

SPRINGBOARD

A Publication of the Spring ISD Board of Trustees

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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, Dec. 13 at Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Blvd.

The Spring ISD Board of Trustees met at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 3 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, Arionna Knox, Christian Hernandez and Arma'n Winters** presented the colors and led the pledge of allegiance.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent **Dr. Rodney E. Watson** spoke about the importance of participating in the election on Nov. 8 and the efforts of so many individuals involved in the district's \$330 million bond referendum that appears on the ballot. He thanked all volunteers for their tireless work at the polls.

"Over the past few weeks, several of us, including myself, have been going out into the community talking about the bond proposal and really outlining the plans that we have to move the district forward," Watson said.

Watson invited the board and members of the audience to join him in watching an encore presentation of the bond video that he said epitomizes what we are working for within the district. See [Bond Video](#).

Watson also reported that district staff members are monitoring the Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS) at campuses, with assistant superintendents working directly with principals at their schools. "In addition to volunteering on the weekends to work the polls and educate our community, the staff has been hard at work really monitoring the systems and structures that we have put in place," 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.

Donald Davis reported on the positive feedback he has been receiving daily at the polls, not only about the bond but also about district accomplishments. "It is a good feeling when you hear your colleagues say the district is turning around," Davis said. "So **Dr. Watson**, I salute you, the administrative team and everyone who is involved in (taking us in) the direction we are going." Additionally, Davis shared that he would be representing Spring ISD and the region at the National Education Advocacy Institute in Washington D.C. in January.

Jensen also reported on the benefits of working the polls. "As a trustee, I get to visit schools and talk to teachers, students and community members, but there is nothing like working a polling site where you have one voter at a time coming up, and you are able to talk to them. Sometimes it is me listening to what they are saying, sometimes it is good and sometimes they've had problems – everything a trustee needs to hear. Sometimes it is a discussion, and it is very informative to me to have these discussions one on one," Jensen said.

Justine Durant echoed the remarks of both Davis and Jensen when she said, "It gives you an opportunity to go one on one with the community that has entrusted us to make appropriate decisions to govern on behalf of their children. It's been informative, it's been hot, but it's also been encouraging because sometimes when we're in the midst of things, we often see the problems and we don't always get an opportunity to see the good stuff. It has been refreshing to see that the community understands and we are seeing their support," Durant said.

Rhonda Newhouse shared that she feels very positive about the bond. "Everybody has been supportive, understanding the needs for our students ... they see that there is a turnaround happening in Spring and I think we do have our administration and superintendent and teachers and staff for Spring ISD to thank for that. Let's continue to support our teachers, staff and administration," Newhouse said.

Following Newhouse's remarks, Jensen acknowledged the hard work of community members who are supporting the bond effort by distributing materials. (The district does not provide promotional materials in support of the bond, but only materials that provide information.) She commended community members for their involvement. "Once again our volunteers, in many capacities, are one of our strengths in our district," Jensen said.

Chris Bell reminded those attending that former Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Tip O'Neill said that all politics are local. "I really want to encourage people to vote down towards the very last page of the ballot," Bell said. The Spring ISD \$330 million bond referendum is located under "Propositions" near the bottom of the ballot.

Presentations

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Details District's Financial Management



Chief Financial Officer **Ann Westbrooks** presented the district's 2015-16 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) to the Board for review and approval. The 150-page document is the district's report of financial operations for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2016. It is prepared, not only for the Board of Trustees, but also taxpayers, grantor agencies, employees, the Texas Education Agency and anyone else who would like to see details regarding the district's financial management, including the external auditor's report. See [CAFR](#).

Public Hearing

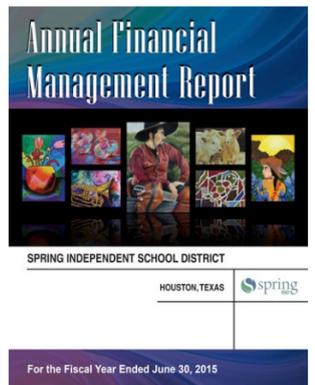
District Receives Perfect Score for Financial Accountability

The Spring Independent School District received the highest rating possible from the Financial Accountability Rating System of Texas for the district's 2014-15 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 2014-15 fiscal year, Spring ISD achieved an A rating, which of course is the highest rating and represents superior achievement," said **Ann Westbrooks**, chief financial officer.

The School FIRST rating system which was used to assess the 2014-15 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.



Action Items

District Targeted Improvement Plan Focuses on EVERY CHILD 2020 Imperatives

The Board approved the District Targeted Improvement Plan for the 2016-17 school year. **Dr. Lupita Hinojosa**, chief academics officer, said the plan aligns with EVERY CHILD 2020 imperatives and focuses on the subpopulation groups in four program areas: Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language, Career and Technical Education, Special Education, and No Child Left Behind. The Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS) requires districts to develop a District Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) if state expectations on the PBMAS are not met. Although the district received the highest score attainable in the area of No Child Left Behind and has shown improvement in other areas, there is still work to be done. Hinojosa said the district has identified the key issues that need to be addressed, the root causes, and developed comprehensive strategies to address the identified issues.

Board Accepts \$20,000 SECME Grant for Robotics Program at 10 Schools



The Board accepted a \$20,000 Science Engineering Communications Mathematics Enhancement (SECME) grant from ExxonMobil that will be used to build a robotics program at six elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools. Participating schools are Heritage, Jenkins, Northgate Crossing, Reynolds, Clark Intermediate and Ponderosa elementary schools; Claughton and Roberson middle schools; and Dekaney and Spring high schools. This is the third year that the district has received a grant from ExxonMobil to be used for SECME programs.

Improvement Plans for Bammel and Major Designed to Continue Progress

Although both Bammel Elementary School and Major Elementary School have been rated Met Standard, the former Improvement Required schools presented targeted improvement plans to the Board that will "maintain and sustain the good work that principals have put in place," said **Dr. Lupita Hinojosa**, chief academics officer. The Board approved both plans and commended the principals for their hard work.

Board Approves 2016-17 Class-Size Waivers Requested

The Board approved the district's request to submit class-size waivers to the Texas Education Agency for kindergarten through fourth-grade classrooms that were over the 22 to 1 student-to-teacher ratio. Out of 643 classrooms, 58 were identified as fluctuating waivers, although none of the classrooms were higher than 24 to 1. As our enrollment continues to fluctuate, due to high mobility, any classroom that exceeds the 22 to 1 is provided additional campus-based support.

In other action the Board approved:

- Second reading of proposed revisions to TASB Local Update 105 affecting 11 local policies, including BJCF, BQ, CLB, CLE, CPC, DBA, DFBB, DFFA, DFFB, EHBD and FDC.
- Second reading of proposed revisions to Board Policy DH local;
- Second reading of proposed revisions to Board Policy DIA local;
- 2016-17 Budget review;
- Requests for proposals for paint, painting supplies and chain-link fencing;
- Interlocal agreement between Spring ISD and Education Service Center Region 10 for the district's participation in the ESC Region 10 457 Retirement Savings Plan, 457 FICA Alternative Plan and use of 403(b) Third Party Administration Services; 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.