

# Spring Independent School District

16717 Ella Blvd. • Houston, Texas 77090 • Tel. 281.891.6000



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
7:00 PM, OCTOBER 8, 2019  
BOARD ROOM  
GORDON M. ANDERSON LEADERSHIP CENTER  
16717 ELLA BOULEVARD, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77090**

## **MINUTES**

### **I. Call to Order (7:01 PM)**

President Rhonda Newhouse called the Regular Board Meeting of the Spring Independent School District Board of Trustees to order at 7:01 PM on October 8, 2019, in the Board Room of the Gordon M. Anderson Leadership Center, 16717 Ella Boulevard, Houston, Texas, in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

### **Members Present:**

Rhonda Newhouse, President  
Jana Gonzales, Vice President  
Donald Davis, Secretary  
Winford Adams, Jr., Assistant Secretary  
Justine Durant  
Dr. Deborah Jensen  
Chris Bell (arrived at 7:05 PM)

### **Members Absent:**

### **Others Present:**

Rodney Watson, Superintendent of Schools  
Kenneth Culbreath, Chief of Police  
Julie Hill, Chief of Staff  
Lupita Hinojosa, Chief of School Leadership and Student Support Services  
Khechara Bradford, Chief of Curriculum and Instruction  
Mark Miranda, Chief Operations Officer  
Deeone McKeithan, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Ann Westbrook, Chief Financial Officer  
Tiffany Dunne-Oldfield, Chief Communications Officer  
Jeremy Binkley, General Counsel  
Jason Sheffer, Director of Board Services

### **II. Flag Pledges (7:02 PM)**

The Presentation of the Colors was led by the Dekaney High School NJROTC Battalion and included Donovan Rodriguez, Kurt Koulavongsa, Erik Lopez, Esbin Alvarado, and Diego Escobar.

### **III. Moment of Silence (7:05 PM)**

President Newhouse asked the audience to join in a moment of silence.

#### IV. Opening Remarks (7:06 PM)

##### A. Superintendent of Schools (7:06 PM)

Superintendent Rodney Watson announced several recent activities and events had occurred throughout the District since the last Board Meeting. He was especially pleased with the community response to the District's College Night, an annual event that is held at a different high school campus each year. This year more than 150 representatives from higher education and the military were represented and many students and parents attended the event. "We're really excited about how many parents came out," Watson said.

Related to College Night, Dr. Watson also reported that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, also known as FAFSA, is now open. Any student considering college can apply at [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov) and the priority deadline for Texas colleges and universities is January 15, 2019.

Two District events occurred on the same night, October 1<sup>st</sup>, and Watson said he and other administrators divided their attention between the National Technical Honor Society member induction at Dekaney High School and the National Night Out held at Westfield High School. He noted that National Night Out, which is hosted annually by the Spring ISD Police Department, was the first for new Chief of Police Kenneth Culbreath. "Your team was absolutely successful," he told Chief Culbreath, thanking him and his team for their effort.

He concluded his event updates with a report on the ribbon-cutting ceremony at Springwoods Village Middle School. "We're hoping Springwoods Village will become our first International Baccalaureate program in our District, creating an atmosphere for global learners," Watson said, "We are definitely going to keep our community and our Board apprised as they are going through the authorization process, making sure that we get that designation."

Dr. Watson went on to report about two recent presentations at the Board Work Session on October 3, 2019. First, he reported on the Targeted Improvement Plans for seven campuses that are in response to their state accountability ratings. He thanked the parents who provided feedback at campus meetings in September as well as the principals who produced "very tight plans" for improving student outcomes at their campuses. "We know that many parents turned out in September at the individual campuses to hear a little bit more about the plan but more importantly to give feedback about what they think is necessary to continue improving those schools," he said. Second, Dr. Watson spoke about the Holdsworth Center presentation to the Board at the recent work session. "As many of you know, we were selected to be part of the second cohort of the Holdsworth Center leadership program," Watson said. "We want to say a special thank you, we speak with the Holdsworth team often, but we were really fortunate to be selected to participate."

Next, Dr. Watson announced that Spring ISD Financial Services, under the leadership of Chief Financial Officer Ann Westbrooks, had recently achieved the Transparency Star Award from the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. "They received this prestigious award for the District's Financial Transparency webpage, which lays out in an easy-to-understand manner all aspects related to the District's budget," Watson said.

Dr. Watson closed his remarks with a call to action regarding the District's annual Employee Engagement Survey that will launch on Tuesday, October 15th, administered by K-12 Insight. "The data collected is extremely important as we consider ways to strengthen and improve our district as a great place to work," Watson said.

B. Board of Trustees (7:11 PM)

President Newhouse invited the Trustees to make remarks.

Trustee Adams commented on the Lone Star Governance Framework, which the Board of Trustees is developing in cooperation with Superintendent of Schools Rodney Watson. Adams said it will be used as a tool for self-evaluation. "As we are requiring and providing professional development for the administration and the faculty, we are also undergoing it ourselves," he said.

Trustee Bell spoke about the upcoming November election and specifically about Proposition 7, which regards a constitutional amendment allowing increased distributions to the available school fund. "So take a look at Prop 7, if you don't mind, and give it your consideration," Bell said.

Trustee Davis, who on a recent trip to the Texas Association of School Boards Convention in Dallas, heard talk about the great things happening in Spring ISD. Davis shared with the Board that the District's story is being told. "They know the great things we are doing. I want to commend you Dr. Watson, and I want to commend the leadership team, principals, and our entire staff for the great things we are doing, the great achievements," Davis said.

Trustee Jensen said she was amazed by how many fine students from Dekaney, Spring, Westfield and Wunsche High Schools had met the academic and character requirements to earn induction into the National Technical Honor Society on October 1st. "They were wonderful to meet," she said. In addition, Dr. Jensen highlighted the Education Planning Guide as a District-produced document with which she is greatly impressed. "That planning guide is one of the most amazing documents I have ever seen," Jensen said. "There are over a 100 pages of careers and pathways for students to take and it tells the students which courses to take. It tells them how much that occupation pays, and what kind of post certifications, post graduation they will need. It is just such an amazing document I recommend anybody in the public or in the school system to go look at those pathways."

Trustee Durant reported that she had opportunities to work with the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority on registering students and community members to vote. "September 24th is National Voter Registration Day and for the last several years we've gone to our high schools," Durant said. This year they spoke to government classes at Dekaney High School, answering the students' questions and registering them to vote. Later that evening they attended an open house and community partnership event at Anderson Elementary where they were able to register more voters. "We registered close to 100 people to vote between those different events, and so I just wanted to say thank you to the District for that partnership and that we were able to successfully do that," she said. In addition, Durant said she is excited about the direction the District is taking at the middle school level, citing the LIFT 6 initiative and the recent ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new Springwoods Village Middle School. "I'm really pleased in the direction we are taking and looking forward to a brighter future," Durant said.

Trustee Gonzales talked about the presentation of the Targeted Improvement Plans at the Board Work Session on October 3, 2019 and the excitement and energy she witnessed among the principals. "It was amazing to see how excited they were about this," Gonzales said. She was especially impressed by their teamwork and ability to call on fellow principals any time, day or night, for assistance. "They are such a cohesive group of folks, and it was just refreshing that evening to see how excited they are about those plans." She closed her remarks by thanking the principals. "I could just feel the excitement and the energy in what you are going to accomplish this year," she said.

President Newhouse reported how pleased and happy she was that the recent College Night included a larger representation of services for special needs students than she had seen before, including employment services and universities. "On College Night at Westfield, we had ten vendors just for special needs students. They had a section to themselves," she said. The students attending included graduates as well as students who are still receiving services from Spring ISD schools. She closed by thanking the college and career counselors for including the special needs students and "doing such a wonderful job in getting services for those students."

#### **V. Recognitions (7:20 PM)**

##### **A. ABCD Award – Mystros Barber Academy (7:20 PM)**

The Board recognized Mystros Barber Academy founder and president Eros Shaw for his longtime support of Spring ISD and presented him with an ABCD (Above and Beyond the Call of Duty) Award.

Mr. Shaw and his barber academy were recently selected by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) as part of its annual Business Recognition Program, which honors organizations and businesses whose generous support helps Texas public schools and their students be successful. Mr. Shaw was recognized by TASB for his ongoing support of Spring ISD, including providing student scholarships to train at his barber academy and serving on important decision-making groups such as the 2016 Bond Committee. In addition, Mystros Barber Academy has helped support District events such as the annual Back-to-School Expo and Spring ISD's Fun Run and Wellness Fair. Through their "Books in the Barber Shop" program and through direct donations, Shaw and the academy have also been champions of student literacy.

##### **B. Points of Pride – Spring ISD Internal Auditor Patricia Rios (7:25 PM)**

The Board awarded a Points of Pride award to Spring ISD Internal Auditor Patricia Rios, who recently completed the requirements to earn the designation of Registered Texas School Business Administrator from the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO). Earned through a combination of coursework, on-the-job experience and advanced training, the Registered Texas School Business Administrator designation is the highest level of certification that TASBO offers.

#### **VI. Agenda Participation (7:29 PM)**

Members of the public did not register to speak to the Board.

#### **VII. Board of Trustees (7:30 PM)**

##### **A. Reading of the Trustees' Continuing Education Credit Hours (7:30 PM)**

Board President Rhonda Newhouse announced the continuing education hours earned by each Board Member. Texas Education Code requires that the minutes of the last regular meeting of the Board of Trustees held before an election of trustees must reflect whether each Trustee has met, exceeded, or is deficient in meeting the training required for the Trustee.

Winford Adams, Jr. met the Tier 1 requirement; met the Tier 2 requirement; exceeded the Tier 3 requirement; and met the Tier 4 requirement.

Chris Bell met the Tier 1 requirement; met the Tier 2 requirement; exceeded the Tier 3 requirement; and met the Tier 4 requirement.

Donald Davis met the Tier 1 requirement; met the Tier 2 requirement; exceeded the Tier 3 requirement; and met the Tier 4 requirement.

Justine Durant met the Tier 1 requirement; met the Tier 2 requirement; exceeded the Tier 3 requirement; and met the Tier 4 requirement.

Jana Gonzales met the Tier 1 requirement; met the Tier 2 requirement; exceeded the Tier 3 requirement; and met the Tier 4 requirement.

Deborah Jensen met the Tier 1 requirement; met the Tier 2 requirement; exceeded the Tier 3 requirement; and met the Tier 4 requirement.

Rhonda Newhouse met the Tier 1 requirement; met the Tier 2 requirement; exceeded the Tier 3 requirement; and met the Tier 4 requirement.

**VIII. Public Hearing for the 2019-2020 Targeted Improvement Plans (7:33 PM)**

A Public Hearing was held for the seven 2019-2020 Targeted Improvement Plans for Spring Independent School District submitted by Eickenroht and Major Elementary Schools and Bailey, Bammel, Claughton, Dueitt and Wells Middle Schools.

Members of the public did not register to speak on this item.

Trustee Davis moved that the Board of Trustees approve the 2019-2020 Targeted Improvement Plans, as presented by the administration. Trustee Jensen seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**IX. Public Hearing for the Spring Independent School District's State Financial Accountability Rating (7:42 PM)**

A Public Hearing was held for the Spring Independent School District's State Financial Accountability Rating. The Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas ("School FIRST") was created when the 77th Legislature (2001) directed the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Comptroller's office, to develop and implement a financial accountability rating system for school districts in Texas. These results were released by the Texas Education Agency for the year ended June 30, 2018. School districts are required to prepare an annual financial accountability report and present it in a public hearing.

Members of the public did not register to speak on this item.

**X. Chief of Staff (7:47 PM)**

- A. Second Reading of TASB Proposed Revisions to Board Policy FNF(LOCAL) – STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – INVESTIGATIONS AND SEARCHES (7:47 PM)  
The Board conducted a second reading of proposed changes to Board Policy FNF(LOCAL).

- B. Nomination of a Spring ISD Board Trustee for the Region 4, Position B Seat on the TASB Board of Directors
- The Board discussed nominating a Spring ISD Board Trustee for the Region 4, Position B Seat on the TASB Board of Directors. As a member of the TASB Board of Directors, this person would represent his or her region on the Board, guiding the organization to ensure that the Association fulfills its mission to provide advocacy, visionary leadership, and high-quality services.

Trustee Adams moved that the Board of Trustees nominate Trustee Donald Davis for the Region 4, Position B Seat on the TASB Board of Directors. Trustee Bell seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**XI. Chief of School Leadership and Student Support Services (8:00 PM)**

- A. Interlocal Agreement Between Harris County Department of Education and Spring Independent School District for the 21st Century Grant Program at Bammel Middle School (8:00 PM)
- Chief Lupita Hinojosa presented the Board with information regarding the proposed Interlocal Agreement with Harris County Department of Education for the 21st Century Grant Program at Bammel Middle School. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) after school program will serve students who meet at least two of the at-risk indicators. The program will focus on increasing the overall academic performance in the core subjects as measured by formal and informal assessments. Students will participate in:

- Core educational services such as homework help, academic clubs, etc.;
- College and career readiness activities;
- College visits;
- Social and conflict resolution activities; and
- Parent engagement sessions and services.

Trustee Gonzales moved that the Board of Trustees approve the Interlocal Agreement between Harris County Department of Education and Spring Independent School District for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant Program at Bammel Middle School. Trustee Durant seconded the motion and the motion carried 6 to 0 with Trustee Adams abstaining due to his employment relationship with Harris County Department of Education.

**XII. Chief Financial Officer (8:05 PM)**

- A. One-Time Revenue and Expenditures (8:05 PM)
- Chief Ann Westbrook presented the Board with proposed options for one-time cost expenditures. Spring ISD received non-recurring revenues as a result of Senate Bill 500, property value audit revenues and an additional SHARS payment. These funds were all received after the 2018-2019 fiscal year and contributed to a large increase in the fund balance. These non-recurring funds allow for the district to address certain needs through one-time expenditures.

Trustee Durant moved that the Board of Trustees approve the proposed one-time cost expenditures as presented by the administration. Trustee Jensen seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Trustee Jensen moved that the Board of Trustees approve and adopt the Resolution to pay staff a one-time retention supplement. Trustee Durant seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**B. 2019 Appraisal Roll Certification (8:11 PM)**

Chief Ann Westbrook presented the Board with the 2019 Appraisal Roll Certification. The Chief Appraiser of the Harris County Appraisal District has certified the 2019 property values for our District. This is the tax base in addition to estimated amounts for uncertified property which will support the 2019-2020 operating and debt service budgets.

Trustee Adams moved that the Board of Trustees ratify the 2019 Appraisal Roll Certification. Trustee Durant seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**C. 2019 Tax Rate (8:16 PM)**

Chief Ann Westbrook presented the Board with information regarding the 2019 Tax Rate. As required by state regulations, the District published a proposed tax rate of \$1.50 in the Houston Chronicle on May 29, 2019. Upon receipt of the certified values from the Harris County Appraisal District on August 13, 2019, and in accordance with the new laws as a result of the 86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative Session, an additional review was done resulting in a proposed tax rate of \$1.43.

In accordance with the Property Tax Code, a taxing unit authorized to both maintenance and operations (M & O) and debt service (I & S) expenditures with property taxes must adopt its rate in two separate components; one for maintenance and operations (\$0.97) and one for debt services (\$0.46).

Trustee Durant moved that the Board of Trustees approve a tax rate of \$1.43 and that the Board approve the 2019 Tax Rate Ordinance and Resolution. Trustee Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**XIII. Consent Agenda (8:35 PM)**

The Board approved the Consent Agenda items that were discussed in detail at the October 3, 2019 Board Work Session.

Trustee Jensen moved that the Board of Trustees approve and adopt all of the items listed on the Consent Agenda, with the exception of Item XIII. H., which was already approved. Trustee Gonzales seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**A. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Following Meetings:**

1. September 5, 2019 Work Session
2. September 10, 2019 Regular Meeting

**B. Acceptance of Grant Funds – Region 4 Education Service Center 2019-2020 School Support Grant**

The Board will consider accepting the Region 4 Education Service Center 2019-2020 School Support Grant in the amount of \$38,379.11.

**C. Second Reading of TASB Proposed Revisions Affecting Board Policy BBE(LOCAL) – BOARD MEMBERS – AUTHORITY**

Chief Julie Hill will present the second reading of Board Policy BBE(LOCAL).

**D. First Reading of Proposed Revisions Affecting Board Policy EIC(LOCAL) – ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT – CLASS RANKING**

Chief Julie Hill will present the first reading of proposed changes to Board Policy EIC(LOCAL).

**E. Lone Star College Dual Credit Partnership Between Lone Star College System and Spring ISD**

The Board will consider approving the Lone Star College Dual Credit Partnership between Lone Star College System and Spring ISD.

- F. Westfield High School Ninth Grade Center, 2nd Guaranteed Maximum Price  
The Board will consider approving the Westfield High School Ninth Grade Center, 2nd Guaranteed Maximum Price in the amount of \$8,480,044.
- G. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Harris County Public Health (HCPH) and Spring Independent School District  
The Board will consider approving the MOU between Harris County Public Health (HCPH) and Spring Independent School District.
- H. 2019 Appraisal Roll Certification  
The Board will consider ratifying the 2019 Appraisal Roll Certification.
- I. Request for Proposal (RFP) #20-004 – Curriculum Consulting Services  
The Board will consider awarding the contract for Curriculum Consulting Services to the providers recommended by the administration.
- J. Taxpayer Refunds  
The Board will consider ratifying refunds exceeding \$500.

**XIV. Public Participation (8:38 PM)**

Members of the public did not register to speak to the Board.

**XV. Closed Session (8:39 PM)**

President Newhouse recessed the open session at 8:39 PM for the purpose of entering into closed session pursuant to the following provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act:

- A. Under Section 551.071 - For the purpose of a private consultation with the Board's attorney on any or all subjects or matters authorized, including any item posted on this agenda
- B. Under Section 551.074 - For the purpose of considering the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear complaints or charges against a public officer or employee
  - 1. The Board will deliberate regarding the Superintendent's evaluation
  - 2. The Board will deliberate on employees nominated for special recognition
  - 3. The Board will deliberate on a recommendation for the termination and finding of no good cause for an employee's abandonment of contract
  - 4. The Board will deliberate on the issuance of school district teaching permits for noncore career and technology courses
  - 5. The Board will deliberate on employee resignations, recommendations to withdraw prior actions taken, recommendations to void employee contracts, recommendations for the proposed termination of employees on probationary and/or term contracts, and final orders for employees on term and probationary contracts previously proposed for termination and/or nonrenewal
- C. Under Section 551.076 - To consider the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation, of security personnel or devices

**XVI. Action on Closed Session Items**

President Newhouse reconvened the open session at 9:52 PM.

- A. Trustee Jensen moved that the Board of Trustees approve the Superintendent's recommendation to terminate the contracts of Cathy Rohde and Charlotte Thomas




upon finding that the employees failed to perform their contracts without good cause, and authorize the Superintendent or designee to notify the employees of the proposed termination pursuant to Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code. Trustee Jensen further moved that the Board authorize the Superintendent or designee to notify the State Board for Educator Certification that the employees failed to perform their contracts without good cause, and of the action taken by the Board. Trustee Adams seconded the motion and the motion carried 6 to 0 with Trustee Bell abstaining.

- B. Trustee Gonzales moved that the Board of Trustees approve the Superintendent's recommendation to propose the termination of the Term contract of Dawn Cline as presented in closed session and to authorize the Superintendent or designee to provide the employee notice of the Board's action and her rights pursuant to Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code. Trustee Durant seconded the motion and the motion carried 6 to 0 with Trustee Bell abstaining.
- C. Trustee Bell moved that the Board of Trustees issue a school district teaching permit to the following Steven Walker and Sean Perrodin for the purpose of teaching noncore career and technology courses and to authorize the Superintendent or designee to notify the Commissioner of Education of the Board's action. Trustee Durant seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

**XVII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Trustee Jensen, seconded by Trustee Gonzales, the Board unanimously adjourned the meeting at 9:56 PM.

  
Rhonda R. Newhouse, President

  
Donald Davis, Secretary