

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

- Rhonda Newhouse, M.Ed.**  
President
- Jana Gonzales**  
Vice President
- Donald Davis**  
Secretary
- Justine Durant**  
Assistant Secretary
- Chris Bell**
- Deborah Jensen, Ph.D.**
- Winford Adams Jr.**

## 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. 16 at Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 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, Dec. 12 at Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center to address items on the agenda. Vice President **Jana Gonzales** called the meeting to order. Westfield High School Army JROTC Cadets **Walker Blakley, Abner Perez, Albert Salas, Faith Jones, Raul Benavides, Jean-Charles Cadeau, Jorge Alcocer** and **Timothy Beckelic** presented the colors and led the pledges of allegiance.

## Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Dr. **Rodney Watson** opened with an announcement about the 2018 Smart Kid Cool Car giveaway that will take place in May 2018.

"I'm hoping everyone is helping to spread the word about our Smart Kid Cool Car program, open to all eligible Spring ISD students," Watson said. "Honda of Spring has generously agreed to partner with us again and donate a new 2018 HRV to our car giveaway."

The opportunity to have their name put in a drawing for the brand-new Honda car is open to Spring ISD seniors who meet certain academic, attendance and community service requirements.

"I encourage all of our seniors to work hard so you are eligible for this drawing," Watson said. See [video](#).



Rodney E. Watson

He continued with a reminder that seniors who plan to attend college should fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible, as it will open the door to possible financial opportunities and loans.

"I know many of our seniors, including my daughter, will be finishing up applications over winter break. I want to give a shout out to all parents and counselors out there who are offering support and guidance during this stressful time. All of this work will pay off this spring when our students are actually accepted into college," Watson said.

Next, Watson talked about the district's focus on attendance, which includes monthly updates at board meetings about the Every Day Counts, Attendance Matters campaign. He acknowledged campuses that are making strong gains in student attendance: Spring Early College is now leading all Spring ISD campuses with a year-to-date attendance rate of 97.67 percent. Close behind are Winship Elementary and Roberson Middle school, both slightly above 97 percent. "For the second month in a row, Westfield High School is still leading the pack with the strongest year-over-year improvement," Watson said.

He went on to thank everyone who helped make the district's 3rd-annual Winter Wonderland literacy event a success, with over 1,000 attending.

"As the district's largest literacy event of the year, we hope this event helped kindle more enthusiasm for reading. Certainly, the kids were very excited about picking up their books," he said. See [Winter Wonderland](#) story.

He expressed special thanks to the Spring ISD Education Foundation for not only donating the books for the literacy event but for also coordinating a luncheon on Dec. 9 for Spring ISD families who had been impacted by Hurricane Harvey.

Through a partnership with the **Josh Beckett** Foundation, and donations from HEB and **Mattress Mack**, they hosted a luncheon in the Spring High School cafeteria and also presented HEB gift cards and a check for \$250 to each family. In addition, four families were given gift certificates from Mattress Mack valued at \$4,000 each.

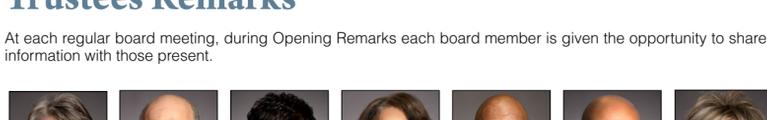
"Although Josh Beckett, who was a star baseball player at Spring High School and went on to play in the major leagues, was unable to attend, his wife **Holly Beckett**, and the director of his foundation, **Jason Oberle**, who are also Spring High alumni, were at the event. Another Spring High School graduate, **Brian Tuttle**, prepared the barbecue that was provided by the Beckett Foundation and HEB," Watson said.

Watson then introduced two finance team members who had been recently promoted: **Susy Morales**, director of finance, now oversees compliance, activity funds and treasury; and **Yvette Washington**, director of financial operations, oversees payroll, accounts payable and the finance side of benefits.

In closing, Watson acknowledged the district's football teams for their hard work. "Westfield High School gave it their very best and really came close in their third round game against Lufkin. I want to applaud their hard work. All of our teams this season deserve accolades for making it into the playoffs. I know our goal next year, is for one of our teams to come home with the winning trophy."

## Trustees Remarks

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



Before inviting the trustees to share remarks, Vice President **Jana Gonzales**, who was running the meeting in the absence of Board President **Rhonda Newhouse**, mentioned the "great comments" she had heard in the community about Winter Wonderland and the Westfield football game.

After commenting on what a great week it had been, full of wonderful activities, **Justine Durant** highlighted the Bammel 50th Anniversary Celebration. She thanked Dr. **Berky Hernandez-Owolabi** for a well-planned, elegant event that included long-time staff members and student alumni sharing what the school meant to them.

"It was just really a great activity, a great event to attend, and I want to congratulate Bammel and Dr. O for an anniversary celebration that we all truly enjoyed." See [Bammel 50th Anniversary](#) story.

Durant also reported that trustees had attended the Greater Houston Partnership Annual Board Reception where they had the opportunity to meet other elected officials.

She concluded her remarks with a comment about the Winter Wonderland event. "There were so many people you could not see the floor. And you could not miss the wonderful costumes that our cabinet wore," Durant said.

**Winford Adams Jr.** piggybacked on her reference to the Winter Wonderland, saying that his children "had a phenomenal time going around and filling out their passports and getting their book at the end." He also gave a shout out to Roberson Middle School for their recent game night that featured games that were content-oriented. He gave the example of Percentage Trashketball, in which students who make a basket then get to solve a percentage problem. "My kids loved it. We need to keep doing things like that," Adams said.

**Chris Bell** welcomed Adams, who had been sworn in and took his seat on the board at the Dec. 7 work session. "It is nice to have a new colleague on the board." Bell also recognized the members of a scout troop who were present and thanked them for attending.

"As long as you are mentioning the scouts," said **Deborah Jensen**. "I had an opportunity for a question and answer session (with them) before tonight's meeting, and I think we have some future trustees."

Following the trustees' remarks, Superintendent Dr. **Rodney Watson** publicly recognized and welcomed new Trustee Winford Adams Jr. to the Board of Trustees with the presentation of a plaque.

## Spotlight



Holiday card winners, their families and art teachers join the Board of Trustees and Superintendent in the horseshoe for a congratulatory photo.

### Spring ISD Board of Trustees Awards Top Honors in Annual Holiday Card Contest

The Board recognized three elementary school students for their submissions to the district's annual holiday card art contest. Chosen as this year's winning entry was artwork by **Jenna Duong** of Hirsch Elementary. Her artwork will grace the cover of the district's 2017 holiday card from the office of Superintendent Dr. **Rodney Watson**.

The top three students in this year's competition, listed together with their campus and art teacher, are as follows:

Winner: <b>Jenna Duong</b>	1st Finalist: <b>Kiarrah Blatz</b>	2nd Finalist: <b>Kenia Ochoa</b>
Grade: 2nd	Grade: 1st	Grade: 5th
School: Hirsch Elementary	School: Smith Elementary	School: Meyer Elementary
Teacher: <b>Angel Reynaud</b>	Teacher: <b>Dorris Pauley</b>	Teacher: <b>Barbara Gardner</b>

"Each year, students enter their artwork in hopes of it being selected for the cover of Dr. Watson's Holiday Card," said Dr. **Joe Clark**, director of performing and visual arts. "This year, we're proud to continue that tradition. Each finalist received a framed or matted print of their artwork, and the first-place winner also received printed copies of the same holiday card that Dr. Watson receives, to share with her own family and friends this holiday season."

Each student was also given a gift bag of art supplies at the board meeting.

The Spring ISD holiday card is mailed out each year from the superintendent's office to a group that includes senior administrators, community leaders, local business partners and others whose support is vital to the district's mission and goals.

This year's competition sought submissions from all Spring ISD elementary school students, while next year's contest will draw from the work of the district's secondary students.



Superintendent Dr. Rodney Watson congratulates Jenna Duong.



Holiday card winners Jenna Duong, from left, Kenia Ochoa and Kiarrah Blatz show off their artwork, framed and ready for display.

## Public Hearing

### District Receives Highest Rating from State for Financial Accountability

The Spring Independent School District received the highest rating possible from the Financial Accountability Rating System of Texas for the district's 2015-16 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.

"I'm pleased to announce that for the 2015-16 fiscal year, Spring ISD achieved an A rating, which of course is the highest rating and represents superior achievement," said **Ann Westbrook**, chief financial officer.

The School FIRST rating system which was used to assess the 2015-16 year consists of 15 base indicators that analyze trends related to financial management efficiencies. The first five 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 five. Failure to comply with any of these five indicators results in an automatic failure.

See [School FIRST](#) report. Printed copies are available from the finance office upon request.

## Presentation:



Board Trustees listen to a presentation on the designs for the new police command center and district stadium.

### Architects Present Designs for Police Command Center and District Stadium

Spring ISD trustees got a detailed look at the proposed designs for both the district stadium and the police center. Using a 117-acre parcel of land off Cypresswood Drive just south of Burchett Elementary school, the new stadium features a state-of-the-art turf field with seating for 8,000 fans, a large community room, Hall of Fame area, band plaza, concessions and food prep areas, home and away locker rooms, as well as hospitality and press box areas.

A special feature would be a special memorial plaza to honor service members from the Spring area.

"Stadiums are highly visible," said **Laura Sachtleben**, one of the architects on the project from the firm of Stantec. "We know the importance of this and we're honored to be part of it."

Sachtleben assured the trustees that the proposed design was developed with the input of multiple departments, including athletics, transportation and police. The firm has also been working with the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) on the project, Satterfield and Pontikes.

Under the current schedule, construction on the stadium would visibly begin in late spring with a target completion date of third quarter 2019, in time for football season.

Trustees also had the opportunity to see the proposed designs for the new Spring ISD Police Command Center and Tax Office, which will be located at a district-owned building at 420 Lockhaven Drive.

The GPD Group (previously SBWV) presented a \$1.8 million plan that would renovate the first floor of the 41,644-square-foot building for the police department, now located on N. Forest Boulevard, and renovate the second floor for the tax office, technology department offices and the district's risk management group.

"We're committed to creating a state-of-the-art facility that is more than double the size of the police department's current building," said **Mark Miranda**, chief operations officer. Besides adding much-needed office and cubicle space for the district's 62 police officers and six dispatchers, the renovated building would also include a new holding area as well as a secure property storage room. The building would also feature a large training space that could be used by the police department, as well as other district staff, as needed.

"The district has definitely outgrown the current facility," said Trustee **Justine Durant**, who praised the district for purchasing a building that already included features that would work well for a police department, including a sally port and even some furnishings.

By renovating the second floor for the tax office, the district would be able to move those operations out of the portable buildings at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center at 16717 Ella Boulevard.

The office space would feature a larger lobby, meeting services, tax record storage and vault room, as well as some conference room areas for taxpayer transactions. The renovation work is expected to kick off in the spring, Miranda said.



Architectural drawing of the proposed Spring ISD stadium design.

### District Partners with EMERGE to Help High-performing Students from Under-served Communities Access Selective Universities

Dr. **Lupita Hinojosa** introduced a program under consideration called EMERGE that empowers and prepares high performing students from under-served communities to attend and graduate from selective colleges and universities nationwide.

EMERGE Executive Director **Trisha Cornwell** was at the meeting to show how the program aligns with the goals of the district, its benefits and what a potential partnership would look like. Cornwell presented data showing that only three percent of the students in the nation's top colleges come from the bottom 25 percent of the income quartile. Additionally, only eight percent of students with the SAT scores and GPAs to get into a top college ever submit an application. "It's not that these students don't exist at these high schools, they are a top college applicant," Cornwell said.

The EMERGE program, which begins with a student's 10th-grade year and follows through high school graduation and college, identifies and works with high-potential students to make them aware of the opportunities for them to attend select schools, as well as available scholarships, which range from 85 to 100 percent of a student's financial needs.

"Our goal is to connect students with schools where we know they have the highest probability of graduating," Cornwell said.

## Action Items

### Agreement with iEducatte Will Provide College-student Tutors in 3rd- through 5th-Grade Classrooms

The Board approved a Memorandum of Understanding with iEducatte to hire college students from area universities to work alongside teachers in the district's 3rd- through 5th-grade classrooms.

A non-profit organization, iEducatte's goal is to expose elementary school students to role models that not only assist in instruction, but also represent the potential of academic excellence and the pursuit of higher education.

### In other action the Board approved:

- Authorization for issuing unlimited tax refunding bonds, Series 2018;
- A Request for Proposal for excess workers' compensation stop-loss insurance;
- The internal audit mid-year report;
- Adopting a resolution to vote for Pete Pape for a position on the Harris County Appraisal District Board of Directors to represent all Harris County school districts except Houston ISD;
- An interlocal agreement with Klein ISD for armored truck services;
- Requests for Proposal for group travel services, carpet and vinyl tile replacement, and plumbing services; and
- Taxpayer refunds.