

News from Dripping Springs ISD

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2018-19 CAMPUS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCED

Dripping Springs ISD announced 2018-19 Campus Teachers of the Year on April 4. Teachers of the Year are: Shay Diez (Sycamore Springs Elementary, physical education), Lauren Milner (Dripping Springs High School, health sciences), Caroline Rogers (Dripping Springs Elementary, third grade), Candy Rowen (Rooster Springs Elementary, first grade), Denise Thomas (Walnut Springs Elementary, fifth grade), Rachel Tole (Dripping Springs Middle School, English), and Candace Torres (Sycamore Springs Middle School, special education). The Dripping Springs ISD Teacher of the Year program is sponsored by St. David's HealthCare, in conjunction with the Dripping Springs Education Foundation.

Campus winners were selected through a nomination and voting process of all staff at each school. The seven campus winners are now eligible for the DSISD Elementary Teacher of the Year and Secondary Teacher of the Year awards, which are chosen following an interview process with a district committee and will be announced at the May 20 Board of Trustees meeting. Those two winners will represent Dripping Springs ISD in the state Teacher of the Year contest.

Below is a brief career summary on each of the campus winners:

SHAY DIEZ: Sycamore Springs Elementary teacher Shay Diez is in her 12th year teaching and her second in Dripping Springs ISD. Previously she taught for six years in Aldine ISD and four years in Austin ISD. In addition to her PE certification, Ms. Diez also is certified as an Early Childhood-Fourth Grade generalist and in English as a Second Language. She was a campus leader in developing the recent Mighty Tiger Games that included elementary Functional Academic students district-wide. Ms. Diez earned a bachelor's degree in Kinesiology from the University of Texas.

LAUREN MILNER: Lauren Milner has been teaching Health Science for four years at DSHS and also is the sponsor of the school's ROTC club. She also has served as a teacher/lecturer at the University of Texas Center for Professional Development. An Army veteran, Ms. Milner is certified in Career and Technical Education. Ms. Milner earned her bachelor's degree in International Business/French from St. Joseph's College (Ind.), and two master's degrees: one

in finance from Trident University and one in Sports and Health Sciences from the American Military University (Va.).

CANDY ROWEN: Candy Rowen is in her third year teaching at Rooster Springs Elementary, after spending two years teaching in the Escambia County School District and 19 years teaching in the Santa Rosa School District, both in Florida. She is certified in Early Childhood through Grade 6 for core subjects, as well as English as a Second Language. Ms. Rowen, who earned her bachelor's degree in Business Teacher Education from the University of West Florida, played a significant role supporting one of her students and his family this year following a serious car accident.

CAROLINE ROGERS: Caroline Rogers is in her 11th year at Dripping Springs Elementary, which is where she has spent her entire teaching career. Currently she teaches third grade. A native of Dripping Springs, Ms. Rogers also attended school at the campus and graduated from Dripping Springs High School. She is certified as an Early Education-Grade 4 generalist and in English as a Second Language. Ms. Rogers graduated from Texas State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in International Studies.

DENISE THOMAS: Veteran teacher Denise Thomas has spent nearly half of her career – 12 years – in Dripping Springs ISD and at Walnut Springs Elementary. Currently she teaches fifth grade. Previously she taught elementary school in Austin ISD for 14 years. Ms. Thomas possesses multiple certifications: Elementary Self-Contained (Grades 1-8), English as a Second Language, Elementary Art (Grades 1-8), and Special Education (PK-12). She earned her bachelor's degree from the College of Saint Rose (N.Y.).

RACHEL TOLE: Rachel Tole is in her third year as an eighth-grade English Language Arts teacher at Dripping Springs Middle School and her 12th year overall. Before coming to Dripping Springs, she taught for a year in Irving ISD, for two years at Lake Country Christian School, and for six years in Keller ISD. She is certified in Elementary English (1-8), Elementary Self-Contained (1-8) and English as a Second Language (1-8). Ms. Tole graduated from Baylor University with a bachelor's degree in Education.

CANDACE TORRES: Special Education teacher Candace Torres has been in Dripping Springs ISD for three years, moving from Dripping Springs Middle School to Sycamore Springs Middle School for its inaugural year in 2017. Currently she is a sixth-grade inclusion teacher. Ms. Torres also taught for one year in Corpus Christi ISD and eight years in Fort Bend ISD. She is certified in Special Education (EC-12) and is a graduate of Texas A&M University-Kingsville with both her bachelor's (Interdisciplinary Studies) and master's (Education Administration) degrees.