

FROM THE TIGER NATION

DRIPPING SPRINGS ISD REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Spring 2018

OUR VISION:

We inspire and equip students to be life-long learners and positive contributors to the world.

OUR MISSION:

We partner with students, parents and the community to provide a personalized and exceptional education for every student.



DRIPPING SPRINGS ISD CAMPUSES

Dripping Springs High School

940 Hwy. 290 West/Enrollment: 1,867

Dripping Springs Middle School

111 Tiger Lane/Enrollment: 759

Sycamore Springs Middle School

14451 Sawyer Ranch Rd./Enrollment:
743

Dripping Springs Elementary School

29400 Ranch Road 12/Enrollment: 765

Walnut Springs Elementary School

300 Sportsplex Drive/Enrollment: 721

Rooster Springs Elementary School

1001 Belterra Drive/Enrollment: 787

Sycamore Springs Elementary

14451 Sawyer Ranch Rd./Enrollment:
800

DSISD Administration

510 W. Mercer St.
512.858.3001

Dear Members of the Dripping Springs Community,

While Dripping Springs ISD has a long-standing tradition of educational excellence, we are not resting on our laurels. We are always finding better ways to meet students' needs, to help them identify their gifts and passions, and to prepare them effectively for the challenges they will face in life. Our strategic plan, which went into effect in 2016, is based on the concept of personalized learning ... providing a DSISD "Signature Education" to each and every student.

I believe our teaching staff represents many of the best educators in the state of Texas. They are dedicated to helping students reach their potential. They listen to the voice of their students and provide choice to their students. I'd like to publicly thank all teachers, support staff, and administrators for their dedication and commitment. You are all "life changers."

This report includes many facts and figures that we share with our stakeholders to ensure transparency. While data certainly has value and the recognitions received by students, staff, and schools is worthy of celebration, what is most important at all times is our students' safety, love of learning, and happiness.

The district values a strong connection with members of our community ... the "village" in which we live. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in our schools.

*Sincerely,
Bruce Gearing*

We Are Dripping Springs ISD

Dripping Springs ISD implemented a five-year strategic plan in 2016. The plan was the result of a comprehensive planning process that involved stakeholders from all levels: students, parents, community members, business leaders, teachers, and administrators. The Board of Trustees approved the strategic plan's goals and objectives in July, 2015, and a complete document that includes all action steps was completed that November.

The 2016-21 Strategic Plan was rolled out with public meetings, a website dedicated to the plan, and an introductory video. The plan clarifies the intent and commitment of Dripping

Springs ISD to personalize learning for students while striving to meet the district's mission every day.

There are four main sections in the strategic plan.

The "Village" refers to community partnerships, relationships built on trust, communication and a sense of connectivity among campuses.

The "Operations" section refers to the functions that occur behind-the-scenes so that schools run smoothly

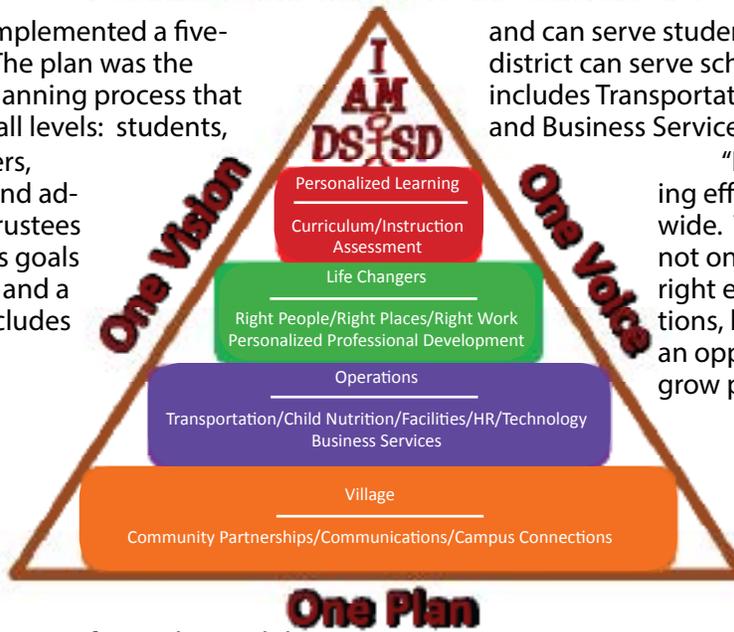
and can serve students' needs. Likewise, the district can serve schools' needs. Operations includes Transportation, Facilities, Child Nutrition and Business Services.

"Life Changers" refers to having effective staff in place district-wide. The district recognizes that not only is it important to get the right employees in the right positions, but that they must be given an opportunity to develop and grow professionally over time.

At the top of the pyramid is "Personalized Learning" – which includes supporting students instructionally in an environment that allows them to pursue their passions and

be involved in creating their own educational goals.

For more information on the strategic plan, visit: www.dsisdtx.us/strategicplan. This page includes links to the strategies and action steps of the plan, as well as a six-minute video that provides an overview. Frequently Asked Questions and background information also are available.



DSISD Five-Year Vision

Dripping Springs ISD serves as a model 21st Century learning environment. Faculty and students are committed to life-long learning through creative and innovative thinking. Together they take risks and explore passions. Each student is part of a team focused on creating, implementing, assessing, and modifying a unique plan to maximize potential. These personalized plans have a global focus and create a growth mindset. Students develop a 21st Century skillset through the integration of curricular and extracurricular programs. The culture reflects a commitment to everyone's realization of maximum potential. The operation of the district is effective and efficient in the delivery of a safe, nurturing environment for all.

Dripping Springs ISD Board of Trustees



Dr. Mary Jane Hetrick
Trustee
Elected May 2015



Ron Jones
Secretary
Elected May 2014



Carrie Fontana-Kroll
President
Elected May 2012



Shannon O'Connor
Trustee
Elected May 2015



Shelly Reeves
Trustee
Elected May 2010



Barbara Stroud
Vice President
Elected May 2008



Jon Thompson
Trustee
Elected May 2013

Board meetings are held the fourth Monday of the month, starting at 6:00 p.m., with an agenda review meeting the previous Monday at 6:00 p.m. (Only one meeting is held in November and December due to holiday schedules.) A full schedule is available at www.dsisdtx.us/trustees.

District of Innovation

Dripping Springs ISD officially became a "District of Innovation" in June 2016. The District of Innovation concept was passed by the 84th Legislature giving traditional independent school districts exemptions from some state mandates while increasing local control. More information on Districts of Innovation, as well as the full DSISD plan, is available on the Dripping Springs ISD website (www.dsisdtx.us/innovation).

Rankings & Recognitions

- ❖ In the 2017 Texas state accountability ratings, Dripping Springs ISD and all schools "Met Standard" in the Texas state accountability system. Index scores for DSISD and all campuses significantly surpassed the minimum target score in all categories.
- ❖ For three consecutive years (2014-16), Dripping Springs ISD was selected as a finalist for the H-E-B Excellence in Education District of the Year, then in 2017 the DSISD Board of Trustees was a finalist for School Board of the Year.
- ❖ Dripping Springs High School and Dripping Springs Middle School received "A" letter grades in spring of 2017 by the organization Children at Risk; DSE and WSE received "A"s; RSE was a B+.
- ❖ *U.S. News & World Report* included DSHS in its 2017 national rankings of top high schools, awarding the designation of "Silver Medal" school.



OUR GRADUATES...

- ❖ The DSHS graduation rate for 2017 was 100.0 percent.
- ❖ Approximately 93 percent of DSHS students pursue higher education.
- ❖ Members of the Class of 2017 reported receiving nearly **\$5.2 million** in scholarship offers at universities across the country.
- ❖ DSHS students matriculated to many prestigious universities across the country like Harvard University, the University of Alabama, and the University of Arkansas, to military service academies including the Air Force Academy and the U.S. Military Academy, and to outstanding in-state institutions like the University of Texas, Texas A&M, TCU, Baylor, Rice, Texas Tech and Texas State University.

Academic Data/Honors

- ❖ All five DSISD schools received "grades" of A by the website niche.com; the district overall received an A+.
- ❖ Dripping Springs students at all grade levels consistently perform well on the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) tests. The percentage of Dripping Springs students passing the tests and scoring at the higher "masters" level far exceeds their state peers.
- ❖ The number of DSHS students benefitting from dual enrollment opportunities has increased significantly in recent years. Dual enrollment allows students to simultaneously earn high school and college credits. DSHS currently offers 14 ACC (Austin Community College) courses and seven through the University of Texas OnRamps program. Total enrollment in all college-level courses is 2,046.
- ❖ By the end of last year, 166 juniors had earned 12 ACC credit hours and 106 seniors had completed 24 credit hours.
- ❖ Each year, a high percentage of high school students taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams score high enough to earn credit at most universities. Of the 780 tests taken in 2017, two-thirds received a score of 3 or higher; that figure is much higher than state and national averages.
- ❖ A total of 132 high school students received recognition for exceptional achievement on Advanced Placement (AP) exams taken in the spring of 2017, including six who earned National AP Scholar Awards and 41 selected as AP Scholars with Distinction.
- ❖ The Class of 2017 scored well above state and national averages on both the ACT and SAT college entrance exams. Dripping Springs' average ACT score of 24.7 topped the state average by 19.3 percent and the national mark by 17.6 percent. On the SAT, the average score of DSHS students (1179) bettered those of their peers in the state and nation by 15.9 and 11.2 percent, respectively.
- ❖ Three Dripping Springs High School seniors have been selected as National Merit finalists in the 2017-18 competition: Ryan Gahagan, Mia Haraguchi, and Christopher Lee. Nineteen other Dripping Springs students were recognized as Commended in the National Merit Competition.
- ❖ In spring of 2017, two seventh-graders earned national or "grand" recognition in the Duke University Talent Identification Program and 13 received state recognition. Eight others qualified for the Duke TIP Academy for Summer Studies.

2017 LONE STAR CUP



Dripping Springs High School recorded the highest-ever finish in the Lone Star Cup standings in 2016-17 with 67 points. The previous best finish for DSHS was seventh-place tie in 2009-10. Lone Star Cup points are awarded based on their team performance in district and state championships in: state and area marching band, tennis, team tennis, cross country, volleyball, football, swimming and diving, wrestling, girls' basketball, soccer, golf, track and field, academics, one-act play, softball, and baseball.

CLASS OF 2017 DESTINATIONS

70%	Four-year college or university
25%	Community college or technical school
2%	Military
3%	Workforce

STAFF HONORS

- ❖ Natalie Mahany was the 2017 Texas PTA Elementary Teacher of the Year.
- ❖ Elaine Cogburn, DSISD Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance, was one of three statewide finalists for the 2017 Commitment to Excellence Award by the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO).
- ❖ Dripping Springs High School English teacher Yvonne Kaatz was the 2017 Texas Humanities Teacher of the Year.
- ❖ Walnut Springs Elementary Facilitator for Learning and Innovation Marisa Vickery was selected as the "High Impact Teacher of the Year" presented by TCEA.
- ❖ Derek Woods received the 2017 Randy Julia Service Award from the Texas Color Guard Circuit.
- ❖ In 2017, DSHS softball coach Wade Womack was the Texas 5A/6A Coach of the Year.
- ❖ In tennis, Cary Jackson was the Capital Area Coach of the Year.
- ❖ DSHS basketball coach Craig Swannack was named 2017 Central Texas Coach of the Year.
- ❖ Superintendent Bruce Gearing was a finalist for the 2016 Superintendent of the Year award presented by the Texas Association of School Boards.

Extracurricular and Cocurricular Recognitions

ACADEMIC/SCIENCE/Writing

- ❖ Students from Sycamore Springs Middle School participated in the Central Texas competition of the National History Day Contest Feb. 24, with nine projects moving on to the state level.
- ❖ In 2017, three DSHS students qualified for the UIL academic state competition.
- ❖ Senior Jaxson Thornton won a Gold Circle Certificate of Merit from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association for an Opinion piece published in "MyDSHSnews."
- ❖ The DSHS 2017 Tiger Cry yearbook, "One & Only," earned a First Place award by the American Scholastic Press Association in its annual contest. DSHS is the only Central Texas school to receive the First Place award and one of eight in the state. In addition, the Tiger Cry won the honor of "Best Overall Sports Coverage" nationwide.
- ❖ Dripping Springs High School junior Ali Voss was one of three winners selected in the 2017 Texas Teen Book Festival Fiction Writing Contest.
- ❖ Two students placed in the Youth Short Story category of the Texas Night Sky Festival's Writing Contest. Ashley Rummel placed first, winning the Orion Award; Julia Junker was second.
- ❖ A team of eighth-graders won a Silver Key Award in the Student Video Contest sponsored by the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission.
- ❖ At the 2017 Austin Energy Regional Science Festival, two secondary projects placed first in their categories and three earned the right to advance to the ExxonMobil Texas Science and Engineering Fair. Siblings Katelynne and Ben Marsan's project was named "Best of Fair" and qualified for the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair.
- ❖ Seventh-grader Karsten Bobb placed first in the Central Texas Regional History Day Contest for "Individual Paper."
- ❖ Middle school and elementary students earned recognition in the 2017 Math Pentathlon. One DSMS student received a Gold Medal and another earned Silver; three elementary students received Gold Medals, four got Silver Medals, and seven earned Bronze Medals.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Dripping Springs students of all ages are leaders within their community and often participate in community service activities. Schools and student organizations have raised money, volunteered their time, and collected supplies to support those in need. Just this fall, the DSHS Student Council spearheaded a district drive to collect donations for those impacted by Hurricane Harvey. The DSHS Class of 2017 alone logged an amazing 46,180 hours of community service time. Elementary schools and the middle schools have been active with multiple causes, often led by student leadership groups such as Student Councils or campus Lighthouse Teams.

BOARD RECOGNITION

- ❖ The Dripping Springs ISD School Board was one of five finalists statewide for the H-E-B Excellence in Education awards program 2017 School Board of the Year. This prestigious award recognizes school boards that demonstrate strong leadership in the community.
- ❖ The DSISD Board was chosen as a Regional Honor Board in the 2017 TASA (Texas Association of School Administrators) awards program.

ROBOTICS

- ❖ DSHS robotics students competing in the 2017 FIRST Dallas Regional won the prestigious Rookie All-Star Award and qualified for the World Championships.
- ❖ At the Regional F1 in Schools Competition, the DSHS team "Team IAT" won two awards: "Fastest Car" and "Research and Development." They also finished second overall, earning the right to advance to the National Finals in late spring.
- ❖ At the International Youth Cyber Defense Competition, "Team Cyber Tigers" placed in the top 30 percent of more than 2,000 schools from around the nation.



- ❖ Based on a second-place finish at the national Jaguar Land Rover 4x4 Technology Challenge, DSHS qualified for the World Championships in Abu Dhabi. DSHS finished 12th in a field of 23 teams from 18 countries, after ranking as high as third during the multi-day competition.
- ❖ Dripping Springs High School is designated as a "Fab Lab" location. Fab Labs are part of an international movement to make fabrication equipment and materials available to members of a broader community.



ATHLETICS

- ❖ Over two signing dates (November and February), 22 Tiger senior student-athletes have signed National Letters of Intent to continue their athletic careers in college.
- ❖ In team tennis, the Tigers advanced to the 2017 regional final and were ranked fourth in the state.
- ❖ In the fall of 2017, both the boys' and girls' cross country teams qualified for the state championships – a first for the boys' team. The boys placed sixth and Bobby Holt was the sixth-place individual finisher.
- ❖ The Tiger football team captured its second straight district title, was undefeated in the regular season, and advanced to the second round of playoffs.
- ❖ The DSHS volleyball team won the 2017 district title for the sixth straight year and advanced to the regional semifinals.
- ❖ In 2017, the Lady Tiger swim team won its first-ever STATE title! DSHS relay teams earned Gold, Silver and Bronze medals and London Farris also earned a Silver.
- ❖ Four Tiger wrestlers qualified for the 2017 state tournament, where Chase Warden earned a Silver Medal and Clayton Jetton earned a Bronze Medal. As a team, DSHS won districts and regionals, and placed 14th at state.
- ❖ In 2017, Tiger softball team earned a bid to the state tournament and had two players named to the 5A All-State Team: Kiele Miller and Camille Corona.
- ❖ The Tiger baseball team advanced to the regional tournament for the first time since 2000.
- ❖ The DSHS girls' golf team won a district title for just the second time in school history, breaking several school records.
- ❖ In track athletes Sydney Cole was a regional champion, and two advanced to the state championships.
- ❖ In May of 2017, eight students represented Dripping Springs at the Special Olympics area track meet, and several placed in their respective events including four Gold Medals.
- ❖ The DSMS boys' cross country team won the 2017 Highland Lakes district.

MUSIC

- ❖ The Tiger Band earned a Silver Medal at the 2017 UIL State Marching Contest in Director Keith Lancaster's final year. During the fall, DSHS won two other major competitions and received a first-place ranking at the Area D Contest.
- ❖ Seven DSHS students were named to the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) 5A All-State Band for 2017-18.
- ❖ Six DSHS choir students qualified for the 2018 state contest as either a soloist or ensemble performer. This fall, 10 students were selected for All-Region Choir.
- ❖ The DSHS Winterguard won a Bronze Medal at the 2017 Texas Color Guard Circuit State Championships.
- ❖ All four DSHS choirs received first division rating in the UIL concert contest and the Treble Choir and Varsity Women earned Sweepstakes Awards.

PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS

- ❖ Dripping Springs High School junior Natalie L'Amoreaux was awarded the Second Runner-Up Prize in the English Speaking Union of the United States Shakespeare Competition.
- ❖ The DSHS Hi-Steppers had a successful 2018 competition season, including winning Officer and Team Platinum Sweepstakes at the Danceline Central Texas Regional.
- ❖ Four DSHS theatre students were national qualifiers thanks to Superior ratings at the Texas State Thespian Festival.
- ❖ The 2017 DSHS musical production "My Fair Lady" earned six nominations in the Greater Austin High School Musical Theatre Awards.
- ❖ The Dripping Springs High School 2017 One-Act Play qualified for Area competition and was the regional alternate.
- ❖ In the regional Visual Arts Scholastic Event (VASE), 40 Dripping Springs students received Superior ratings and "all-region" recognition. Three qualified for the State VASE.
- ❖ In the TEAM VASE state competition for elementary students, seven Walnut Springs Elementary entries placed second.

SPEECH/DEBATE

- ❖ In 2017-18, the DSHS speech and debate team has attended 12 TFA tournaments, and nine debaters have qualified to compete at the TFA State Tournament.
- ❖ Junior Max Bibeau earned a fourth-place medal at the 2018 UIL State Congressional Debate Championship.
- ❖ The Dripping Springs High School policy debaters swept first, second and third place at the UIL CX District Meet, with the top two teams earning spots in the state tournament.
- ❖ In 2017, five debaters qualified for state competition: junior Dylan Farr for the 5A Congressional Debate contest and two teams in CX Policy Debate.
- ❖ Dripping Springs High School Speech and Debate Team won the 2017 UIL District 26-5A Tournament. Five students earned the right to advance to the regional tournament.
- ❖ DSHS junior Seeley Haas has won the Texas Association of Pupil Transportation Bus Safety Regional Speech Contest for her grade level for two consecutive years.

AG/OTHER

- ❖ At the 2018 State DECA Conference, two of Dripping Springs High School's 17 qualifiers earned the right to advance to international competition, which marks a first for DSHS. In addition, Lily Sethre-Brink was elected to one of six state officer positions.
- ❖ At the 2018 Hays County Stock Show, 10 DSISD students earned either Grand Champion or Reserve Grand Champion in their events, and many were recognized as Breed Champions.
- ❖ A total of 18 DSHS students competed in the 2018 Youth in Government state competition. The number of delegates qualifying for state and our overall leadership at state earned Dripping Springs HS the distinction of a "Premiere School," for the second consecutive year.
- ❖ Five DSHS students competed at the HOSA state competition and all finished among the top-10 in their respective events.
- ❖ The Homesite Evaluation team has qualified for the 2018 FFA Career Development Events state competition.
- ❖ In the 2017 PTA Reflections Contest, sophomore James Bartling (Musical Composition) and eighth-grader Drew Wilson (Visual Arts) received state-level Awards of Excellence and qualified for the national contest.

Financial Accountability Update

Dripping Springs ISD takes pride in its fiscal management practices. Together, the administration and Board work diligently with limited resources to fund a high-quality education for students. To achieve these goals, the Board adopted policies requiring a minimum fund balance of four months of operating expenditures and set limitations on budget deficits. The adopted budget may not reflect a budget deficit exceeding 2 percent of projected revenues. These parameters guide the Board in making budget decisions while also preserving the financial stability of the District.

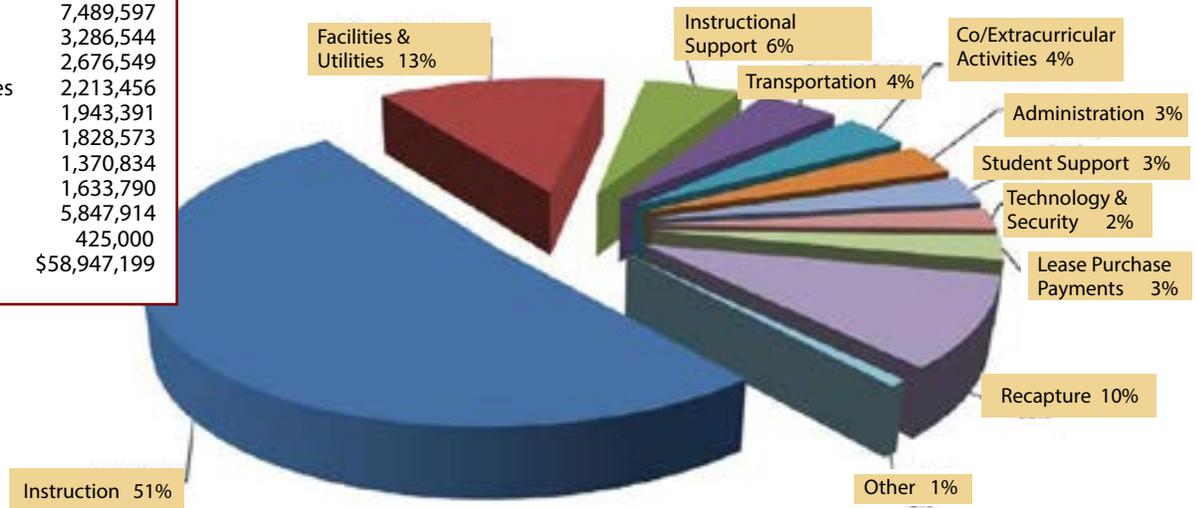
The 2016-17 fiscal year was the first time in several years that the district was required to return funds to the state under the system of "recapture". In order to offset the resulting loss in revenue, the district cut campus/department budgets by 8

percent, used a limited portion of the district's fund balance to help manage the budget, and restructured the district's tax rate without increasing the total rate. The third strategy required voter approval in September of 2016; more than 80 percent of voters cast their ballot in favor of the rate restructure or "tax swap." The 2017-18 property tax rate remains at \$1.52 per \$100 of certified property value, which is the same rate that has been in place since the 2014-15 fiscal year.

For the 2016-17 audited fiscal year, Dripping Springs ISD achieved a balanced budget, and ended the year with a total operating fund balance of \$31,323,869 as of June 30, 2017. Portions of this fund balance are designated to various district improvement projects.

**General Fund Expenditures by Area
Fiscal Year 2017-18 Budget**

Instruction	\$30,231,551
Facilities & Utilities	7,489,597
Instructional Support	3,286,544
Transportation	2,676,549
Co/Extracurricular Activities	2,213,456
General Administration	1,943,391
Student Support	1,828,573
Technology & Security	1,370,834
Lease Purchase Payments	1,633,790
Recapture	5,847,914
Other	425,000
Total	\$58,947,199



FINANCIAL RECOGNITIONS

- ❖ In a May 2017 report by TXSmartSchools.org, Dripping Springs ISD received a score of 4.5 out of 5 possible stars for the second consecutive year. The summary chart stated that DSISD has "very high academic progress" and "low spending compared to its fiscal peers." The report looks at various indicators of student performance and cross-references those with spending levels.
- ❖ Dripping Springs ISD has received the highest rating of "Superior," a letter grade "A," and a score of 100 on the Texas FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas) report every year. FIRST measures the quality of school districts' financial management and reporting.
- ❖ The district's bond rating is 'AA' according to Standard & Poor's and Aa2 according to Moody's.

DS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Founded in 1992 to support academic achievement, the Dripping Springs Education Foundation supports the district in many ways including grants to teachers for classroom enrichment, encourages and supports excellence in teaching, and fosters student participation in special projects that otherwise would not be funded in the district budget. The Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.

In 2017, DSEF provided approximately \$205,000 in total support to the district, staff and students. In 2017 DSEF was selected as the Dripping Springs Non-Profit of the Year.

For more information, to donate or to volunteer to help, please visit the DSEF website at: <http://www.dsefoundation.org>.



District Facilities: Now and in the Future

2014 BOND PROGRAM

The \$92.4 million DSISD bond program approved by voters in May of 2014 is basically complete. It included funding for Sycamore Springs Elementary and Sycamore Springs Middle School, a multi-purpose stadium that was built at the competition field behind Dripping Springs High School, some HVAC system and roof replacements, a baseball/softball complex, expansion of high-school field house/locker room facilities, a public access road connecting the stadium to Highway 290, and district-wide technology and infrastructure improvements including a Network Operations Center at DSHS.

Sycamore Springs introduced a concept of two schools connected but operating independently. While efficiency is achieved in areas like mechanical systems and kitchen and the building's footprint is minimized, potential for collaboration between the two schools and greater opportunity for students is explored.



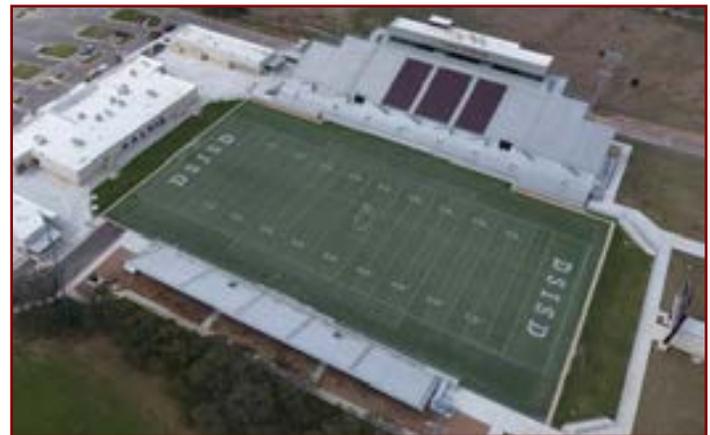
The new Sycamore Springs Elementary School/Middle School campus serves 800 elementary and 740 middle school students.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Throughout the fall, of 2017 the Long-Range Facility Planning Committee met to evaluate the current state of district facilities, review financial information and demographic data, and study DSISD's facilities capacity in relation to current and projected growth in student enrollment. The Bond Steering Committee then formed in January to take those findings and consider project options and cost. Upon completion of the committee's analysis, a recommendation was presented to the Board of Trustees.

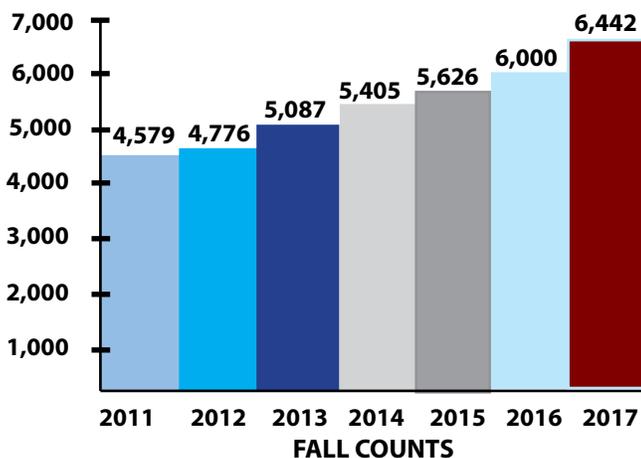
At a special meeting Feb. 12, the Board voted unanimously to call for a \$132 million bond referendum. Information is available at: www.dsisdbond.net.

The district currently owns two other pieces of property: 150 acres at the intersection of Sawyer Ranch Road and Darden Hill Road, and 24 acres on RR12 at Mt. Gainor Road. Decisions have not yet been made regarding what type of school (s) would go on each property.



Aerial view of the new Tiger Stadium

DSISD STUDENT ENROLLMENT UPDATE



Enrollment shows that growth has continued at a steady pace in the past five years. In fact, this year's increase of 7.24 percent is the highest single-year jump in the past decade. Previously, the highest single-year increases were 6.92 percent last year and 6.82 percent between 2006-07 and 2007-08. DSISD is the second-fastest growing district in the state of Texas (behind Prosper ISD). Demographic projections show this growth continuing.

Dripping Springs ISD now serves just more than 6,400 students. Compared to 10 years ago, the district served just over 4,000 students (enrollment was 4,023 in October 2007).

A demographic update was presented in October 2017 and is available on the DSISD website.

Dripping Springs

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

NOTES

