

## **Board Recognition**

**Jan. 14, 2025**

### **Former Denton High, LaGrone Academy Teacher Recognized as Educator of Influence**

Brenda Buster, a former cosmetology teacher at Denton High School and the LaGrone Academy, has been recognized as an Educator of Influence for the impact she had on thousands of students. Over the course of her more than 30-year career, Ms. Buster trained hundreds of local stylists while partnering with Sally Beauty to help open the LaGrone Academy.

Ms. Buster was the Denton High School Teacher of the Year in 2002 and Denton ISD's Secondary Teacher of the Year in 2002.

*Brenda Buster will be in attendance to receive this recognition. The principal of the LaGrone Academy is Marcus Bourland.*

### **Four Denton ISD Ensembles Receive Mark of Excellence Award**

Four Denton ISD ensembles received the Mark of Excellence Award from the Foundation for Music Education.

The Braswell High School Legacy One Jazz Ensemble, Braswell Wind Symphony and the McMath Middle School Jazz Ensemble were each named National Winners. The Denton High School Lab Band 1 was named a Commended Winner.

In addition to being a Mark of Excellence Award National Winner, Braswell's Legacy Once Jazz Ensemble also performed at the Jazz Education Network (JEN) Conference in Atlanta last week. Braswell's jazz ensemble was one of only six ensembles from across the United States that were invited to perform at the largest jazz education conference in the world.

Regarding the Mark of Excellence Award, only the top 25 percent of entrants from across the country are recognized as National Winners, with the second 25 percent named as Commended Winners.

The Mark of Excellence project seeks to recognize and award outstanding achievement in performance by high school and middle school bands, choirs and orchestras. The project gathers entries from throughout the United States and provides valuable feedback for all entrants.

A unique competitive environment is created which allows ensembles to compare their performance quality to other outstanding groups from across the country. All entrants receive a compilation recording of the winning performances. Winners are recognized in regional and/or national publications and at national and regional conventions. It is hoped the adjudicator critiques and the compilation recordings will prove helpful in improving performances and will spread knowledge of quality literature.

*The Braswell High School Director of Bands is Aaron Snipes. The principal of Braswell High School is DeCorian Hailey. The director of the Denton High School Lab Band 1 is Jesse Woolery. The principal of Denton High School is Joel Hays. The director of the McMath Middle School jazz ensemble is Travis Harris. The principal of McMath Middle School is Brett Moore.*

### **Denton ISD Receives \$9 Million Grant to Provide Devices with Internet Access to Students with Limited or No Connectivity**

Denton ISD was one of only two public school systems in the United States to receive a grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA).

The roughly \$9 million grant will provide students with limited or no internet connectivity access to devices with internet access. In addition, these devices will also include browsing security protections, just like those on the district network.

Denton ISD was one of only 24 entities from across the United States to receive the grant, and the district was one of only eight educational organizations to be awarded. This funding comes from the \$1.25 billion Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program, one of three Digital Equity Act grant programs created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

*Arshay Sloan, Senior Integration Architect; Christopher Johnson, Senior Systems Infrastructure Architect; and Yalonda Weaver, Director of Grant Financial Management, will be in attendance to receive this recognition. Denton ISD's Chief Technology Officer is Robert Pierce.*

### **Denton ISD's Executive Director of Construction, Planning & Growth Receives State Award**

Brandon Boyter, Denton ISD's Executive Director of Construction, Planning & Growth, received the Pathfinder Award from the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO). The award was developed to recognize members from facilities and operations

for their use of innovative practices, response to unprecedented situations and connection to students and staff.

Denton ISD continues to rank as one of the fastest growing areas in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex, and under Mr. Boyter's leadership, the district has opened two new schools (Cheek Middle School and Martinez Elementary School) since the start of the 2023-2024 school year. In addition, Denton ISD also opened two new campuses that had been rebuilt (Calhoun Middle School and Newton Rayzor Elementary) in that same timeframe, and two new schools (Reeves and Hill Elementary) are scheduled to open August 2025.

Mr. Boyter has been in public education for more than 20 years, and has been involved in construction for over 25 years. He has been a part of more than 75 new K-12 construction projects and countless renovation projects during his career.

*Dr. Tracy Ginsburg, Executive Director of the Texas Association of School Business Officials, will also be on hand for the presentation.*

### **Community Spotlight**

#### **Harvest Ministries Recognized for Work with Denton ISD**

Each year, the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) honors businesses, organizations and individuals for their support and exceptional advocacy of public schools. This statewide honor, as part of "Stand Up for Texas Public Schools," recognizes local businesses and community organizations that partner with school districts, making a difference in the lives of public-school students.

Harvest Ministries has been a longtime supporter of Denton ISD, providing food to both students and staff, as well as donating hundreds of backpacks to the district's Back-to-School Fairs. Since 2023, Harvest Ministries has provided nearly 300 holiday meal boxes that have been distributed to students at multiple campuses.

In addition, Harvest Ministries has provided lunch for the staff at Braswell High School and breakfast for staff at Paloma Creek and Bell Elementary, as well as Navo Middle School.

For the unique way Harvest Ministries has assisted our district, and for going above and beyond to assist our students and staff, we wish to thank Harvest Ministries for their continued support.

*Eric and Antoinette Patrick from Harvest Ministries will be in attendance to receive this recognition.*

## **Board Appreciation Month**

Texas is home to more than 5.4 million public school children who are enrolled in more than 1,100 school districts. That translates into 7,200 volunteers who are elected by their local citizens to act as trustees – making effective and good decisions to benefit the education of our community’s young people.

In Denton ISD, our seven elected trustees work many hours – often time representing us at community breakfasts, during their lunch hour and at evening events. They respond to parent phone calls and emails; they attend trainings with regard to policy and law and they strive every day to make effective decisions to benefit of our community’s more than 33,335 young people and 5,000 employees.

We want to acknowledge the work and volunteer efforts of our 2024-2025 Board of Trustees:

Barbara Burns, President  
Mia Price, Vice President  
Sheryl English, Secretary  
Amy Bundgus, Trustee  
Dr. Patricia Sosa-Sanchez, Trustee  
Charles Stafford, Trustee  
Lori Tays, Trustee

Thank you for your service and constant commitment to our organization – your impact will be felt for generations.