



November | 30 | 2020

## 'Grow Your Own' Develops Paraprofessionals into Teachers and Covers Certification Cost

Brittany Eatmon has always wanted to be a teacher, and now, she is steadily working her way toward her goal – thanks to the Duncanville ISD 'Grow Your Own, Stay at Home' program.

This year, the district launched the program to give paraprofessionals, who are currently employees in the school district and already have a bachelor's degree, the opportunity to earn their teaching certificate – at the district's expense. The program is funded by a grant specifically designed to grow candidates for hard-to-fill jobs like bilingual, special education, secondary math, science and career technical education.



Special Education Aide Brittany Eatmon

Brittany works as a Special Education Aide at Fairmeadows Elementary School. She is one of five Duncanville ISD employees who interviewed for and received a spot in the program. The application process was rigorous and included a grade point average requirement, recommendations and a face-to-face interview.

Brittany and her cohort are currently taking courses through the iTeach TEXAS alternative certification program. The program provides courses and learning modules the paraprofessionals need to complete to take the tests required for their teaching certificates. Brittany said she tried to do the coursework on her own in the past, but found it hard to stick with it.

"What I like about this program is that it feels like we're going to do this as a family, as a team," Brittany said. "Having that mentorship and someone who's going through the trenches with you."

Read [more](#).

## District Receives State's Highest Rating for Financial Accountability

Duncanville ISD received the highest rating of 'A' for superior achievement in financial accountability by the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST).

Duncanville ISD's superior rating, based on data from the 2018-2019 school year, lets taxpayers know that the Board of Trustees and the superintendent are doing a great job with their taxpayer dollars.

School FIRST was developed by the Texas Education Agency to ensure public schools effectively manage their financial resources to provide the maximum allocation possible for direct instructional purposes.

The FIRST ratings are calculated using 15 financial indicators, such as the accuracy of information, administrative cost expenditures, long-term solvency and any financial vulnerabilities as determined by an external auditor.

Duncanville ISD scored 92 of 100 points on the 15 indicators to receive the superior rating.

Learn more about the financial rating system [here](#).

## Board Business: New Trustee Sworn In

The Duncanville ISD Board of Trustees hosted a regular board meeting on November 16, 2020. A video recording of the meeting can be viewed on the district website under Board of Trustees.

Information shared and decisions made during that meeting include the following:



### Newly Elected Trustee Begins New Role

The Duncanville ISD Board of Trustees welcomed newly elected trustee Dr. LaSonja Ivory as she was sworn into office. She will fill the role of Place 4 previously held by Renee McNeely who served as a trustee for six years. During the meeting, Mrs. McNeely shared words of encouragement with Dr. Ivory as the new trustee begins this journey. Dr. Ivory thanked Mrs. McNeely for her insight and kind words.

Dr. Ivory joins the district with more than 10 years of experience as a high school administrator. She earned her doctorate in educational leadership and policy studies from California State University, Northridge.

To read more Board Business, click [here](#).

## Duncanville Police Department Launches Newsletter

It's a busy time for the Duncanville ISD Police Department. One of the biggest pieces of news is the construction that's nearing completion to transform the district's former administration building into the police department's new home. Police Chief Chavela Hampton has also hired a new assistant chief and a police dispatcher.



You can read more about what's new with the Duncanville ISD Police Department in their quarterly newsletter. Click [here](#).

## Donate to Board of Trustees Coat Drive for Students



Tomorrow is the deadline to contribute to the the Duncanville ISD Board of Trustees' 3rd Annual Student Coat Drive.

Through the years, this coat drive has provided more than 400 new coats to students in need. To donate money to purchase coats for Duncanville ISD students, click [here](#).

### Upcoming Events:

**Duncanville ISD Board of Trustees Meeting**, begins at 6:30 p.m. and goes into executive session, on Monday, Dec. 14 at the Duncanville ISD Education Plaza, 710 S. Cedar Ridge Rd., Duncanville. The public portion of the meeting resumes around 7:00 p.m.

**Winter Break**, from Monday, Dec. 21 through Friday, Jan. 1 (staff); from Monday, Dec. 21 through Monday, Dec. 4 (students). See calendar [here](#).

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**, on Monday, Jan. 18 - no classes



The Informer is distributed by the Communications Department at Duncanville ISD. The weekly newsletter, published each Monday, is intended to keep the community informed about important news and events happening within the district. Story ideas or questions can be directed to: [Lari Barager](#) - Director of External Communications

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