

# SPRINGBOARD

A Publication of the Spring ISD Board of Trustees

Vol. 26 No. 6/ January 2017

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

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**Justine Durant**  
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**Rhonda L. Faust, J.D.**

**Jana Gonzales**

## Public Participation is Welcomed

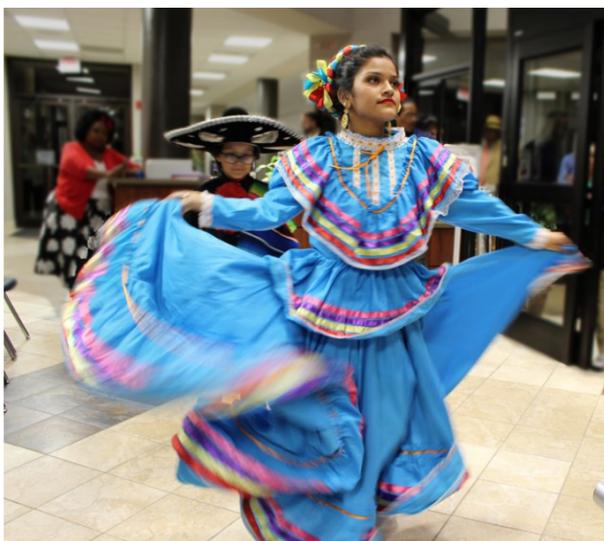
Citizens who want to speak at a Board meeting are asked to register at least 15 minutes prior to the time when the meeting is scheduled to begin.

For more information, go online at [www.springisd.org](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, Feb. 14 at Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Blvd.**

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 10 at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center to address items on the agenda. After President **Dr. Deborah Jensen** called the meeting to order, Spring High School Navy JROTC Cadets **Sierra Trones, Stephen Torres, Andres Diaz, Joe Aguilar and Stephen Terrazas** presented the colors and led the pledges of allegiance.

## January is Board Appreciation Month



Janeth Pilar and Jasser Pilar entertain board trustees.

### Board Trustees Recognized for Service and Commitment

With January designated National School Board Recognition Month, the district and community took the opportunity to show their appreciation to the Spring ISD Board of Trustees for their voluntary service and tireless commitment to the students and employees of the district. The evening began with a dinner where trustees received certificates of appreciation from Superintendent **Dr. Rodney E. Watson** and many good wishes from both district and campus administrators who attended.

Before the board meeting, trustees and guests were entertained by members of the Claughton Middle School Theatre Company, directed by **Lillian Pope**. Among the troupe, were **Janeth Pilar**, pictured at left, with her brother **Jasser Pilar**.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of proclamations from Texas State Senator **Sylvia Garcia** and Harris County Precinct 4 Commissioner **Jack Cagle** acknowledging the board's numerous contributions to the community.



At left, Superintendent Rodney Watson presents Trustee Jana Gonzales a certificate of appreciation. At right, President Deborah Jensen is thanked for her service by Cooper Elementary School Principal Leticia Gonzalez.



## Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney Watson** opened his remarks by expressing his appreciation to the trustees. "Once again, thank you for all the things that you do. Sometimes the job can be thankless with all the volunteer hours that you give, but this month is really a time for us to say thank you as we reflect upon all of the contributions you have given as a board."

Watson also thanked the trustees for their active engagement during the work session on Jan. 5 and at the board retreat on Jan. 6-7. "I really appreciate the hard questions that you all asked ... the feedback you gave and more important, the participation as we share with you the direction we're headed," he said.

Next, he reported that the board and administration are beginning to discuss the 2017-18 budget development, specifically the conversation facilitated by **Ann Westbrook**, chief financial officer, at the board work session. "In that discussion, we talked about the enrollment this year – we are predicting it to again be flat. In addition, we are monitoring the legislative session related to some of the priorities that we have discussed, and I know we'll be finalizing those priorities as we continue to move forward." He went on to mention a few district priorities that will be on future agendas for discussion, including restorative discipline initiatives, expanded prekindergarten and an elementary gifted and talented center.

"Last but definitely not least, last week A-F ratings came out, and we did have a brief conversation regarding some of the concerns regarding the implementation of that legislation. As you know, as a district we don't make any excuses for it. We are and will stand ready to respond to any new accountability systems that the state puts out. We do know that we have a struggling population as it relates to at-risk students on socioeconomic levels, but that does not mean our students aren't able to meet the standards. We will continue to bring information back to you and show you how we are addressing those concerns in meeting the needs of all our students," Watson said.



Rodney E. Watson

## Trustees Remarks

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



Deborah Jensen



Chris Bell



Rhonda Newhouse



Justine Durant



Donald Davis



Rhonda L. Faust



Jana Gonzales

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

**Chris Bell** said he was elated by all the love shown throughout the district during School Board Appreciation Month. "It is good to be appreciated. Some folks think we are paid. Some folks think we are highly paid. We are just cheerleaders, and we are servants," Bell said. He went on to remind the audience that the Texas Legislature is now in session. "It is going to be fast and furious. Over 1,200 bills have already been prefiled. The top priority for the speaker of the house – the number one priority he mentioned was school finance." Bell finished by encouraging the public to make their opinions known to their legislators.

**Deborah Jensen** talked about the board's team building at the Saturday retreat on Jan. 7 and thanked trustees for their participation. "I'm excited about how we are starting to get more and more of our own board policy and systems together so that we can be a more powerful board. Learning how to be a board member is an ongoing process. I thought we made quite a bit of progress on Saturday, so thank you all for coming."

**Justine Durant** echoed Jensen's remarks on team building. "It was a treat to work with my colleagues on the board. Everyone has a heart and a passion for what's best for kids, and as long as we continue to put that first, we can't do anything but grow and strive forward." Durant talked about the power of working together – with other districts as well – to be heard during the current legislative session. "It is high time that they adjust how they fund public education. Our kids deserve more. If you find some time to write some letters and make some phone calls, we would really appreciate it, and it would be great for our kids," Durant said.

## Action Items

### Board Approves New Math and LOTE Textbooks for the 2017-18 School Year

Following a public hearing on the State Board of Education's Proclamation 2017 Instructional Materials Adoption, the Board of Trustees approved new mathematics and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) textbooks. Classes will begin using the textbooks in 2017-18. The new instructional materials were displayed in the hallway outside the boardroom for the public to inspect. Career and Technical Education textbooks were also part of the public hearing, however those textbooks will be presented to the board for approval in February.

Textbooks approved on Jan. 10 are: Algebraic Reasoning by Consenza and Associates, Statistics and Probability with Applications by Bedford, Freeman and Worth; and Spanish levels I to IV and French levels I to IV by Vista Learning.

The selection process for each textbook, which involved committees of administrators and teachers, included a thorough evaluation of each selection's alignment with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and current Spring ISD curriculum, as well as research to ensure that there have been no controversies regarding the books.

"I very much appreciated that the committees were made up of teachers who have been recognized as teachers of the year or teachers that stood out in the core competencies that these books represent," said Trustee **Rhonda Faust**. "That gave me a greater sense that a lot of due diligence had gone into the selection of these textbooks and reassurance that all of the TEKS will be met by the content of these learning materials."

### In other action the Board approved:

- Second reading of proposed addition to Board Policy CCA local, regarding debt management; and
- Taxpayer refunds.



Dr. Lupita Hinojosa, chief of school leadership and student support services, inspects the new textbooks on display outside the boardroom.



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