

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.

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14 via video conferencing, due to health and safety concerns related to the COVID-19 coronavirus, to address items on the agenda. **President Rhonda Newhouse** called the meeting to order.

## Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney E. Watson** opened his remarks with a report on the status of the Class of 2020 Graduation plans. Watson announced that, based on feedback received from parents and students, the district would be moving forward with plans for two graduations — virtual ceremonies to confirm graduates for each campus on Saturday, June 6, followed by in-person events for each of the high schools during the week of July 27-31 at Planet Ford Stadium. An additional benefit of holding the in-person ceremonies at the end of July is that the summer graduates will be able to take the stage with their classmates, rather than in a separate ceremony



Rodney E. Watson



Under the district's plan, the Class of 2020 will have a virtual graduation on Saturday, June 6, 2020, following this schedule:

- 9 a.m. Dekaney High School
- 11:30 a.m. Spring Early College Academy
- 2 p.m. Westfield High School
- 4:30 p.m. Spring High School
- 7 p.m. Carl Wunsche Sr. High School

The week of July 27-31, the district is planning to host in-person graduation ceremonies at the Spring ISD Planet Ford Stadium each evening at 7 p.m., using the schedule below:

- Monday, July 27 - Dekaney High School
- Tuesday, July 28 - Spring Early College Academy
- Wednesday, July 29 - Westfield High School
- Thursday, July 30 - Spring High School
- Friday, July 31 - Carl Wunsche Sr. High School

[See story.](#)

Next, Watson reported that, as of April 14, 98,731 meals had been provided by Spring ISD Child Nutrition workers to families with children 18 years old and younger at schools across the district since the curbside meal distribution began on March 16. "We know that we have several employees that are out on the front line every day making sure that our families are fed," Watson said. "Every week our meal distribution number is going up ... which lets you know that it is a need in our community and thanks to your support we are able to provide that for our families."

He then acknowledged the board for meeting in a special-called session to address the need for providing technology to students. "And so, once again, thank you all for your support in helping us to be able to do that. He reported that 3,087 chromebooks had been distributed to students in grades nine through 12, 3,473 chromebooks were distributed to students in grades six through eight and the remainder would be distributed to fourth and fifth grade students, as well as Special Education students in all grades. "So I am really happy to be able to go down to our elementary level to meet students' needs as well."

Next, Watson shared with the trustees that he had watched a video before the meeting of an elementary student reading her first, completed Project-Based Learning (PBL) assignment online. "It was beautiful to watch the young lady complete her assignment," he said. [Empowered Learning 2.0](#) PBL assignments began this week for prekindergarten through 11th-grade students, while seniors began Empowered Learning 2.0 on April 6.

In closing, Watson thanked district employees for their work. "Once again, I want to say a very special thank you to all our (police) officers that are out there working every day, our child nutrition staff, our principals and also our teachers who are not only on the front lines working but also contacting our parents. Thank you so much for your sacrifice and for supporting our students in Spring ISD," Watson said.



## Trustees

**Rhonda Newhouse, M.Ed.**  
President

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

**Donald Davis**  
Secretary

**Winford Adams Jr.**  
Assistant Secretary

**Justine Durant**

**Jana Gonzales**

**Kelly P. Hodges**

## 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 is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, May 12.**

## Trustees Remarks

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



Deborah Jensen  
Position 1



Kelly P. Hodges  
Position 2



Justine Durant  
Position 3



Winford Adams Jr.  
Position 4



Rhonda Newhouse  
Position 5



Donald Davis  
Position 6



Jana Gonzales  
Position 7

President **Rhonda Newhouse** invited the trustees to make remarks.

**Winford Adams** talked about the challenge of maintaining the balance between governance and management that faces school boards during social distancing. "I've been attending some virtual meetings and I want to acknowledge publicly that it is challenging right now to the work of governing the board, and having these virtual meetings is not quite the same as meeting with you all face-to-face and so I miss that fellowship and that coming together. Adams expressed his commitment to maintaining strong working relationships with fellow trustees during the extended closure. "I miss the fellowship of coming together," he said.

**Dr. Deborah Jensen** spoke about seeing "some wonderful things happening in our district during this challenging time." She gave kudos to Westfield High School Principal **David Mason** for his weekly newsletter, Mason's Message. "It is just phenomenal this week," Jensen said. "He not only gave a forum for students to show off their skills and wonderful accomplishments, but also he gave directions to parents and students about their assignments. He has information about where to get food – not just what Spring ISD does – he has references for finding employment in our community and then he had connections to all the PBL projects," she said. "Just kudos to principal Mason and this district. For providing much useful information to parents, including how to access community support in the way of food banks and other forms of assistance."

**Donald Davis** commended district principals, administrators and staff for their efforts during the closure. "They do an awesome job," Davis said. "Dr. Watson, I salute you." He went on to say that the district's stories need to be told, and with approval from the board and superintendent, he intends to share those stories with Leadership TASB and the Texas Caucus of Black School Board Members (TCBSBM).

**Jana Gonzales** also commended district employees. "You all are doing a fantastic job while you are also trying to take care of your own families," she said "We certainly appreciate everything you are doing. The communication has been unbelievable through Twitter, Facebook, the emails we are receiving from you all. You are doing a fantastic job. Keep up the good work and continue to take care of your own families as well. Thank you so much," she said.

**Rhonda Newhouse** talked about the response she received from the Spring community to a letter she sent out prior to the spring holiday to staff and parents, thanking them for their support in working with us in this uncertain time and thanking employees for all the hard work that they are doing. "I must say, I was truly surprised that I got a lot of emails back from people thanking the board for supporting the district, so you guys need to know that you're being appreciated as well, Board, for your support of the district," Newhouse said. "Let's continue to keep up the good work for Spring ISD."

## Action Items

### Board Approves 2nd Resolution on District Procedures Due to COVID-19

The board approved a second comprehensive resolution on district procedures in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Priorities of the four-page resolution include protecting the health and safety of students, staff and community; retaining employees; providing students with a remote-learning educational program and other services to the extent possible; altering normal operations while continuing to serve students; and ending the additional pay, as of April 18, for non-exempt employees who are called upon to do work.

In addition, the resolution also gives the superintendent authority to make decisions related to the closure, as necessary, in order to continue providing services to students.

### In other action the Board approved:

- Resolution to temporarily modify class rank calculation and suspend the requirement for AP testing to receive AP weighted credit;
- Second reading of TASB proposed revisions to Board Policy BED local regarding public participation at board meetings;
- Second reading of TASB proposed revisions to Board Policy FL local regarding student records;
- 2020-21 Texas Education Agency Annual Allotment and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) Certification;
- Accepting \$51,750 in grant funds awarded for purchasing rifle-resistant body armor;
- Engaging with Whitley Penn for the district's annual audit;
- Request for Proposal #20-012 contract for purchasing motor fuels;
- Request for Proposal #20-016 authorizing the superintendent of schools or a designee to negotiate, execute and amend contracts with the Construction Manager-at-Risk for the summer 2020 projects; 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.