



# PRESS RELEASE

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**GEORGE WILLIGE, FORMER TISD ADMINISTRATOR,  
TO BE INAUGURAL INDUCTEE FOR TISD HALL OF FAME**



*Texarkana, TX* – Texarkana Independent School District will honor former TISD Administrator, George Willige, as their inaugural inductee for the TISD Hall of Fame during their annual Texas Public Schools Week Community Breakfast.

The event will be held on Tuesday, March 8 at 7:00 a.m. in the Dan Haskins Student Center at Texas High School, 2112 Kennedy Lane.

“I am thrilled that Mr. Willige has been chosen as our very first Hall of Fame inductee,” commented James Henry Russell, Superintendent of Schools. “This newly developed annual award

will honor a retired TISD employee who has made a significant impact on the TISD and Texarkana community. Our Hall of Fame will preserve the history of so many of our great educators who have made TISD what it is today. We want to make sure that their names and contributions are here for others to see not only now but in many years to come.”

“Mr. Willige spent a large portion of his life taking care of others and serving as a great role model for literally thousands of students in TISD, continued Russell. “He was my principal during my four years at Texas High School and I always remember him attending every single event. Now, after having worked in education for a number of years, I know the incredible commitment and sacrifice that it takes to attend all of those events along with managing a large school. I don’t believe there is a tougher job in education than being the high school principal and Mr. Willige did it so well for a very long time. He has definitely left a positive mark on so many of us and he, along with his family, deserves a huge thank you for those many years of service in an incredibly tough position.”

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“Mr. Willige was a conscientious leader to students and staff,” noted Wanda Boyette, President of the TISD Board of Trustees. “His knowledge of academic advancements led him to look toward the future for what students needed now in order to be successful and his eager determination created change in the Texas High curriculum so that success for students would be ensured.”

Willige began his career in education in 1965 with TISD as Football/Track Coach and Science Teacher at F. Ben Pierce Junior High School. From there, he went on to coach Football/Track and teach U.S. History at Texas High School beginning in 1968. He returned to F. Ben Pierce Junior High in 1970 to teach Science and then back to Texas High from 1972 thru 1978 as a Counselor.

In 1978, Willige was named Principal of Fifteenth Street Elementary School (now Theron Jones Early Literacy Center) and in 1979 was named Principal of Spring Lake Park Elementary School. Always enjoying having the opportunity to be around high school students, he accepted the position of Principal of Texas High School in 1980 and remained there until 1993.

Moving his educational knowledge to the district level, Willige took on the role of Director of Federal Programs, Counseling and Personnel Director in 1995. In 1997, he made his way back to Texas High School as Principal until his retirement in 2001.

“I chose a career in teaching because I had some really good teachers of my own that inspired me to want to become a teacher and coach,” stated Willige. “They always appeared to love what they were doing and I wanted to have that type of career as well.”

During his service to Texas High School, Willige was instrumental in the development of the Honors courses and the Broadcast Journalism department. He spearheaded the need for technology on the campus which allowed Texas High to go from one computer for the entire campus to five computer labs and many other individual computers on the campus.

“Convincing others of the need for technology was like pulling teeth in the early years. Although computers were new and not many were using them at the time, I felt that this would be one of the key instructions that our students should have access to before they went off to work or college. Technology was not going to be a thing of the future, it was there right now and our students needed to know and learn this technology so they would not get left behind in the years ahead.”

Willige has served the Texarkana community as a member of the Wilbur Smith Rotary Club since 1972 and as Advisory Board member for Texarkana College Vocational Curriculum Committee. He is a member of Williams Memorial United Methodist Church where he has served on the Long-Range Planning Committee and as a member of the Administrative Counsel.

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In the educational field, Willige served as Regional Legislative Chairman for the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals and is a member of the Texas Retired Teachers Association having served as District President, State Officer and a member of the State Leadership Training Committee.

He was born in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1942 and graduated from Longview High School in 1960. He attended Texarkana College from 1960 to 1962 where he earned the honor of All Conference Defensive Tackle for the Texas Eastern Conference. Willige graduated from North Texas State University with a Bachelor of Science in Health, Physical Education & Recreation in 1965 and holds a Masters of Education in Guidance & Counseling from East Texas State University – Commerce. He received his Mid-Management Certification in 1978 and his Superintendent Certificate in 1990.

He is married to the former Carol Morgan (THS 1960 graduate) and they have two children, Kim Hayes (THS 1981 graduate) and Scott Willige (THS 1985 graduate) and seven grandchildren – Brittany Saylor (THS 2002 graduate) Hannah Hayes, Whitney Willige, Dalton Willige, Jacob Willige, Taylor Knighton and Kaylee Knighton.

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**PHOTO, FILM AND STORY OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE DURING EVENT. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT TINA VEAL-GOOCH, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AT 903.794.3651 EXT. 1013.**