard work on the part of my staff," said Garganta.

[See video.](#)

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney Watson** began by congratulating the students who participated in the Spring Livestock Show and Fair this past weekend and by thanking employees, community members and business partners for their support of the Spring ISD Stampede buyers group. "We received a lot of support from internal staff members. We did get some money donated to us on the floor – thank you Investex," he said. "More importantly, our students had a really good time."



Rodney E. Watson

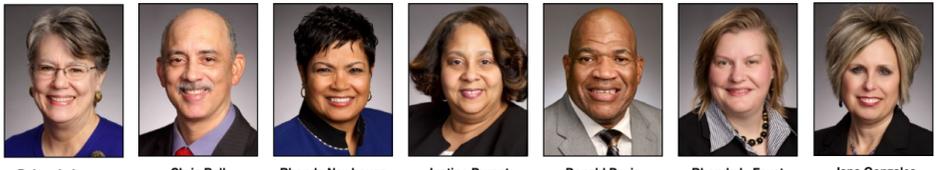
He also commented on the recent Chamber of Commerce Economic Forum which he and others at the board meeting attended: "It was a really nice event that provided information on what is going on in our community regarding jobs."

Next, he previewed an agenda item – the District of Innovation – which had been discussed in detail at the board work session on April 6.

"Last but not least, Dr. Hinojosa and I had an opportunity to walk the schools this past week. We went to two of our high schools and a few of our elementary schools, just really getting a picture of what is going on in the classrooms, important things that teachers and principals are needing, and what we need to continue focusing on," Watson said.

Trustees Remarks

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



Vice President **Chris Bell** invited trustees to make remarks.

Jana Gonzales echoed Dr. Watson's praise for the recent Spring Livestock Show and Fair. "It was nice to see the different schools – Dekaney, Spring, Westfield, Wunsche and some of our middle schools – working together in partnership out there showing their animals," Gonzales said. "We had a very successful show. The weather was nice and I just want to thank all of our staff, administration and business partners for coming out and supporting those students. We really appreciate it."

Chris Bell reported that he and Trustee **Donald Davis** had recently attending a Navy JROTC event at Spring High School and commented on how impressed they had been with the school's JROTC program, which has been recognized as the largest in the state and the fifth largest open-enrollment program in the country. "We have a great team over there," Bell said. "We have students who are doing great things ... who went on to places like the Naval Academy, other colleges and universities and the military. We are proud of their efforts," Bell said.

Action Items

Spring ISD Board Approves Local District of Innovation Plan

The Board approved and adopted the district's Local District of Innovation Plan. The action followed an extensive process that began in January and included the establishment of a local planning committee to develop the plan along with a month-long period for gathering community input and feedback.

"The District of Innovation represents an opportunity for the district to further the implementation of our five-year strategic plan EVERY CHILD 2020 by allowing us to leverage and use flexibility at the local level for some of the policies that are currently a part of the Texas Education Code," said **Julie Hill**, chief of staff.



"I really appreciated the planning for this," said Board President **Dr. Deborah Jensen**. "I like that it is tightly tied to our strategic plan and that we actually looked at our strategic plan and where we needed to have flexibility, in the legal sense, to really enact what is going to be best for every students' education in Spring."

Created by the 84th Legislature through Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 12A, the purpose of the District of Innovation designation is to allow traditional independent school districts the opportunity to obtain exemptions from certain provisions of the TEC, giving the district more local control over how instruction and education is delivered to students.

The Spring ISD Local Innovation Plan includes the following exemptions, which will impact the 2017-18 school year:

- **Minimum Attendance for Credit or Grade**
Allows opportunities for internships, mentorships, blended learning, virtual instruction and project-based learning that provide invaluable learning experiences even though students may miss part of the traditional attendance time in the classroom.
- **Staff Development Requirements**
Allows teachers to attend districtwide trainings on Spring ISD initiatives, allowing the district to more efficiently use its financial, human and material resources.
- **Student/Teacher Ratios, Class Size and Notice of Class Size**
Allows the district to continue using a class-size formula accounting for its high mobility rate of 14 to 44 percent without seeking annual waivers from the Texas Education Agency.
- **Designation of Campus Behavior Coordinator**
Allows the district to use all campus administrators and counselors to address discipline issues and to support students in managing their behaviors through a comprehensive citizenship program.
- **Planning and Preparation Time**
Allows the district to provide opportunities for teachers to review curriculum, plan instruction, analyze data, observe peers, work with mentors and perform other professional development activities during the school day at their home campus or at other campuses.
- **First Day of Instruction and Last Day of School**
Allows the district to set the start and end of school days that meet the needs of Spring ISD; balance the number of instructional days in each semester; and allows students in dual credit courses to follow the schedule of colleges and universities.
- **Certification of Instructors in Non-Core Classes**
Exempts the district from requiring individuals who are teaching Career and Technical Education courses along with college and university professors teaching dual-credit courses to hold a teaching certificate, allowing for the expansion of offerings in both areas.

Now that the Local Innovation Plan has been approved, the district can move forward with producing an instructional calendar for the 2017-18 school year, which is expected to go to the Board for approval soon.

For more information, visit www.springisd.org/doj.

Board of Trustees Creates New Employee Excellence Award

As a way to recognize more district employees, the Board approved a new program that will highlight and acknowledge positive employee behaviors and outstanding performance. The Board of Trustees Employee Excellence Award is designed to allow anyone – parents, community members, principals, staff members – to nominate employees who have brought the Spring ISD mission to life and help the district reach each and every Spring ISD student.

"There are so many staff members doing some amazing things every day in our schools. We wanted to find a way to really celebrate those employees that are making a difference. We think the Employee Excellence Award will allow us to do that, said Assistant Secretary **Justine Durant**, who led an ad hoc committee that developed the outline for the recognition program. "An example of a perfect nomination would be a long-term substitute teacher who is working extra hours to help her campus prepare for upcoming STAAR testing or a bus driver who volunteers to read at an elementary school when not scheduled to work."



The Board will award one employee each month during regular board meetings, and a grand prize winner, selected from the group, will be honored at the Spring ISD Employee Recognition Banquet held annually in May. Winners will be presented a special plaque and will receive the coveted gold Spring ISD logo lapel pin.

The program kicks off in August, and nominees will be accepted through the district elevate tool for monthly consideration by the Board of Trustees. Nominees must be employed full-time for a minimum of six months.

Watch for more information to come as we get closer to the August start time.

In other action the Board approved:

- A resolution to nominate Dr. Rodney E. Watson for the 2017 Superintendent of the Year award;
- Actual financial expenditures from July 2016 to Feb. 28, 2017 totaling \$194.4 million;
- Purchase of 60 school buses – equipped with three-point harnesses – through a cooperative purchasing agreement;
- Request for Proposals for bank depository services with BBVA Compass;
- Request for Proposals for Enterprise Wireless System; 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.