



PRESS RELEASE

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**TISD ANNOUNCES SUPERIOR RATING
IN SCHOOL FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY;
SETS ALL-TIME HIGH IN STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

Texarkana, TX – During their Tuesday, September 20, 2011 regular session, the Texarkana Independent School District Board of Trustees held a public hearing to announce findings from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) Schools FIRST (Financial Accountability Rating System of Texas).

For the ninth consecutive year, TISD has received the rating of Superior Achievement for quality performance in the management of school districts' financial resources. This rating is based upon an analysis of staff and student data reported for the 2009-10 school year as well as budgetary and actual financial data for the 2010 fiscal year. Senate Bill (SB) 218, which was passed during the 77th Texas Legislature in 2001, authorized the implementation of a financial accountability rating system for Texas school districts.

"TISD's effort in being effective, efficient and accountable with taxpayers' dollars is an important task that we strive continually to deliver," said Deidra Reeves, Chief Financial Officer. "Receiving the Superior Achievement Rating for the ninth year is evident of our excellence in managing and reporting taxpayer dollars and something that we take great pride in."

The Schools FIRST accountability rating system assigns one of four financial accountability ratings to Texas school districts, with the highest being "Superior Achievement," followed by "Above-Standard Achievement," "Standard Achievement" and "Substandard Achievement." Districts with serious data quality problems may receive the additional rating of "Suspended-Data Quality." Districts that receive the "Substandard Achievement" or "Suspended – Data Quality" ratings under Schools FIRST must file a corrective action plan with the Texas Education Agency.

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In additional reports, TISD announced that student enrollment has reached 7,117 for the 2011-12 school year as of Monday, September 19, 2011. Enrollment is up 181 students over the previous year and is reflective of a continued growth pattern for the ninth year in a row.

“We are very pleased with the enrollment numbers for the year and appear to be right on target with our projections,” stated Paul Norton, Superintendent of Schools. “TISD continues to work diligently in our efforts to provide quality academic offerings for our students and the academic rigor that our parents expect.”

“A portion of the additional increase is a direct result of our newest school, the Texarkana ISD Virtual Academy, which opened this year,” Norton continued. “We had set our first year enrollment projections at 75 students in grades 3-6. Principal Marsha Burris and her staff have worked diligently to make this happen and I could not be prouder of their efforts.”

The Texarkana ISD Virtual Academy is TISD’s newest innovative educational program, in partnership with Texas Education Agency and Calvert Education Services. It provides online learning for any public school student in the state of Texas who is motivated to learn academic content in a customized educational setting with the daily support of a responsible adult. Through the Calvert Education Services collaboration, the Texarkana ISD Virtual Academy offers a customized version of the world-renowned Calvert School curriculum that is aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). All students enrolled in the academy have the same accountability measures required by the State and will be required to take all annual assessments.

Enrolled students have course studies that offer flexible pacing and customized instruction in English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Health and Fine Arts.

Supervising teachers monitor the virtual classroom along with the student’s progress. They help problem-solve, lead discussion, demonstrate via webcam, offer intervention, remediation and enrichment for the student and the managing parent/guardian.

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