



Dr. Brent Hawkins
LISD Superintendent

Hawk's Talk

Wednesday, July 21, 2022

LION COUNTRY IMPORTANT DATES

New Teacher Training

Tuesday, July 26

Wednesday, July 27

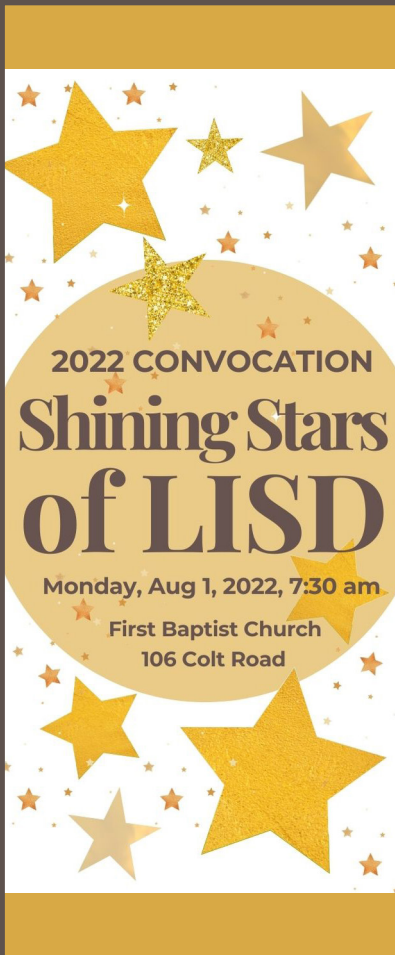
Thursday, July 28

LISD Convocation

Monday, August 1

First Day of School

Monday, August 8



July LISD School Board Meeting

LISD addresses social media rumors

The July School Board Meeting opened with LISD principals reporting on student success based on the Texas Education Agency State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) results. Creekside Elementary Principal Elisha Bell shared, "We built on the culture of students first. We will do whatever it takes to serve our students. When I joined the campus, we had a D rating. Today, we are at a solid B, thanks to the dedication and commitment of the CSE staff. We worked hard on lesson plans and aligning the curriculum. The focus will continue to be on the growth of each student. Our future plans are to help our students and parents to learn how to track their progress so they can understand their growth and performance. Every student must grow at a minimum of one year. Working together with students, parents, and CSE staff will ensure this growth. Timber Creek Elementary Principal Sheri Murphy apprised the board, "Our fifth-graders are a very smart group of students who are headed to the junior high campus. Our science scores improved from 69%-78%. We were proud of the results of all grades and are focusing on students meeting grade level and making one year's growth. Our plans for the new school year are closing the achievement gaps and focus on special education. I am super proud of our teachers and students." Cedar Grove Elementary Principal Erin Barnes was proud of their "really good year." "Our previous campus score was an 83, and we now have an anticipated score of 87, so we are definitely a high B. Our third-graders went from 24% to 47% Masters in Reading. Our scores rose from 78% to 91% in 5th math. Fourth-grade meets and masters were the only areas we did not see growth. Our plans to increase our growth in Math are for our response to intervention (RTI) reading aide will now be assigned to work with our students in math. We have eleven new teachers starting in August so our focus for next year will be teacher retention." Pine Ridge Primary Principal Sarah Hans shared with the board, "We are reviewing data, focusing on student growth in reading groups and working on early literacy skills to ensure success in first grade." Livingston Junior High Principal Jared Nettles reviewed with the board how his first year as principal and his campus received TEA accolades in five out of seven areas. In 2019, the following year, the junior high campus received a D rating. The staff worked hard, met student growth, and received a preliminary C rating. "Response to Intervention (RTI), instructional coaches, and programs helped us make improvements. We have hired an A Team of incoming teachers. We hired lead teachers and coaches, and Dr. Snyder has put together an instructional plan with a focus on 7th grade Math. We will be sharing videos and photos of classroom activities on school social media to keep our parents informed." Livingston High School Principal Dr. Derrick James shared student achievement data that reflected approaches at 69%, Meets 47%, and Masters at 16%. "We plan to increase both areas of meets and masters. More effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on campus guidelines were set during the Spring semester. We spent a lot of time sharing knowledge and looking at data. English I and II reflected a decrease in Masters, but improvements in the PLCs will result in an increase in Masters. In the spring, we were very consistent with the rules, treating everyone fairly, where all students and teachers were focused on learning. There are assistant principal meetings every Monday to make sure everyone is on the same page. We have created an environment of data reviewing and sharing. We are waiting on the TEA College, Career, and Military Readiness score but anticipate a B rating.

LISD Superintendent Dr. Brent Hawkins addressed teacher turnover. "We went through three years of state average turnover. When you look at where we are as a district, there isn't more success for quite a distance. Our school district staff were

heavily recruited in the spring by various districts. Our mission is to keep kids safe and accelerate learning. During COVID, there was a need for constant communication because of panic and fear associated with the impact of the medical health conditions across the nation. We had to update the number of positive cases of COVID continually and keep our community informed. We used Facebook LIVE as a communication tool to share with our parents. Over this last year, we have pushed out a lot of parent and staff emails as a main source of communication. We want to ensure that information on social media has some communication components but we use it mainly to showcase our students and staff success. We will be creating a tab on our website to allow parents and members of the community to find answers to frequently asked questions as well as address rumors so that there is transparency and communication. We continue to have the info@livingstonisd.com email address that is available but encourage our community to give us a call or knock on our doors to better serve you. Our FAQ tab looks to address a wide array of information that our community can go to quickly and get information. Recent examples that were on social media but brought to our attention include examples like a post about my personalized license plate. It indicated that I placed a personalized plate on a school vehicle. The license plate was purchased in 2011 by my daughters after I received my doctorate. They purchased the plate with their money, and it was on the truck that I drove when I started to work in the district eight years ago. I renewed it each year on my personal vehicle, and I assume that someone did not know that I actually owned the truck it was on. Another post that a different community member called me about was a post on social media that described a police report from 2017 reflecting theft of funds and personal items from my vehicle while it was parked in my driveway. My vehicle was broken into, and there was money that was stolen, but this money was replaced from my personal funds at no cost to the school or district insurance policy. The post stated that the amount of funds was up to \$50,000 and that the money was derived from athletic funds and deposited into the Ag department accounts. The true fact of this was that in fact money was stolen from my truck and was a few hundred dollars. We do not take in that amount of money at the athletic gate, and booster clubs handle concession funds. I'm not sure that I have even handled gate money during my eight years in the district. The money was in fact, brought to me one night by an employee who had discovered a former employee had been negligent in depositing money from an Ag fundraiser. Again it was a few hundred dollars and several checks that dated back over several years and also included some signed blank checks from the booster club. I do not have access to the district safe after hours, so the money was secured in my vehicle. The post makes little sense in that athletic departments across the state lose money, but Ag departments receive weighted funding from the state. It is just a simple case of a lack of understanding of the facts that we hope we can clear up before it turns into defamation-type behavior. The last example I will use is that I've been asked to explain the facility use by the Little Dribbler program, and I start by saying that I'm a huge basketball fan. I coached basketball previously in my career, and my kid played, and I coach in this Little Dribbler program. I see the importance of the Little Dribblers for our students. We used the same policies and formulas to arrive at the cost as has been done for years in this district. The difference in the increase in use by the organization and the increased cost of labor and supplies. These points were covered with the organization prior to use. There was \$29,250 worth of facility use that was waived for Little Dribblers this past year and \$15,525 in 2018-2019, which shows an increase of usage. A balance of \$11,240 is currently owed at the end of their season for custodial labor and cleaning supplies. \$3,960 of that total was for COVID fogging which was a requirement by the district protocols for Covid, and \$7280 was custodial labor and supplies. This is an increase from \$4120 that Little Dribblers paid in November of 2020, but you can clearly see that increase in usage and supplies affects all of us. When we buy a tank of gas or groceries at the store, we all feel the impact of increases in cost. We can not staff a custodial department paying \$7.25 per hour in wages. Labor is a major driver of cost for our district and society. Little Dribblers is not a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization, it is a for-profit organization. We have made numerous attempts to contact the organization, even via registered mail; they have not been successful. I actually had a person that was going to donate the cost of Covid fogging they incurred, but because of lack of communication back from the organization, the person has withdrawn that offer. The district is on a fixed income, we do not have the taxing authority to raise taxes beyond our current level. We have continued to prioritize staff salaries throughout these times. I mean, we have the capacity for teachers to earn approximately \$100,000 per year through the state-funded teacher incentive allotment. If we do not stay with market-driven salaries, our ability to staff the district would be impacted."

LISD Director of Student Services Lana Smith gave the district safety update. "We are compiling a district report and holding a safety meeting on July 25, 2022. We are preparing an exterior door audit which includes inspecting door locks for the Texas Education Agency before the first day of school. We have a very detailed and specific plan for the prevention and mitigation of active threats, active attackers, and active shooters. Principals are auditing campuses and helping to assemble a district report which is distributed to the safety team. Key audits are held across the district, and all campuses have one master key. During the summer months, there are audits that cover the interior and exterior of the campuses. Fire drills take place each month, and all camera systems are checked. TEA is requiring audits to be conducted at each campus, but the district already had a rotation at each campus. All threat assessment teams have training. They review each threat and a complete a profile on each incident, and it is tracked from campus to campus. All campus staff will be training on safety procedures and trauma with specific training for new teachers.

The board approved the 2022-2023 Student Code of Conduct as an action item.