

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

Rhonda Newhouse, M.Ed.
President

Winford Adams Jr.
Vice President

Kelly P. Hodges
Secretary

Justine Durant
Assistant Secretary

Donald Davis

Jana Gonzales

Deborah Jensen, Ph.D.

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. on Tuesday, Feb. 9 at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Blvd.

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 12 at the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center to address items on the agenda. The meeting was a hybrid of in-person and virtual, with trustees together in person, while most other participants and members of the public joined the meeting via Zoom. President **Rhonda Newhouse** called the meeting to order and led the pledges to the flags.

January is Board Appreciation Month



The Spring ISD Board of Trustees are Kelly P. Hodges, from left, Jana Gonzales, Winford Adams Jr., Rhonda Newhouse, Justine Durant, Deborah Jensen and Donald Davis.

Board Trustees Honored for their Dedication to Spring ISD Students, Staff and Community

Every January, school board members across the state and nation are recognized during National School Board Recognition Month for the contributions they make to their schools and communities. Prior to the meeting, Trustees were honored at a special event where they were presented certificates of appreciation, gift baskets from campus administrators and many thanks for their tireless voluntary service.

Campus administrators shared stories and reflections about how the trustees make a difference for their campuses and in the lives of their students. [See story.](#)

Recognitions

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

Hirsch Teacher Honored for Going 'Above and Beyond the Call of Duty'

Trustees honored Hirsch Elementary School second-grade teacher **Diane Moore** with an ABCD Award for showing incredible presence of mind and preparedness in aiding a student who was choking on campus.

"In December, just before the Winter Break, Ms. Moore came to the aid of a student who was choking during lunchtime," said Chief of Innovation and Communications **Tiffany Dunne-Oldfield** during her remarks.

"Knowing there was no time to waste, she utilized her safety training to perform the Heimlich maneuver, clearing the student's airway and resolving a dangerous situation," Dunne-Oldfield said. "We want to give her a big round of applause for going above and beyond the call of duty – and saving one of our student's lives."

Trustees added their praise for Moore's actions, including **Dr. Deborah Jensen**, who said she recognized the difficulty in putting knowledge into action in the middle of an emergency.

"I would like to add a real compliment to someone who can take your training, connect it to a situation in an emergency where there's, I'm sure, quite a bit of feelings and excitement, and you were calm in the middle of a storm," Jensen said. "We are really blessed to have you. Thank you."

Trustee **Winford Adams Jr.** thanked Moore for her example of "being level-headed in a crisis situation, and doing what teachers do," by always keeping a watchful eye out for the children in their care. That same sentiment was echoed in comments by Hirsch's principal, **Dr. Clare Resilla**.

"Thanks to Mrs. Moore's quick thinking and skilled response she was able to perform the Heimlich maneuver and save our Hirsch scholar from what could have been a catastrophic event," Resilla said. "Although fairly new to Hirsch Elementary and to the district, Mrs. Moore's dedication and passion for serving our Hirsch Hawks are evident in all she does."

Moore joined Spring ISD at the beginning of the 2019-20 school year, shortly after completing her longtime goal of becoming a Texas certified teacher. She went on to be named Hirsch's Rookie Teacher of the Year. Moore said she was extremely grateful for the ABCD recognition, but felt she could not have acted otherwise when faced with the frightening situation in the school cafeteria.

"I have to give the praise to God, because His hand was definitely on the situation," Moore told trustees. "I am extremely proud to be a part of Spring ISD, and particularly Hirsch Elementary. We have a fabulous leader and a great staff that was there in an instant to support. So, I truly am humbled and I thank you very much for your kindness." [Read more.](#)



Hirsch Elementary School second-grade teacher Diane Moore holds the ABCD award honoring her for coming to the aid of a choking student.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney E. Watson** opened his remarks by wishing the Board a happy Board Recognition Month, which is celebrated every January.

"We just honored our trustees with a special Zoom celebration for all their hard work on behalf of the district," Watson said. "I say this all the time and I'm not exaggerating when I tell everyone that Spring ISD has the best board in the state with trustees who truly care about making a difference for our students and staff."

He noted the long hours, late meetings and all the commitments and responsibilities of the volunteer position. The pandemic has only added to the challenges. "I thank you so much for your leadership and your guidance during this pandemic and I've been grateful for your flexibility to help us navigate the changes that we've experienced," Watson said.

Watson also went on to reassure everyone that the district is continuing to monitor the situation around COVID-19. He said he is in frequent communications with area medical providers and other area superintendents. "Our priority is the health and safety of our staff and students as we fulfill our mission to provide daily instruction," he said. "This has been an ongoing balancing act and I want to make sure I say thank you to all of our teachers, custodians, child nutrition workers, bus drivers, administrators, police, support staff and everyone who makes this work possible every single day."

He said the district would continue to let employees know about potential vaccine opportunities and urged everyone to stay safe as the vaccines become available to more people.

Watson then discussed the instructional calendar for the upcoming school year. "Our goal is to be able to bring a calendar recommendation to the Board in February for approval," he said. Before then, the district will work with the Advisory Committee on Education for input and survey staff and parents about the proposed options. "We know how important the calendar is for our families and staff to start planning so please keep your eyes open for our survey later this month," he said.

Finally, Watson reminded everyone about the four asynchronous learning days for students this semester, including the first one on Wednesday, Jan. 27.

"On that day, all students — both remote and in-person learners — will work from home on asynchronous assignments that have been provided by their teacher/campus," he said. "Our goal is to give our teachers time to plan and collaborate on their campuses during these designated days."



Rodney E. Watson

Trustees Remarks

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



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

Winford Adams Jr. said how much he had enjoyed being in the stands to cheer on Spring High School's football team during their Regional Semifinals game against DeSoto High School on Dec. 26.

"I wanted to congratulate the Spring High School football team and their coach and players and Principal Melendez on a hard-fought game," Adams said. "They didn't bear out against DeSoto, but I just wanted to congratulate them on their season."

Dr. Deborah Jensen praised the district's Technology department, under the leadership of Technology Officer Jeff Kohrman, along with all those working to acquire and distribute mobile hotspots to district families in need of reliable internet access, as well as the efforts to spread the word about free internet plans available to qualifying families.

"It is just amazing how many families are getting these hotspots and the Chromebooks so the kids can be connected," Jensen said. "This is going to be a whole new world of connectivity, I think, for our whole community, and it's an amazing thing."

Justine Durant reminded community members that the Texas Legislature was now in session, and that important matters related to schools would be up for debate in 2021, including the extension of the hold-harmless period put in place last fall to protect district funding despite the statewide effects of COVID-19 on enrollment rates.

"Our legislators are now in session," Durant said, encouraging members of the Spring ISD community "to reach out to your local representative and encourage them to continue to hold our districts harmless, in supporting us with the appropriate financing we need throughout this pandemic."

Durant also pointed out the Board's key legislative priorities listed on the district website, which members of the community can also support by contacting their representatives.

Rhonda Newhouse began her own remarks by thanking everyone involved in organizing the Board Appreciation event held earlier that evening.

"I'd first like to say thank you to our principals and administrative staff that did a wonderful job in appreciating the school board members before our meeting tonight," Newhouse said. "We are very appreciative of your gifts and kind words. But please know, we know that we are here to serve you, and you are first – our students are first – and this is just a pleasure for us to work and serve for our students and our teachers, staff and community."

Newhouse also took the opportunity to thank departing Chief of Innovation and Communications **Tiffany Dunne-Oldfield** for her years of service in Spring ISD. She went on to congratulate Dunne-Oldfield on her new role as Associate Executive Director of Marketing and Communications for the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) in Austin, where she will support the work of school boards and school districts across the state.

"We appreciate all that you have done for the Board," Newhouse told Dunne-Oldfield. "You work with us graciously, we depend on your participation, and we are grateful to miss you. But we wish you good luck and blessings on your new position. Congratulations to you and your family."

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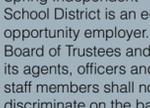
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Spring Independent School District is an equal opportunity employer. The Board of Trustees and its agents, officers and staff members shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, age, color, religion, national origin, military status, or any other legally protected status in making decisions regarding staff members or students.

To see the full TAPR report for 2019-20, as well as previous years, please visit [this page.](#)

In other action the Board approved:

- Minutes from the following meetings: Dec. 3, 2020 Board Work Session; Dec. 7, 2020 Special Called Session and Dec. 7, 2020 Regular Meeting;
- The waiver to utilize additional asynchronous instruction days;
- Second reading of proposed revisions to BDB(LOCAL);
- The contract for internet access to the provider recommended by the administration;
- Taxpayer refunds