

SPRINGBOARD

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, March 21 at Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Blvd.

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 14 at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center to address items on the agenda. After President **Dr. Deborah Jensen** called the meeting to order, Dekaney High School Navy JROTC Cadets **Jesse Hernandez, Priscilla Hernandez, Gerbert Guadamuz, Leonardo Fernandez** and **Nathaniel Vasquez** presented the colors and led the pledge of allegiance.

Recognitions

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

Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award



Members of the Career and Technology Education Advisory Board join the Board of Trustees and Superintendent Dr. Rodney Watson in the horseshoe for a celebratory photo.

CTE Advisory Board Recognized for Going Above and Beyond the Call of Duty

The Board recognized and honored the Spring ISD Career and Technology Advisory Board with an Above and Beyond the Call of Duty award for providing guidance and support to Spring ISD for nearly four decades.

"The CTE Advisory Board has long been at the leading edge of preparing our kids for life after graduation – helping us to "Reach Every Student" and ensuring "Excellence in Every School," said **Tiffany Dunne-Oldfield**, chief communications officer.

The advisory board is probably best known for its annual scholarship luncheon, hosted each spring. Over the years, the event has raised more than \$300,000 to help fund post-secondary training, education and industry certifications for students as well as teacher program grants for classroom innovation.

"Perhaps not so well known, but key to the success of the district's CTE program, are the real-world connections the board and its numerous committees provide," said Dunne-Oldfield.

Business, industry and community representatives are recruited each year to bring their expertise to the district's career clusters. Many volunteer hours are spent evaluating the CTE program needs at each campus and making recommendations for both long- and short-range planning based on the current job market and future trends.

In addition, whether it be serving on last year's bond advisory committee, the current boundary advisory committee, the Spring ISD Education Foundation or some other worthwhile program, the CTE Advisory Board members are quick to step up and step in when the call goes out for help.

"As we celebrate February as Career Awareness Month, it is the perfect time for us to take a moment and reflect on the incredible work – the Above and Beyond the Call of Duty work – of our CTE Advisory Board," Dunne-Oldfield said. "Since its inception, it has been helping the district help our students prepare for life after high school."

Points of Pride Award



Individual music students receive congratulations from Board Trustee Justine Durant, pictured at left, and from Chief Communications Officer Tiffany Dunne-Oldfield, pictured at right.



All-state music students and their directors gather in the horseshoe for a congratulatory photo with Board of Trustees and Superintendent Dr. Rodney Watson.

Music Students Shine in All-State Ensembles at TMEA Convention

The Board presented Points of Pride awards to 15 students from the district's three comprehensive high schools who qualified to participate in all-state ensembles – including choirs, bands, orchestras and jazz ensembles – during the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) 2017 clinic and convention in San Antonio, Feb. 8–11.

More than 64,000 student-musicians from across the state compete in a challenging, multi-stage audition process for the chance to perform at the annual conference. Roughly 1,700 of those students received invitations to join one of this year's 15 all-state ensembles.

Spring High School band students who participated, along with their placements, are: **Christian Gonzalez**, clarinet, 1st chair – All-State Philharmonic Orchestra (3rd year All-State); **Melvin Vega**, clarinet, 2nd chair – All-State Philharmonic Orchestra (2nd year All-State); **Anthony Cook**, percussion, 6th chair – All-State Philharmonic Orchestra; **Kendrick Cortez**, euphonium, 8th chair – All-State Symphonic Band (2nd year All-State); **Ryan Dimaranan**, trumpet, 13th chair – All-State Symphonic Band; **Diego Rojas**, bass clarinet, 4th chair – All-State Concert Band; **Javior Sorrell**, baritone saxophone, 2nd chair – All-State Concert Band; and **Michael Harrison**, drum set, 2nd chair – All-State Jazz Ensemble I.

Dekaney High School band students who participated, along with their placements, are: **Gerson Sibrian**, trumpet, 9th chair – All-State Concert Band; **Juan Guardiola**, contrabassoon, 1st chair – All-State Concert Band; and **Omar Carrillo**, clarinet, 27th chair – All-State Concert Band.

Westfield High School's **Thomas Bui**, a band student, was selected again this year. A percussionist, Bui earned 1st chair ranking in the All-State Philharmonic Orchestra.

Spring High School vocal music students who participated, along with their placements, are: **Breanna Lindsey**, alto 2, 4th chair – All-State Mixed Choir (2nd year All-State); **Josue Hernandez**, tenor 2, 6th chair – All-State Tenor-Bass Choir; and **Zach Alvear**, Bass 2, 8th chair – All-State Tenor-Bass Choir.

Spotlight



Black History Month Oratory Contest winners join the Board and Superintendent for a congratulatory photo. Giovanni Brothers, pictured at right, makes a point during his speech.

Black History Oratory Contest Winners Present Their Speeches

Recognizing February as Black History Month, Board Trustees joined the audience to listen to the top three winners of the district's first Black History Month Oratory Contest present their speeches on the topic of "Barack Obama – Our First African-American President."

The winners are: First Place – **Lance Williams**, Winship Elementary School; Second Place – **Giovanni Brothers**, McNabb Elementary School; and Third Place – **Rodney Watson II**, Beneke Elementary School.

Superintendent's Report



Rodney E. Watson

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney Watson** reported on some of the agenda items that had been thoroughly discussed at the board work session on Feb. 9. "Last week's board session lasted well into the evening," Watson said. "Meetings like that aren't the norm but they are important, when needed, to ensure that we continue the important work of the district."

He began with the Attendance Boundary Review work that has resulted in proposals that would improve school capacity levels; create clearer feeder patterns; strengthen academics; and prepare for a new middle school and three ninth-grade centers.

"The changes provide us an opportunity to establish true feeder patterns from middle to high schools – allowing our schools the opportunity for increased collaboration. We currently only have one middle school with a clear feeder pattern to a single high school," Watson said. "Under the proposed boundary changes, we would have five middle schools with clear feeder patterns to a single high school – a huge improvement." See www.springisd.org/abr

Watson went on to speak about the district's preparation for expanding transportation to a one-mile limit in August. "The word is out that we are hiring bus drivers. Information is all over social media about our increase, and you may have heard an ad on the radio about our upcoming job fair. Your approval of a new compensation and incentive plan for our transportation team will allow us to not only reward current drivers for their hard work but also recruit new drivers," Watson said. See www.springisd.org/busdrivers for more information.

He then addressed the possibility of becoming a District of Innovation. "We will also continue exploring the District of Innovation designation. As you know, this unique designation will give the district more local control over how instruction is delivered to students," Watson said. See story below

Next, Watson recognized recent outstanding achievements, including the District Principals of the Year and the Dekaney Diamonds dance team.

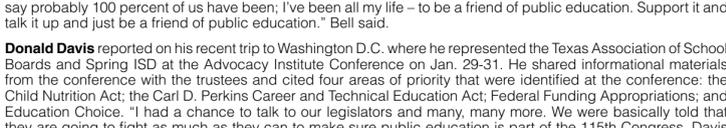
Principals of the Year **Lettie Gonzalez** of Cooper Elementary and **Dario Villota** of Twin Creeks Middle School will both represent the district in this year competition, and will also be recognized at the annual Spring ISD Employee Recognition Banquet later this year. See story

"As many of you watched the Super Bowl a few weeks ago, we had several students actually out on the field performing," Watson said. "The Dekaney Diamonds dance team was invited to perform with Lady GaGa during the halftime show; this was truly a once in a lifetime opportunity."

Watson concluded with a video presentation of an innovative classroom at the Richey Academy. **Joy Bazzle**, sixth-through eighth-grade English teacher, has created a classroom that incorporates movement and fun into the learning experience by employing standing work stations, stationary bicycles, elliptical machines with desktops, and large exercise balls instead of chairs to sit on. See video

Trustees Remarks

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



President **Dr. Deborah Jensen** invited trustees to make remarks.

Chris Bell expressed his delight at seeing so many attending the board meeting. "It is always good to have a packed house when we do this," Bell said. He went on to talk about the focus currently on education at both the state and national levels. "I just want to encourage everybody who has been part of public education – I would say probably 100 percent of us have been; I've been all my life – to be a friend of public education. Support it and talk it up and just be a friend of public education," Bell said.

Donald Davis reported on his recent trip to Washington D.C. where he represented the Texas Association of School Boards and Spring ISD at the Advocacy Institute Conference on Jan. 29-31. He shared informational materials from the conference with the trustees and cited four areas of priority that were identified at the conference: the Child Nutrition Act; the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act; Federal Funding Appropriations; and Education Choice. "I had a chance to talk to our legislators and many, many more. We were basically told that they are going to fight as much as they can to make sure public education is part of the 115th Congress. Davis commended Trustees Bell and Durant for their involvement in advocacy at the state level, and mentioned an advocacy group that was started in August called One Voice for Texas.

Justine Durant continued the discussion regarding governmental activity related to public education. "One of the most important roles we play is as a citizen. As citizens united we can make a difference. Public education is being threatened right now. It is really important that you write letters and make phone calls, send emails and make sure that, as a citizen, your voice is heard," Durant said.

Rhonda Newhouse took the opportunity to "toot some of our students' horns." She talked about Westfield High School's Drama Department Black History Touring Show, "The Westfield High School drama department is doing an awesome job in their performances, starting back in January, of telling the story [of black history]," said Newhouse. "They are not only telling the story in our school, but this past Sunday, I had an opportunity to witness them at a church. They are going from church to church this month and have been doing this for several years. I don't know who a lot of students who are taking every Sunday off to go to someone's church somewhere to perform. So hats off to the Westfield Drama Department for the outstanding job that they are doing spreading the good word about Spring ISD throughout the Houston community."

Jana Gonzales recommended that people follow Spring ISD schools on Twitter. "There is something going on every single day at every school and it is just amazing the things that our students and teachers are doing," Gonzales said. "It's just phenomenal the things that are happening in Spring ISD. Thank you to all of our principals, administrators and teachers. Keep up the good work, because you guys are doing great things in Spring," Gonzales said.

Deborah Jensen closed by mentioning her positive experiences during recent school visits, including a mock inaugural ball at Clark Intermediate School and a career day at Beneke Elementary School.

"Clark Intermediate has an experiential unit on what it takes to be a citizen and what's involved in an election in the United States," Jensen said. "I will tell you that I think the most impressive thing in that inaugural ball was the secret service. They were just adorable."

At Beneke's career day, she was impressed with presentations given by students from Carl Wunsch Sr. High School. "I had the privilege of seeing some Wunsche students who are in the education program teach a class of students. Oh my goodness, they are good. I was trying to recruit them. Also there were some young men and women in uniform that were future law enforcement and they were really outstanding," Jensen said. She concluded by thanking Trustee Newhouse for her presentation at the career fair.

Presentation

Report on District Educational Performance; Texas Academic Performance Report

Dr. Lauren Topek, chief of curriculum, instruction and assessment, reported on the district's educational performance and the Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR) during a public hearing that is required annually by the state of Texas. The TAPR includes state, district and school-level data that is disaggregated by four areas: ethnicity, economically disadvantaged, English language learner and special education. See TAPR

Action Items

2017 Instructional Materials Adoption for Career and Technical Education

Following a public hearing on the State Board of Education's Proclamation 2017 Instructional Materials Adoption of Career and Technical Education textbooks, the Board of Trustees approved new instructional materials for CTE courses from the following publishers: Cengage Learning, iCEV, Pearson, McGraw Hill Glencoe and McGraw Hill Education, all from the Texas Education Agency approved vendor list. Schools will begin using the new materials in the 2017-18 school year.

Fifty-eight CTE teachers from across the district, representing both middle and high school levels, were involved in the process. Members attended vendor presentations based on approximately 16 career clusters, and thoroughly evaluated textbooks, which included soliciting feedback from other teachers.

Process to Become a District of Innovation

Following a public hearing, the Board approved a resolution to initiate the process of becoming a District of Innovation. With this status, Spring ISD will be able to further personalize how instruction is delivered to students.

Established by the 84th Texas Legislature, the District of Innovation distinction gives traditional independent school districts in Texas access to many of the flexibilities offered to Texas' open enrollment charter schools.

"If approved, this designation will give us more local control over how instruction and education is delivered to our students," said Spring ISD Chief of Staff Julie Hill. "There are nearly 100 exemptions to areas of the Texas education code available. Curriculum, instruction, budgeting, the length of the school day as well as the start of the school year can be considered for a district's local plan. We can also choose to have more flexibility with educator certifications, allowing us to be creative in hiring CTE (Career and Technical Education) instructors and teachers."

Hill went on to explain that Spring ISD's final innovation plan, which can be in place for five-years, will be created by the local innovation committee that was also appointed during this month's meeting. The 20-member committee made up of various district stakeholders – including parents, teachers, business and community members, school administrators, district leadership and trustees – will develop Spring ISD's innovation plan to further the implementation of the five-year strategic plan, EVERY CHILD 2020. They will also consider the district's academic needs, staffing requirements and district goals. Once completed, the initial plan will be posted online for public feedback for 30 days. The committee will then meet to review the feedback and finalize the plan.

One exemption that will be considered relates to the start of the school year. Traditionally, Spring ISD's academic calendar is approved in the month of February; however, this year the process has been delayed until the local innovation committee finalizes the innovation plan and it is approved by the Board of Trustees.

"We will release a calendar for the 2017-18 school year as soon as possible. We know that those dates are key to our community planning," said Hill. "Our goal is to have as much information as possible as we develop a calendar that fits the local needs of the Spring ISD community."

In other action the Board approved:

- Affiliation agreement with Lamar University to provide speech language pathologist interns with an opportunity to participate in a supervised, structured internship with the district;
- First reading of proposed policy provision CDA (Local) regarding other revenues – investments;
- First reading of proposed policy provision FC (Local) regarding student attendance areas;
- 2016-17 second budget review; and
- Taxpayer refund.

Important dates:

- The plan will be presented to the district's Advisory Committee on Education (ACE) on March 6. Their approval is needed before the plan can be presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration.
- The plan will be posted online for public viewing and feedback March 7 – April 6.
- The local innovation committee will present the plan to the Board of Trustees for consideration and adoption on April 11.

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, age, color, religion, national origin, military status, or any other legally protected status in making decisions regarding staff members or students.