

Character Education

We were fortunate to have two students speak at this month’s board meeting about the importance of character. The students submitted video recordings of their essays.



Bastrop Middle School 8th grader Hadley Ackermann spoke about perseverance saying, “I’ve had to show my perseverance in various difficulties. I have dyslexia and have struggled to learn to read all my life. However, I’ve learned to continue to persevere and overcome this obstacle with the help of my teachers and parents.”

Kamryn Martinez, a 4th-grade student at Cedar Creek Elementary, talked about loyalty. “Being loyal means you are committed and being committed means you stick by someone even when things get tough. It can be shown in many ways and when someone chooses you, it makes you feel like a champion!”



Welcome Rick Rivera

The board unanimously approved the appointment of James Allen’s replacement, Rick Rivera. Allen resigned from the board effective the end of December when he accepted a new job in Arkansas. Mr. Rivera has lived in Bastrop for 22 years. He currently has three children, two of whom are currently enrolled in BISD. Bastrop County Judge Paul Pape swore in Mr. Rivera as the new trustee for Place 1.



Presentations & Recognition



January is School Board Recognition Month. The theme this year is **Navigating to Success**. Bastrop Mayor Connie Schroeder issued and shared a special proclamation on behalf of the City of Bastrop, and Superintendent Barry Edwards presented board members with an engraved compass as a token of the District’s appreciation. Board members also received a framed letter with quotes from our staff thanking them for their dedication and service to the community and commitment to students, teachers, and families.

Students from [Bastrop High School](#) and [Cedar Creek High School](#) bands were recognized by Chico Portillo, Director of Fine Arts, for their tremendous accomplishments in symphonic band and wind ensemble. Some students advanced to Area, and one student advanced to State. Click the links above to learn more about these outstanding musicians from both schools!

Director of Accountability Heather Christie presented the [2019-2020 Texas Academic Performance Report](#) for the district and each campus. The report provides updates about the district's accreditation status, campus performance objectives, and other important information. The full report will be available on the district website within the next two weeks. The data show that Bastrop ISD students continue to graduate at high levels with an almost 97% 4-year graduation rate, which is well above the region and state averages. Another noteworthy point is a significant bump in College, Career & Military Readiness (CCMR) rates. Bastrop ISD, which is A-rated in CCMR, saw a rise of almost 10 percentage points. Kudos to our students, teachers, school leaders, and outstanding C&I team who make these achievements possible!

2021 *Bond* Election

Parent and community member Evan Moilan, on behalf of the Citizens Advisory Task Force, [shared a presentation](#) with the Board about the CATF's work over the last couple of months to craft a bond package for consideration. The team recommended a \$183,650,000 bond package to be placed on the May 1, 2021 ballot. The proposal calls for two new elementary schools, technology infrastructure for virtual learning, safety and security upgrades, reconfiguration to a PK-5 and 6-8 model, as well as major improvements to existing campuses. For a description of projects, visit our website.

The board voted unanimously to accept the CATF's recommendation and to call a bond election for May 1. Board President Ashley Mutschink thanked the task force for bringing forth a proposal that will help make Bastrop ISD a destination district. An important note is that the bond will not raise the school district's tax rate, which is currently \$1.32 total. The BISD tax rate was lowered in 2020 by 5 cents and in 2019 by 7 cents, for a total of 12 cent reduction in the past two years.

Board *Action*

In other action, the Board:

- Approved the 2021-2022 Academic Calendar. Calendar A was overwhelmingly supported by district staff and the public. The new calendar will be available on the district website in the coming days.
- Approved a contract with the Bastrop County Elections Office, as well as an agreement to conduct a joint election with the City of Bastrop.
- Approved an order of election for the Board of Trustees Election for May 1, 2021, for Place 1 and Place 2.
- Approved a One-Step [Construction Manager At-Risk Process](#).
- Approved a resolution adding an additional signature on Bastrop ISD bank accounts.
- Approved extending the Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) benefit, which expired December 31, 2020. This decision allows employees who have not used EPSL to access the leave benefit through June 30, 2021 if they are impacted by COVID-19.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is February 16, 2021, at 5:30 pm.

**MORE INFORMATION WILL BE COMING
ON THE NEWLY APPROVED MAY 2021 BOND ELECTION!**

Early voting starts April 19th

Election Day is May 1st
