

Character Education

Supported by her entire family, Bastrop Intermediate School sixth-grader Amya Binion spoke to the Superintendent and Board of Trustees about honesty and integrity. She said the true meaning of honesty “is about being true to yourself. It’s about who you are and what you need to live your most authentic life. It simply means you act with integrity and truth.” Well said, Amya!



District Staff Presentations

Sandra Callahan, the District’s CFO, held a public hearing regarding the [20-21 Proposed Tax Rate](#). The total tax rate includes a Maintenance & Operations tax of \$0.92 and a debt service tax of \$0.401. The total proposed tax rate for the 20-21 school year is \$1.321, which is a decrease of five pennies from \$1.371 in 2019-20.

Superintendent Barry Edwards presented a [back to school update](#), sharing with the board that the COVID-19 positivity rate in Bastrop County has dropped to 4.35%. In alignment with the district’s staging method, this allows more students to learn on campus. Superintendent Edwards said, “I’m cautiously optimistic, but we want to be sure our staff and parents are ready to do this.”

Dr. Marisol Rocha, Director of Federal & State Programs and School Improvement, presented the budgets for [ESSA Title I, Title II, Title III, and Migrant Services](#). Among some of the highlights, the budgets allocate funding for the hiring of additional EL Specialists, professional development, more campus programs, teacher retention and recruitment efforts, and providing additional COVID-19 response and campus support.

Randy Sharp, Director of IT Services, presented the board with some impressive statistics about how the [IT Department](#) has adapted and responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. The IT team provided 2,714 devices and hotspots, answered thousands of technical support calls, resolved hundreds of teacher support tickets, and established community hotspots on buses.

Laura Baker, Director of Student Services, gave a status report on current [Dropout Recovery](#) efforts. Baker highlighted the efforts of Attendance Officers, which includes ongoing communication with the families and personal home visits.

Board Action

In addition to the consent agenda, the Board took the following action:

- Approved a prepayment of approximately \$5.26 million of existing bonds, saving taxpayers an estimated \$3.34 million of future interest costs.
- Approved the 2020-21 total tax rate of \$1.32, which is 5 cents less than last year.
- Voted to continue a partnership with Austin Community College for dual credit and articulated credit.

In action at a special meeting held September 10, the Board voted to file a waiver with TEA to extend the District’s transitional start an additional four weeks. This extension gives the District flexibility to continue its phased approach to bringing students on campus.

OCTOBER IS PRINCIPAL APPRECIATION MONTH!

#ThankAPrincipal

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is October 20, 2020, at 5:30 pm.