



PRESS RELEASE

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**GEORGE WADDLES NAMED PRINCIPAL
FOR DUNBAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL;
KATHY OWEN BELL TO MOVE INTO DISTRICT MENTOR ROLE**

Texarkana, TX – During their Wednesday, June 16, 2010, regular session, the Texarkana Independent School District Board of Trustees named George Waddles to the position of Principal for Dunbar Elementary School. Waddles will assume his new role effective July 1 as Kathy Owen Bell, current Dunbar Elementary School Principal, retires from her position to work part-time on district efforts to further develop and mentor new teachers and principals.



“Kathy Owen Bell has been a member of our Tiger Family for 39 years,” commented James Henry Russell, Superintendent of Schools. “She is the best of the best and has done an unbelievable job in guiding and mentoring her administrative staff so that they could grow within TISD and serve the District. In her new role, Kathy will take her years of experience and her many talents to further develop our teachers and principals so that they can achieve stronger student, school and professional success.”



“George Waddles is one that has learned from Kathy since 2007, and he will bring much enthusiasm to his new position,” continued Russell. “He truly cares for the students, staff and the Dunbar Elementary School community and I have no doubt that he will move this school forward in the years to come.”

Waddles professional background includes ten years as a Corporate Trainer for Greyhound Lines, Inc. and ExecuTrain Corp. and four years with the University of Illinois at Chicago as Assistant Director of Educational Assistance. His decision to move into the educational field was based in part on his experiences as a trainer and his technology background.

He joined the Tiger Family in 2004 as a Technology Teacher at Texas Middle School. Waddles was named Texas Middle School Teacher of the Year for 2006-2007 and served as TISD Secondary Teacher of the Year in 2007-2008.

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In 2007, he took on the task of Coordinator of Student Services for Dunbar Elementary School and was selected as a TISD Administrative Intern in 2008. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Truman State University, a Master of Theology in Pastoral Ministry from Dallas Theological Seminary and a Master of Science in Education Administration from Texas A&M University – Texarkana.

“In the educational field, I most enjoy developing relationships with students and watching how their individual talents grow daily,” Waddles stated. “I am looking forward to fostering stronger relationships within the community and continuing to raise the academic bar. Kathy has been the best mentor I could ask for, and I am happy for the opportunity to have learned from her and look forward to her continued guidance and input as I take on this new role.”

Waddles has served the past six years as Pastor for Sunset Missionary Baptist Church. He is married to Angela and they have three children: Erin (18), a 2010 Texas High School graduate; Zach (12) who attends Texas Middle School; and Andrew (9), a student at Wake Village Elementary School.

Owen Bell began her career with TISD in 1976 as a Kindergarten Teacher for Beverly Elementary School. She moved her Kindergarten teaching abilities to Spring Lake Park Kindergarten Center in 1985 where she remained for the next seven years. In 1992, Owen Bell took on the role of Counselor at Westlawn Middle School and in 1998 assumed the position of Principal for Highland Park Elementary School. While there, she led the school to a Texas Education Agency rating of Exemplary four of the seven years. In 2005, Owen Bell was looking for a new challenge and found that in Dunbar Elementary School. As the new principal, she wanted to move the school from a TEA status of Unacceptable – and that she did. Under her leadership, Dunbar Elementary School became a Recognized school in 2006 and has continued that achievement since that time.

“I feel proud to work for TISD because of the many opportunities to grow and learn,” remarked Owen Bell. “This district is filled with some of the smartest staff and they truly keep me on my toes and amaze me with their knowledge in their respective fields. It is the collective Tiger Family that has grown this district to what it is today.”

“In terms of the Tiger Family, there is truly a family atmosphere within the school and the district,” she continued. From divorce to remarriage to my battle with cancer – my Tiger Family has been by my side. This is where my best friends are and I will miss seeing them every single day. I will most miss being around the students, watching them grow and mature through the years and

having the chance to change their life every day with just a smile and an encouraging word.”

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Owen Bell has no doubt that Waddles will do a great job. “He has a genuine care for students and wants the best for them. George is a fun, exciting leader that relates extremely well to students, staff and parents.”

During her years with TISD, Owen Bell was named a Distinguished Principal by the National Association of Elementary School Principals and a Campus Teacher of the Year a total of four times. She served on the first Site Based Decision Making Committee and the first District Technology Committee in 1991. She laughingly says, “Things have really changed since that time. My first presentation to the Board of Trustees was on a sheet that was placed on the wall, not a screen, but a sheet.”

She has a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Southern Arkansas University, Master of Science in Early Childhood Education and Special Education from Texas Tech University, certifications in Guidance and Counseling and Education Administration and served as an Adjunct Faculty member for Texas A&M University – Texarkana from 1992 thru 2002.

Owen Bell is married to John and they have two daughters – Lacey and Jordan and three grandchildren – Gracyn, Whit and Ellis – and one arriving in August.

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