

## News from Dripping Springs ISD

[www.dsisdtx.us](http://www.dsisdtx.us)

**DATE:** August 18, 2017

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S BACK-TO-SCHOOL MESSAGE**

Welcome back for the 2017-18 school year! Everyone in the Dripping Springs ISD family is looking forward to seeing our students on August 23 and getting started on an exciting year. *"Change is the opportunity to do something amazing." ... George Couros.*

We are thrilled to be opening two new schools: Sycamore Springs Elementary and Sycamore Springs Middle School. Last week our teachers were able to get in the building, set up classrooms, and prepare for students' arrival. What a beautiful facility! Parents will notice more areas intended for collaboration among students and hands-on learning. As we emphasize the development of skills like communication and problem-solving, we know these types of work areas are important. In fact, we are finding new ways to use existing space at all campuses to develop opportunities for students. I also wanted to share that Sycamore Springs has been designed so that it blends into the natural landscape, both in terms of architecture and landscaping. It has many features that are environmentally friendly, like rainwater collection and a geothermal heating/air-conditioning system. A majority of the landscaped area on the property is comprised of a native Texas seed mix, which contains native grasses and wildflowers, and will require no irrigation once it is established! Please be patient as it will take some time for the site to return to its natural beauty.

We have a dedication for the new schools planned on Sept. 21, from 6-8 p.m. Please make plans to join us.

Our district continues to grow at a steady and strong pace. We expect approximately 500 new students this year and know that trend will continue. As such, we will be reconvening the Long-Range Facility Planning Committee in September to take a look at our current facilities and enrollment projections, and develop recommendations for future facilities. If you are interested in serving on this group, please contact our Finance and Operations Department at 512.858.3006.

This year will be the second year of implementation for our 2016-21 strategic plan. The plan focuses on the idea of personalized learning for every student, as we strive to create an environment where every student can reach his or her unique potential based on individual passions, strengths, and interests. We made great progress in Year One and will stay on track in the coming years to accomplish our goals. The full plan, which consists of four areas of emphasis, can be viewed at: [www.dsisdtx.us/strategicplan](http://www.dsisdtx.us/strategicplan) and a summary is included on Page 4 of this newsletter.

DSISD also enters its second year as a “District of Innovation.” This state designation is intended to enable local school districts to pursue specific innovations in curriculum, instruction, governance, parent or community involvement, school calendar, budgeting, or other areas by allowing exemptions from several Texas Education Code requirements. While Districts of Innovation must meet basic state requirements like assessments, the end result is an increase in local control.

We hope you have had a chance to explore our new website! We are so pleased with the fresh look and improved organization. A new app is being developed and will be introduced this fall. Please see Page 6 of this newsletter for a summary of all the ways that we stay connected with our families.

To new parents, students and staff, we are glad you have chosen to join the Dripping Springs ISD family. I know that a school decision for your children is one of the most important parents make. Most of the families who move here do so after researching school districts carefully. Teachers and staff members do the same before pursuing a job in a new district. Clearly I am biased, but I think DSISD’s outstanding reputation is well-deserved. Not only has Dripping Springs ISD and its students been consistently recognized in many areas – student achievement, academic progress, extracurricular success, financial accountability – but we do things our way. Our community as a whole is incredibly supportive of education and of Dripping Springs ISD. The DSISD staff is second to none; they are true “life-changers.” Nowhere will you find a more dedicated group of people who are committed to helping children achieve their potential by equipping and inspiring them to be life-long learners and positive contributors to the world. Our students love to learn, our parents love to be involved, and our staff loves creating a rich learning environment.

While Dripping Springs ISD may be growing swiftly, I believe we still enjoy shared small-town values and the enduring Tiger spirit! As a parent of four Dripping Springs Tigers, I am grateful for the opportunities my children receive and appreciate all that our staff members do to support our kids.

Best wishes for a great school year.