

ROAR

EVERY TIGER, EVERY DAY

Commitment to students and Corsicana fueled staying power for Dr. Frost

A LEGACY OF SERVICE

Post board retirement, Kelley's commitment to community continues

HEART, MIND, AND SOUL

Partner Fine Art classes connect special needs students, mentors

40 YEARS OF FRINGE

Calicos drill team still kicking after four decades



SUMMER 2024



2024-2025 CALENDAR

Campus

Campus	Start / End Times
Bowie Elementary	7:40am - 3:20pm
Carroll Elementary	7:40am - 3:20pm
Fannin Elementary	7:40am - 3:20pm
Navarro Elementary	7:40am - 3:20pm
Sam Houston Elementary	7:40am - 3:20pm
Collins Intermediate School	7:40am - 3:20pm
Corsicana Middle School	7:55am - 3:35pm
Corsicana High School	8:10am - 3:50pm

AUGUST 2024

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SEPTEMBER 2024

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OCTOBER 2024

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NOVEMBER 2024

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DECEMBER 2024

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JANUARY 2025

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MARCH 2025

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APRIL 2025

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MAY 2025

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JUNE 2025

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JULY 2025

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LEGEND

- Professional Development / Teacher Planning / Student Holiday
- Graduation
- Staff Development Comp Day
- Bad Weather Day
- Early Release
- Semester Begins
- School Holiday
- Semester Ends
- Parent Conference / Planning / Student Holiday
- 9 Week Period Begins
- 9 Week Period Ends

IMPORTANT DATES

- First Day of School:** August 12, 2024
- Last Day of School:** May 23, 2025
- Labor Day:** September 2, 2024
- Fall Break:** Sep. 30 - Oct. 4, 2024
- Thanksgiving Break:** Nov. 25 - 29, 2024
- Holiday Break:** Dec. 23 - Jan. 3, 2025
- Winter Break:** Feb. 3 - 7, 2025
- MLK Day:** Jan. 20, 2025
- Spring Break:** March 10 - March 14, 2025
- Easter Break:** April 18, 2025
- Graduation:** May 23, 2025
- Memorial Day:** May 26, 2025
- Juneteenth:** June 19, 2025

DAYS/MINUTES

181 Teacher Days
 167 whole + 2 half days = 169 Instr. Days
 76,820 mins. + 460 mins. = 77,280 mins.
 3.65 days banked
 10 PD/Planning/Prep Days

GRADING PERIODS

First 9 Wks: Aug. 12 - Oct. 11 (39 days)
Second 9 Wks: Oct. 15 - Dec. 20 (44 days)
Third 9 Wks: Jan. 7 - Mar. 7 (38 days)
Fourth 9 Wks: Mar. 18 - May 23 (48 days)
 1st Semester: 83 Days & 2nd Semester: 86 Days

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Partner Fine Art classes connect special needs students, mentors

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IN FEBRUARY, DR. DIANE FROST ANNOUNCED HER RETIREMENT HAVING SPENT THE LAST 14 YEARS OF HER REMARKABLE CAREER IN EDUCATION AS THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS FOR CORSICANA ISD. ON MARCH 19, CORSICANA BASEBALL AND HEAD COACH HEATH AUTREY, RIGHT, HONORED HER BEFORE SHE THREW OUT THE CEREMONIAL FIRST PITCH TO SENIOR DYLAN ANDERTON. THE TIGERS WENT ON TO BEAT RED OAK, 12-4.



THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Dear Tigers,

As I write this final letter for ROAR, I cannot keep from thinking nostalgically about the last 14 years in the most excellent school district! Since 2010, we have served our students, focusing on academics, while never losing sight of the needs of the whole child. Some of the accomplishments of which I am most proud extend beyond the school day or year to additional opportunities to support our students and families. Our community looks to Corsicana ISD for love, leadership, and support, and our Tigers never fail to answer the call. Tigers support the whole child.

I think too about our many students who excel at the region, state, and national levels. Whether it is academics, fine arts, or athletics, because of our incredibly talented staff, students have the opportunities to develop and fine tune their talent and skills and to prepare for successful adult lives. Additionally, I am proud that our students do not have to be “pigeon-holed” into one area or another. We support students in fulfilling their dreams and interests. Tigers expect excellence.

Most important, I realize that my retirement means that I lose daily contact with people who I have grown to love and cherish. I'll never forget the first few days on the job, when I struggled just to remember the names of principals and how to get to each campus. I received directions such as, “Go past French's to where Hamilton House used to be and take a left... Have you met Miss Lilia? She's the sweetest lady, but she lives in Drane now.”



Dr. Diane Frost
Retired Corsicana ISD Superintendent

Not only will I miss our staff, but I will also miss community members who have become close friends and supporters. When we were dealing with difficult situations, I could usually count on a phone call, or two, reassuring me and recalling another situation from years gone by or that a previous Superintendent faced. I also always knew that I could go to a campus and count on a teacher, principal, custodian, or counselor hugging me and offering reassuring words. Tigers stick together.

So, I'd like to conclude this article and my tenure as Superintendent by saying a huge thank you-to the greatest people I've had the honor of knowing. On May 7th when I visited all the campuses to say good-bye, I realized that it's true what they say-Once a Tiger, Always a Tiger. While I may not be your Superintendent, I will always keep in tune with the District. I will always cheer for the Tigers and expect great things, because of you, the best is yet to come.

Sincerely,

Diane Frost

Diane Frost, Ph.D.
Once a Tiger, Always a Tiger

EVERY TIGER, EVERY DAY

COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS AND CORSICANA
FUELED STAYING POWER FOR DR. FROST

BY RAYMOND LINEX



Like most, Diane Frost can trace the beginning of her long and prestigious career back to her childhood. At her home on the Tennessee-Alabama border her desire to educate bloomed. Her work ethic developed during summers on her family's cattle farm.

Before Dr. Frost, the Corsicana ISD Superintendent, became one of the state's foremost public school leaders and advocates, she was Diane Davis, who had enough role models in her life to both spark her career path, and teach her the things to succeed.

In June, Dr. Frost bids adieu to public school education after 40 years. The little country girl from Tennessee made grand impacts on Corsicana.

THE PLAN

Not unlike other teachers who knew they were born to be in the classroom, Dr. Frost's first pupils were her stuffed animals. That front porch served as her classroom long before she even walked into a school as a student.

"Education was always in my plan," Dr. Frost said.

A young lifetime had been spent with a school campus in mind.

"I still remember my first day of school and how excited I was," Dr. Frost recollected. "I walked in to Athens (Ala.) Elementary School, and Mrs. Barksdale was my teacher. I had a book sachel that was red with a picture on the front of a boy and girl going to school. I had a cigar box with my desk supplies."

One advantage of the cattle farm had a lot to do with the distance it was from her school. Her aunt Elizabeth taught junior high 30 minutes away in Athens and she was young Diane's transportation to and from school.

The difference in grade levels and school days meant she "got" to stay late at school, she pointed out. Teachers took advantage. But she saw it another way.

Mrs. Barksdale assigned her post-class chores – straighten the desks,

beat erasers on the wall to clear the chalk dust, organize the classroom library books, clean the top of the desks, erase the board, sharpen the pencils. Sometimes she even got to record grades in the teacher's grade book.

"I thought it was very cool that I had the special responsibilities," Dr. Frost said. "Sometimes other teachers would ask me to do things in their classrooms as well. I considered this a special treat."

During the summers, Dr. Frost lived about 30 minutes from her closest friends, too. It led to some summer doldrums.

She was always expected to work on the farm. This may have been another reason she dreaded summers so much as a kid. But it had its benefits.

"My family believed in hard work, and my sister and I were expected to do our share," she said. "My parents instilled a solid work ethic, and I appreciate that to this day. Hard work

develops character.”

That work ethic would pay dividends later in life.

A NEW HOME

In 2018, the Texas Association of School Boards surveyed schools and found that superintendents remained on the job for about four years. At that time, Dr. Frost was in Year 8 at Corsicana ISD.

She'd make it six more before announcing her retirement in February.

“Dr. Frost has staying power here because she earned it,” said Merrill Harrison, Assistant to the Superintendent for most of Dr. Frost's tenure here. “A lot of people do not see the behind the scenes effort, the extra hours of blood, sweat, and tears that a superintendent puts in, but I did, and so did the Board of Trustees. She's been wonderful to work for, and Corsicana is better for it.”

After a teaching career that began at Irving MacArthur High School, in 2006 Dr. Frost served in a variety of positions in Southlake Carroll, including Interim Superintendent. After Carroll, she became Deputy Superintendent in Lake Travis ISD.

Her next stop became her longest. Her research on Corsicana intrigued her.

“Corsicana seemed like a great place to live,” she said, 14 years later. “It is in a central location, and the Board and community have a commitment to education. (Husband) Ken and I drove to Corsicana one weekend, and we liked the hometown feel. People were friendly.”

Superintendents should be committed to the districts that hire them, she said. And she and Ken dug in.

They made great friends here, and she took pride in helping city leaders promote the values of calling

Corsicana home to those considering a new place to reside or bring their business.

“As we got to know the town of Corsicana I was even more impressed with its history and traditions,” Dr. Frost said. “I loved learning about the discovery of oil, the Jewish heritage, the older homes and their histories, the trains that came through town, and the time when the downtown was a bustling center of business. We have been fortunate to experience the revitalization of the downtown area and the new businesses that are coming to Corsicana.”

The new Superintendent became active in civic organizations and attending local events. April's Derrick Days celebration was her 14th in a row to attend. Ken even made the front page of the *Corsicana Daily Sun* once, relocating honeybees, one of his many hobbies.

They both found Corsicana welcoming. And Corsicana embraced them.

THE HOME STRETCH

For 14 years, the Frosts have called Corsicana home. Dr. Frost has called Corsicana ISD home. For many employees of CISD, she is the only superintendent they have known.

Over a decade and a half, one sees

many ups and downs, regardless of profession. The highs and awards that often come with them have been plentiful during her tenure, and Dr. Frost has always let one axiom guide her.

“Diane always put kids first in all her decisions regarding CISD,” said Terry Seth, former school board member and president of the school board that hired her.

Upon that foundation, one of her first accomplishments was to work with the Board to create the CISD Core Beliefs, which focuses on individualization, development of partnerships, inclusion of the Fine Arts, and preparing students for the future.

In 2018, Dr. Frost was named Region 12 Superintendent of the Year. Last year was a banner year for Corsicana ISD, as it was named H-E-B's Excellence in Education Small District of the Year, and its Board was recognized as the Texas Association of School Boards Honor Board of the Year.

“The main things were that she listened to ideas I had and gave great feedback,” current CISD Board President Dr. Seth Brown said of their early vision meetings. “She changed things for me and made my new job easier to get accustomed to.”





The Frost and Brown-led Board set its sights on that TASB honor.

“We certainly accomplished that!,” Dr. Brown said. “Through her guidance and hard work we set ourselves in motion to become not just an honor board but the Texas School Board of the Year in 2023.”

The list of accolades and accomplishments for and under Dr. Frost would require many more magazine pages to fill. But two that stick out came during the middle of her tenure.

There was the bond of 2014, after one had failed previously.

“She has a never give up attitude as I’m reminded about the bond that didn’t pass,” Terry Seth said. “She went back to the drawing board and improved the Bond package and it passed the following year.”

The most notable result of that bond was Corsicana Middle School, the District’s most modern campus that opened for the fall of 2017.

“We worked incredibly hard to get the bond passed that included the Middle School and improvements to all the other campuses, except the High School,” Dr. Frost said. “The High School needs so many updates that we decided to wait and have a second

bond. One of my greatest hopes is that the community will have pride in its facilities and will pass a bond for its updates and renovations soon.”

The second came a fall later, when the Jackson Bears of 1968 were honored on the field during a Friday night home football game. It had been 50 years since the Bears won their seventh, and final, Prairie View League state championship. Two year later, Jackson integrated with Corsicana High.

Corsicana ISD honored the living members and family members of the deceased with a moving ring ceremony.

“I’ll never forget the appreciation and love that was a part of the ring ceremony,” Dr. Frost said. “When the Bears were on the field, you could feel the pride of our community throughout Tiger Stadium.”

In a few weeks, Dr. Frost will settle into her white SUV one more time and ease out of the parking lot. The proverbial keys to the District will be left in the hands of Stephanie Howell, a Corsicana native, CHS graduate, and understudy of Dr. Frost’s even before she was elevated to Deputy Superintendent in the summer of 2023.

The front doors to their offices have

been less than six feet apart for years.

“Dr. Frost has been an excellent mentor, teacher, and friend,” said Howell, who was named Lone Finalist in April. “She has helped lay the foundation for the future of Corsicana ISD, in the last few years by impressing upon me the fortitude and strength needed to pilot a school district.

“Her wisdom and friendship will be missed, but I know she’s just a phone call away.”

Dr. Frost can walk away from Corsicana ISD knowing it’s in good hands. The pieces of the puzzle left behind were selected by her, not because they fit her mold, but because she knew those pieces fit Corsicana. Its culture. Its sense of community.

More than that, they seek the best for the town’s more than 6,000 students.

“I hope that the community will remember that every decision I made was based on what was best for our students and the District,” Dr. Frost said. “Many of our decisions were hard to make, and often there was no perfect answer. I love our students and staff, and I always tried to do what was best for the District.

“The many, many successes of our programs reflect the commitment we have toward development of all our students’ interests, whether they are in sports, fine arts, career and tech ...,” she said, tapering off. “The growth and development of our students into adults who contribute to society is our number one focus.”

Corsicana, and its ISD, will feel her impact for years to come. And its residents will forever be grateful.



CHS GRAD

HOWELL

TAKING REINS OF CORSICANA ISD

The Corsicana ISD Board of Trustees tabbed Corsicana native Stephanie Howell as the District's next Superintendent. Her new role began May 1.

"Stephanie Howell emerged as the clear choice to guide our district into the future following a search process that included input from stakeholders across our community," Board President Dr. Seth Brown said. "She has experience ranging from teacher to principal to administration, and we believe in her leadership abilities when it comes to the education of our students, the growth of our staff, and service to our community. She knows the heartbeat of Corsicana."

The Texas A&M-Commerce graduate earned her Master's from Lamar University, and is on course to secure a Doctorate in Education. She has been a CISD administrator since 2009 in various capacities.

She succeeds Dr. Diane Frost, who announced her impending retirement in February after 14 years as CISD Superintendent.

"A rewarding part of my time in Corsicana is seeing the maturation of young leaders like Ms. Howell," Dr. Frost said. "She has excelled in every new challenge presented to her, and I believe she will do the same as the next CISD

superintendent. Ms. Howell is a wonderful educator and I am confident she will lead our students, staff, and the community to many more successes in the future."

In almost 20 years of education, Howell has focused on one principle – every child can be successful.

"Preparing students for the future has always guided my intentions and actions," Howell said. "In roles from being in the classroom to leading a campus to having a voice in major District decisions, the foundation needed to lead and impact the lives of students developed. Having served in so many roles allows me to see situations through a variety of lenses and have empathy and understanding needed in effective decision making."

Howell most recently served as Deputy Superintendent.

"This is an opportunity of a lifetime," Howell said. "I am a Corsicana product who loves my hometown, and my goal will always be to make this a better place for our students, teachers, staff, and community."

Howell and husband Stephen have two children, son Nick and daughter Makayla, and Layla, their granddaughter.



A LEGACY OF SERVICE

POST BOARD RETIREMENT, KELLEY'S COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY CONTINUES

BY MICHAEL KORMOS

Corsicana ISD Board of Trustees Secretary Barbara Kelley recently retired from the school board, but her legacy will live on through her work to better the District and the community.

As one of the longest tenured board members in CISD history, her genuine care and commitment to schoolchildren was the culmination of a lifetime of service including a 35-year career in law enforcement and multiple stints on local community service boards.

Throughout her 14-year school board stretch, Kelley has many fond memories, but none greater than the 50th reunion ceremony honoring the 1968 G. W. Jackson High School state championship football team.

"I will always remember the joy on the faces of (the late) Coach Alex Williams and his players and their families as they finally received a community-wide celebration after all those years," she said.

Kelley's proudest accomplishment was being part of the board that brought Corsicana Middle School to fruition in 2017.

"From the groundbreaking to the ribbon cutting, the opening of the new middle school was huge," she said.

Kelley's roots run deep in Corsicana, as the 1984 CHS graduate also attended Navarro College, where she was drawn to Criminal Justice. Kelley was hired as a reserve police officer before becoming full-time telecommunicator with the Corsicana Police Department. The Texas A&M Commerce alum worked for DART for 21 years and retired in 2022. She and her husband of over 25 years, Charles, share six children: Kendall, Dewayne, Kayla, Klinton, Kishawn and Kim.

“Corsicana is a great community. Even though I worked for many years in Dallas, Corsicana was always home,” she said. “If I saw a negative, I tried to turn it into a positive. If you choose to be here, be a part of making it better. If you see something that needs to change, be part of that change, don’t just take to social media to complain.”

Kelley decided to run for school board in 2009 after Elbert Turner, who also served for 14 years. She was already involved in community service, so it seemed like a logical next step.

“I met with Mr. Turner and told him I would like to run for his seat, and he encouraged and endorsed me,” she said. “No one ever ran against me, so I felt like I was doing a good job and people were happy how the board was run. It’s not about me, it’s about doing what’s best for the kids.”

CISD school board seats are at large, which means they are not assigned to a particular part of town, which Kelley found suited her as she never wanted to box herself in, but to serve every area of the community.

She encountered many changes throughout her time on the school board, from the COVID pandemic and its aftermath on learning to the rise of technology and artificial intelligence and the potential impact on classrooms. Moving forward she anticipates the state legislature’s push for private school vouchers as the board’s next big challenge.

“I’m all about public education,” she said. “Parents may choose to place their children in private school, but I don’t think they should use public funds.”

Kelley remains humble and advises future board members to stay so and first learn their role, which is to study the issues facing the district, evaluate needs and resources, and vote in the best interest of the students.

“My first term was my learning term,” she said. “I sat back and learned from board members, such as Dr. Rogers, to listen before I spoke. Everyone has opinions, just look at social media. But they must realize they were elected for their judgment, which develops with training and time. As board members we can only do so much. Our job is not to micromanage. Management is up to the superintendent.”

Kelley has dedicated much of her own time away from her family to serving on the school board, as members are not paid for the position.

“People may not realize school board members are volunteers,” she said. “For years I saved my personal vacation time to travel to conferences. It is important work.”

She takes it personally when a student or former student slips through the cracks.

“It’s their choice but I feel like we missed something,” she said. “We can’t put blinders on. Everyone is somebody’s child, not a lost cause. As adults we have the responsibility to show the next generation our true selves, to let them know how we overcame our struggles and lead by example. They can see through the smoke screen. It’s important we share our stories.”

Kelley said, at the end of the day, she hopes she has poured into someone they way her mentor and inspiration Lois Jean Hart (CISD Board Member 1985-1994) poured into her.

“I was there the day she started the Practice Reason In Drug Education (PRIDE) after school program at the MLK Center. She wrote the grant and relied on a small staff and volunteers,” Kelley said. “She was one of the first women I saw act out of the kindness of her heart and get involved in the community. She didn’t sit around and complain, she made things happen.”

Kelley hopes to be remembered as a servant-leader who left the district better than she found it. She has no intentions of sitting on the sidelines, however, as she will continue her work on boards including the 100 Club of Navarro County, Mary Peterson Childcare, the Meeting House Revival, and the Boys & Girls Club of Navarro County.

“I never wanted to outstay my welcome. I feel like I’ve done my job and it’s time to pass the torch,” she said. “I never did it for recognition. I’m a worker and there was work that needed to be done. I’m glad to be leaving on good terms and leaving a legacy of service.”



CORSICANA IS A GREAT COMMUNITY...
IF I SAW A NEGATIVE, I TRIED TO TURN IT
INTO A POSITIVE. IF YOU CHOOSE TO BE
HERE, **BE A PART OF MAKING IT BETTER.**
IF YOU SEE SOMETHING THAT NEEDS TO
CHANGE, **BE PART OF THAT CHANGE...**

40 YEARS OF FRINGE

CALICOS DRILL TEAM STILL KICKING AFTER FOUR DECADES



BY MICHAEL KORMOS

Every member of the Calicos drill team has become part of its shared history. The dancers may have graduated and moved on, but most will never forget the lessons they learned, the camaraderie they felt, and the friendships they forged as part of a squad that has been kicking for almost 40 years.

The Calicos 40th lineup was selected in December for the 2024-2025 school year and so many dancers auditioned, a junior varsity team, the Sapphires, was formed for the first time. The name of the new group was credited to Assistant Director and former Calico, Elizabeth Talley, due to the precious gemstone's beautiful blue hue.

Calicos Director Brittany Lassiter said there have not been many alumni events in the past, but for the 40th anniversary she is planning either a pre-game or halftime performance for former dancers, who will also be invited to next year's spring show.

The Calicos drill team has a long-standing tradition of excellence with dancers winning numerous awards. But the organization is bigger than any individual and many notables have left their marks along the way.

'THE ORIGINALS'

In 1985 a new drill team debuted at Corsicana High School. The Calicos were directed by professional dancer Kim Martin, and the troupe started with only 18 members. The Calicos were not the first dance squad, as it evolved from the Blue and Gold Brigade.

A feature in the 1986 Corsicana High School yearbook reflected on the debut season dubbing the inaugural group, "The Originals."

"Although small, the Calicos succeed in getting the student body behind them," the yearbook stated. "They competed in the Dallas Mavericks Drill Team Competition and the organization has made a strong, lasting impression on Corsicana High and will continue to grow and improve through the years."

The first officers were Captain Paula Flanagan, Lieutenant Anna Highnote, Lieutenant Courtney Dowd. Flangan was also profiled in the 1986 annual.

"It was fun, exciting, and a lot of hard work and dedication," Flangan said in the yearbook. "The good things that came my way are too numerous to mention but I had the opportunity to make new friends."



“THE ORIGINALS”

IN 1985 THE CALICOS WERE DIRECTED BY PROFESSIONAL DANCER KIM MARTIN, AND THE TROUPE STARTED WITH ONLY 18 MEMBERS.

Flangan went on to thank her fellow “Originals.”

“You made my senior year the best one of all,” she said. “I hope you remember the good times we had; I won’t forget you.”

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE...

Talley, who was a Calico from 1987 to 1991, said she danced under four different directors leading up to the tenure of Kara (Guinn) Solis, who oversaw the program for 21 years, over half of its existence, and made it what it is today.

“My first year, the director was Annette Grizzle, the second year Allison Sliva was the director, the next year was Judy Roy, and finally, Claire Wyndam for my senior year,” Talley said. “Kara Solis became the director the fall after I graduated.

“The type of dance has changed drastically,” Talley continued. “Now they are more ‘true’ dancers. We did prop routines and jazz, mostly, that did not take much training. The discipline and sense of pride in being a Calico is the same. It is an honor to be a Calico both then and now.”

Corsicana’s Calicos will always have a special place in her heart, Solis said.

“One of the first things I changed was the old-fashioned drab uniforms to the fringed body suit, which stayed that way until the skirt was added a few years ago,” she said.

Soils also grew the team’s size, from about 24 girls when she started, to 88 by the time she left Corsicana.

“We won multiple awards and were even recognized as National Champions, but my greatest accomplishment is the number of former Calicos who have children and grandchildren on the team,” she said. “It means a lot that multiple generations believed in the program so much that they were willing to put their kids through it as well.”

SUCCESS STORIES

Some of her proudest moments were working with troubled students and helping them find a way to succeed, both in school and in life, Solis said.

One of her favorite examples was Mercedes Bugg, a current Fannin Elementary teacher who went from the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program as a freshman to Calico Senior Lieutenant and CHS Homecoming Queen her senior year.



"I owe it all to the team itself and one amazing director – Kara Solis," Bugg said. "My freshman year I was told I would not be able to try out for the team because of my disciplinary issues. I was devastated. However, Mrs. Solis saw something in me that I did not even know existed. She took me to her office and gave me a very lengthy and persuasive speech. I left that meeting knowing exactly what I had to do to make the team and I did just that. My life did a complete 360 and in a few short months I made the team. Mrs. Solis was one of the only people in my life who held me to such a high standard."

Bugg said Solis didn't just do it for her, but believed in all her girls, molding them into better people in the process of creating an award-winning team.

Solis said in the days before booster clubs, many of the girls would have to raise funds for their uniforms or pay them off throughout the year.

"We always tried to keep our program affordable, so Calicos was accessible to anyone who wanted to work hard," she said. "I told my students don't settle for what you have right now, you have to break the cycle of what's going on in your life and expect more."

SOMETHING SPECIAL

Although most schools the size of Corsicana have drill teams, there is something about the Calicos that sets them apart from the rest:

High expectations and compassionate communication.

"The directors who came after me, Amy Tidwell, and Brittany Lassiter, understood the importance of communication and had the caring attitude to sit down and talk to a troubled kid," Solis said. "There is a lot going on in these students' lives, but Amy and Brittany were masters of making the kids feel what they were doing was important."

Soils said the reason for early morning practices was that so many of the dancers could hold after school jobs. It also prepared them for the workplace and life after high school.

"It's all about caring and explaining to kids who break a rule why the rule was in place and the consequences," she said. "I could stand to have one kid kicked off the team, but I knew if I eased up on my rules, I could lose half a team, and those high expectations have stood the test of time."

THE MODERN ERA

Brittany Lassiter, who enters her 10th year as head program director, said she got to observe Solis as both a student and peer and she set many traditions that are still in place today.

“We have a deep respect for Mrs. Solis and her standards and expectations have been carried on,” Lassiter said. “We have a high level of discipline and the strut, where the officers in white come out in a V formation, is still the same as she choreographed.”

Drill team has always been a competitive sport but in the modern era dance has evolved, making it extremely competitive. Popular music has also changed, incorporating much more hip-hop.

“Back in the day, they used more props, and the Calicos were more performance based,” Lassiter said. “Current shows highlight each dancer’s abilities. We teach skills and tricks now that were still new when I was in high school and college.”

Lassiter knows her limitations, so she brings in expert choreographers to fill in the gaps and give the dancers a fresh perspective.

“We get a little better each year because quitting is not in our vocabulary,” she said. “We get tired, but we don’t quit.”

At first glance, the Calicos’ trademark uniform does not seem to have changed, but upon closer inspections, the boots have been updated for comfort and the skirts have been adjusted to accommodate multiple body types. The hats and tights remain much the same.

The Calicos’ namesake, domestic cats of any breed with a tri-color coat, are almost exclusively female. The dance team has also been almost all female with a few exceptions, such as male members Aaron Hernandez and Graham Conklin.

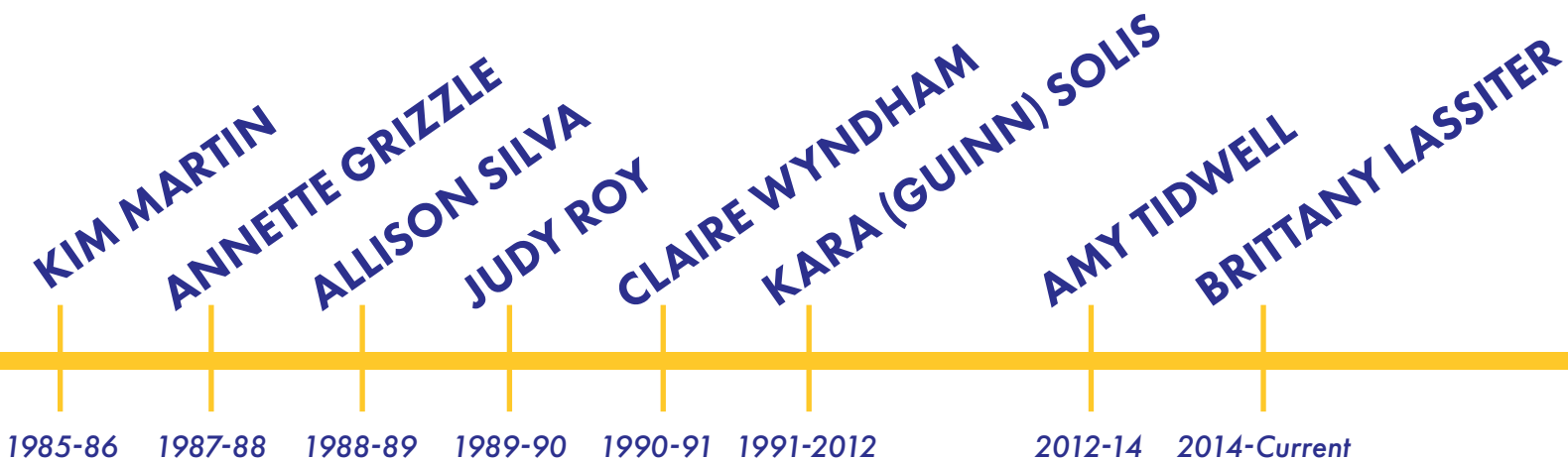
Conklin, currently a college dancer at Stephen F. Austin State University, was a Calico from 2021 to 2023, and was the first male senior lieutenant dance officer.

“This team has meant so much to me in my lifetime,” Conklin said. “The dream, and the experience of being a Calico, were nothing short of a wish come true and made me into the person, future educator, and adult that I am today. I am forever thankful.”

THE CALICO WAY

It starts in July. Calicos boot camp is the first time the dancers come together as a new team for a week-long camp to learn pep rally and field routines, but they also learn more about themselves and each other, through team bonding, exercises, and questionnaires.

TIMELINE OF CALICO DIRECTORS



"This program is a saving grace for many students who may be headed in the wrong direction," Lassiter said. "Once involved in the program, it changes their attitude and even the trajectory of their high school careers once they develop the talent, that they may not know they have. We hold them to a high standard and strive to be one of the most respected organizations within our community. I want them to think of excellence, tradition, and family. They will always have those memories to look back on and I hope it's a positive experience."

LASTING LEGACY

Many Calicos have found great success using the skills and abilities honed on the drill team such as Tidwell, Corsicana's Main Street Director. Tidwell was a Calico from 2002-2005 and Calico Director from 2012-2014.

"My time as a Calico, Dance Officer, and Captain was an extremely rewarding experience," she said. "Through my years on the drill team, I gained discipline, respect, confidence, and perseverance. I truly do not think my life would have taken the path it has taken.

"I owe so much to the organization, and I wish them a happy anniversary and look forward to the future of the Calicos."

Corsicana Middle School Library Media Specialist Gillian Morrison, class of 1997, said the Calicos helped shape her high school experience.

"I think anyone who is part of a team becomes connected with the school," she said. "Calicos kept me in line, gave me a reason to keep my grades up, matured me, and

compelled me to be responsible. Calicos shaped my future endeavors by establishing my work ethic and showing me how the real world works. It creates a massive sense of involvement, and the life lessons will stick with them throughout adulthood. I know, without a doubt, that I loved high school, and 95% of that was because I was a Calico."

Another CISD staff member, Fannin Kindergarten teacher, Sonia Rojas said her involvement with Calicos was what led her into teaching.

"My time during Calicos was such an amazing experience, it has shaped me into the adult I am today," she said. "The laughs, the bond with the team and the shared passion of dance is what unites all of us. This organization has shaped many lives in the last 40 years, it's safe to say that being part of this legacy is something I take pride in. Once a Calico, always a Calico."

Mercedes Bugg said being part of such a special team with the most amazing girls and director was one of the most incredible experiences of her life, and she would do it all over again.

"Getting to experience things like traveling to New Orleans and Santa Fe for competition and performing at Super Bowl XLV were just a glimpse of all that we accomplished during my time in Calicos," she continued. "I never would have guessed that instead of sitting in DAEP I'd be struttin' out on that football field in a shiny white uniform every Friday night, and I owe it all to the Calicos."

ALUMNI EVENTS



FOLLOW CORSICANA HIGH SCHOOL CALICOS AND CORSICANA CALICO ALUMNI ON FACEBOOK FOR INFORMATION AND UPDATES ON ALUMNI EVENTS.



SHARE CALICOS PHOTOS AND MEMORIES WITH DIRECTOR BRITTANY LASSITER AT: BLASSITER@CISD.ORG.

CALICO CORNER





HEART, MIND, AND SOUL

PARTNER FINE ART CLASSES CONNECT SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS, MENTORS

BY MICHAEL KORMOS

A pair of new Corsicana High School programs have created an inclusive, arts-inspired culture while changing beliefs of how students with diverse abilities can create and communicate.

Partner Art and Theatre programs offer special needs students a chance to work alongside peer-mentors to develop their artistic talents. The classes also aim to develop students' self-confidence, self-expression, and communication skills.

Building on the success of recently implemented Partner Physical Education Programs, the benefits of Partner Fine Arts go far beyond the classroom and affect the general education peers as well, giving them a chance to bond and help uncover hidden talents.

"At the Corsicana ISD we want every student to grow and flourish in an environment where they can explore many disciplines," said Margie Crow, Executive Director of Special Programs. "The arts can bring out amazing characteristics in any student. Our students are partnering together to do so, and that is 'Taking Care of Corsicana.'"

The impetus of Partner Theatre Program is the Penguin Project, a unique theatre production in which all roles are filled by students with developmental disabilities. CISD implemented the program in 2019.

CHS Theater Mentor Christian McNutt said his job is to be there as a friend to the talent and to ease any anxiety.

"I have formed bonds, and the friendship is really strong," he said. "It is a lot of fun and gives me more confidence as well."

In a typical stage production, the actors have cues but in a Penguin production, stagehands, and lighting and audio techs must be able to adjust on the spot according to the needs of the talent. Those techies are also a mix of students with disabilities and mentors.

"We must always be ready to make changes and be willing to learn and communicate well with others," said Penguin Project Stage Manager Betsy Grimaldo. "It has made me a better person and offers the special needs students an opportunity to be in the spotlight, feel loved and make memories."

Hannah Bates, a special needs student, has taken part in the Penguin Project since its start.

“The Penguin Project has touched so many lives, but it changed mine especially because I was not in a good place when we started,” she said. “I learned it’s OK to be different and to just be myself. We are all family now and we all love it. This program is amazing.”

Hannah said she is considering a future in community theatre and would really like to help other school districts adopt similar programs.

Partner Art classes allow special needs students to shine and show their strengths through the mediums of drawing, painting, and sculpting. The group recently created clay models in Professor David Collin’s art class.

“This is my first year working with the Partner Art program,” he said. “Many of our students have talents that are surprisingly different and unique in their skill sets. It has been an opportunity for me to learn new ways to condense my knowledge into bite-size nuggets that can be easily understood.”



GIVING THEM **A CREATIVE SPACE** TO EXPLORE THEIR WORLD WILL HELP THEM CALM ANXIETY, GIVE A VOICE TO THEIR CONCERNS, AND GENERALLY DE-STRESS THEIR DAY BY PROVIDING A PLACE **TO PLAY AND IMAGINE.**

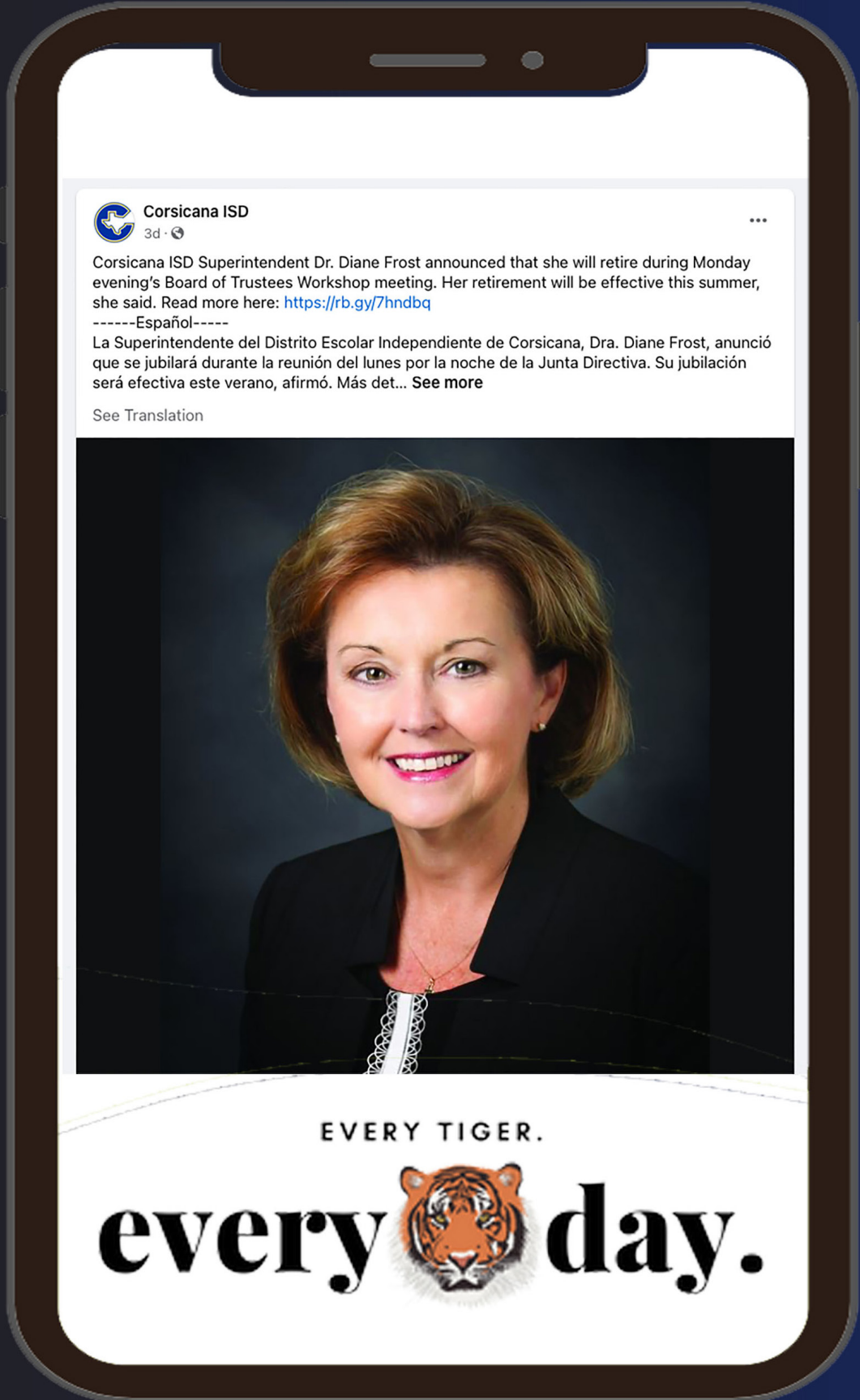
Art fosters the creative nature that all children have and lets them expand and grow their imaginations, he said. It also helps them cope with strong emotions.

“Giving them a creative space to explore their world will help them calm anxiety, give a voice to their concerns, and generally de-stress their day by providing a place to play and imagine,” Collins said. “The students also get to walk from their homeroom to art classes which helps them feel like part of the high school community.”

Collins said he has been pleasantly surprised by the exceptional skills his special needs students have shown. “I think offering the arts to students of all ranges of ability is vital to their well-rounded growth and development,” said Aimee Kasprzyk, Director of Fine Arts and UIL Academics. “Providing Partner Theatre and Partner Art does for their hearts, minds, and souls what Partner PE does for their bodies.”



YOU SAID IT! Corsicana ISD social media follows Frost upon the announcement of her upcoming retirement



Others congratulated Superintendent Dr. Diane retirement. Here are some of your comments.



Les Leskoven

Congratulations! Well deserved. We will miss you and Ken.



Carrie Jenkins Todd

Thank you for your dedicated service and best wishes to you, Dr. Frost!



William Joseph Erwin

Thank you, Diane, for your service and commitment to the kids and our community! Job well done!



Cheryl Noble-Murdock

Congratulations on your upcoming retirement!



Debbie Carlson

Dr. Diane Frost, Superintendent, thank you for your service to the faculty, students, and families of CISD. Congratulations on your retirement. Enjoy!



Rexanne Thomas

Thank you for your service to CISD. The district, its employees, and students have grown under your leadership. Congratulations on your retirement...enjoy!



Jimmy Roby

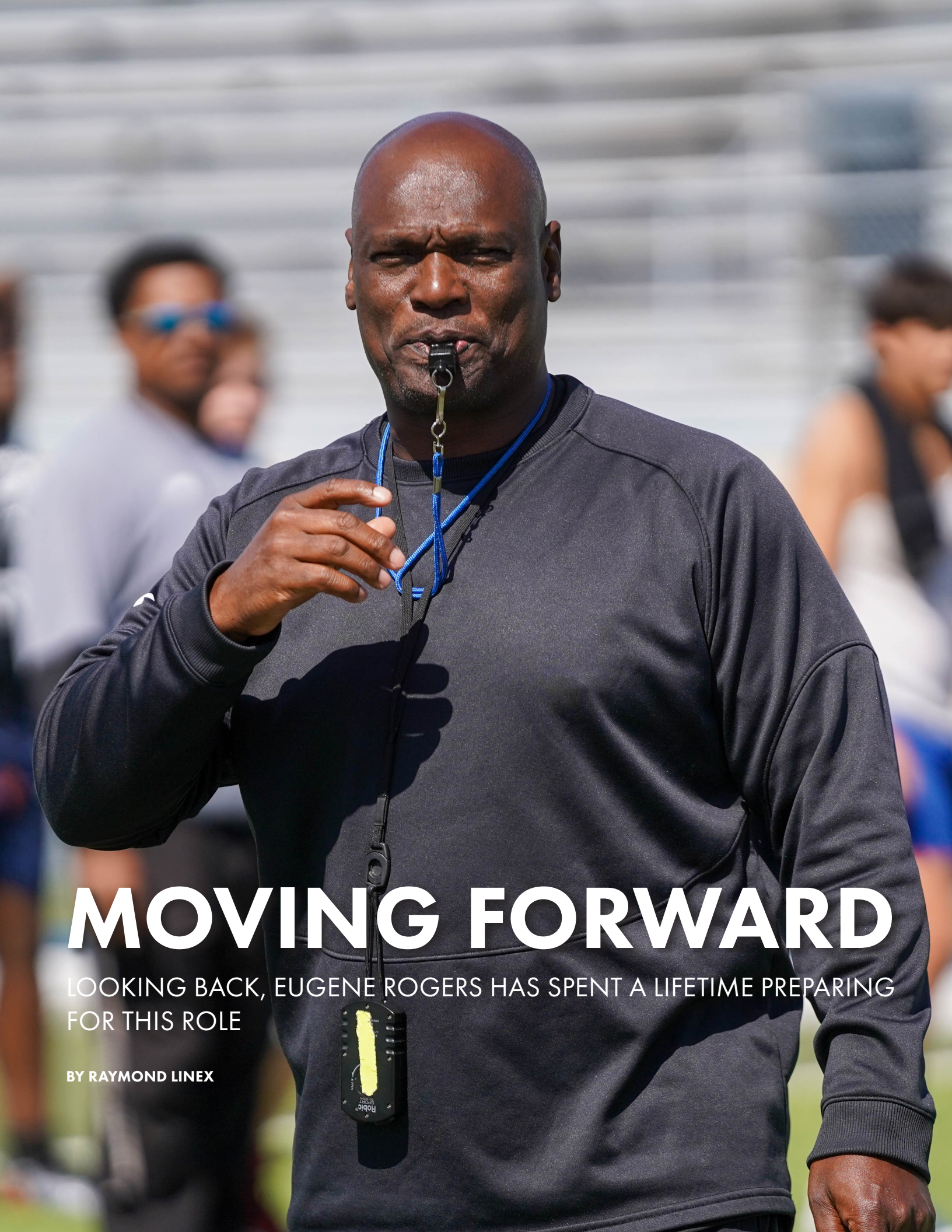
Congrats. You have been the best thing that's happened for CISD in decades. Good luck on your retirement. You are going to love it.



Paul Hooper

Congratulations Diane on your retirement and best wishes in your retirement and future endeavors.





MOVING FORWARD

LOOKING BACK, EUGENE ROGERS HAS SPENT A LIFETIME PREPARING FOR THIS ROLE

BY RAYMOND LINEX

Blue and gold fits Eugene Rogers. The school colors of Corsicana have the feel of home. The warmth of nostalgia. A sense of duty. A calling.

The task of bringing the Tigers football program back to prominence now belongs to the former CHS track star, quarterback, and assistant football coach - under two men who also were CHS alums. To do that, he will lean on experiences gained at multiple spots, coaching under multiple state champions, and even winning one himself while a defensive coordinator at North Crowley.

Immediately, Rogers started putting the old Corsicana way into place here.

"We're doing things I learned foundationally in the (Corsicana) program," Rogers said. "Get them tough in mat drills. We've got the progressive overload going with the weights, so we're going to get stronger. We're bringing back accountability, holding them accountable for everything, including the little things."

"In Coach Rogers we believe we have the right man at the right time," Corsicana ISD Superintendent Dr. Diane Frost said. "He knows the program and he knows the school, having been a Tiger himself. But more importantly, he knows this community and knows its heartbeat. This is home, and Corsicana has welcomed him back with open arms."

For more than three decades, Rogers has spent his career preparing for this. Two head coaching stops, countless coordinator roles, that one ring, and lots of learning under pedigreed Texas and local legends.

In a sense, he has always been moving forward. He shares the phrase often with current Tigers under his tutelage.

"I keep preaching to them the standards are different," Rogers said from behind the desk of his new office before his first Spring Break in Corsicana in more than 15 years. "There's a different way to do it, moving forward. I like to say moving forward."

After a solid college career at Southwest Texas State ended without his name being called on NFL draft day or an undrafted free agent signing, Rogers went into coaching, under former CHS quarterback Tom Wilson at Palestine. He has been moving forward ever since.

After two years an hour away in East Texas, Rogers joined his high school coach's staff here in Corsicana, continuing his understudy days under Don Denbow, the 1963 CHS state champion and the



HE KNOWS THE PROGRAM AND HE KNOWS THE SCHOOL, HAVING BEEN A TIGER HIMSELF. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, **HE KNOWS THIS COMMUNITY AND KNOWS ITS HEARTBEAT.** THIS IS HOME, AND CORSICANA HAS WELCOMED HIM BACK WITH OPEN ARMS.

man who drilled perfection into him as a high school quarterback.

"I was in a master class of offense and how to run a program," Rogers said of the Denbow years. "Coach Denbow demanded attention to detail, that the little things mattered, making sure whatever you put out is elite and top of the line. It has to be great, not average, your absolute best."

Wilson would succeed Denbow when he stepped down after the 1992 season. Rogers stayed on, and the program enjoyed continued success with a state semifinal run in 1994 and championship appearance in 1997 that ended in a heartbreaking 37-34 loss to Texas City.

The chalkboard sessions were epic, Rogers said. And Wilson's approach was in stark contrast to Denbow, the ultimate taskmaster.

"Just being in a room with Coach Wilson, an offensive genius, the guy could scheme you to death, on the board, on paper," he said. "I learned relationships with kids, and making football fun, from Coach Wilson."

His first coordinator position followed that state title appearance when he joined fellow CHS assistant Mike Pappas at Crowley ISD's new high school, North Crowley. Pappas was its first head coach, and in 2003, with Rogers as his defensive coordinator, they won a Class 4A state title, 20-6, over Bay City.

His first head coaching role came at Class 3A Manor in the Hill Country in 2005. He succeeded on the football field, getting the Mustangs to the playoffs for the first time in 16 seasons after an 8-3 year in

what would be his third and final.

That stop opened his eyes on a new level.

“I thought I was ready, but I was sheltered and not ready for all of the other things besides football,” Rogers said. “Coaching, that was a breeze”

Rogers found himself in another favorable position, joining a staff that did not have a former Tiger player or coach at the helm, but one with Corsicana ties.

As a position coach again, Rogers landed at Denton Ryan before the 2009 season under Joey Florence. In 2000, the fledgling Raiders – in their sixth season of varsity football and Florence’s first, upset the Tigers, 33-29, on a last-second touchdown in the Class 4A quarterfinals. Ryan lost in the finals that year but would win titles the next two seasons.

“A lot of the things I am doing now are from Joey Florence,” Rogers said.

Two things primarily stood out: more depth on building relationships the “Flo” way, and a new way to run his offseason. The Tigers will not have spring practices, instead focusing on weights in the morning, skills in period, and taking advantage of the extra week afforded in the fall to schools that do not run padded spring practices.

After Ryan and a brief stint in Haltom, Rogers got his second head coaching nod, at North Crowley, where he had great success as a DC. But the football magic was hard to rekindle at an emerging basketball school. After five seasons, he went back to the assistant ranks at Denton High. In 2021, he joined

the Waxahachie staff as Shane Tolleson’s defensive coordinator.

Tolleson is Corsicana’s all-time leading tackler after a stellar three-year run at linebacker in the ‘90s. The two had talked about this opportunity for years. “I had promised my wife, ‘The next move is yours,’” Rogers said. “‘I have a state championship; this is all about you.’ Tolly gets the Waxahachie job and he calls me. I said, ‘Tolly, you need to call Candra. You need to recruit her.’”

Tolleson proved to be a solid recruiter.

The first thing addressed in Waxahachie was getting stronger. The strength and conditioning program initiated at Corsicana and refined at subsequent stops was put into place. The results speak for themselves, Rogers said, as the Indians went 25-11 in three seasons after their arrival, with six of the losses to back-to-back state champions Duncanville and DeSoto playing in the Class 6A “district of doom.”

That workout system is now in place here. Again.

“I’d been with Shane three years, seen the success, how he’s done it, and how we did it, and Corsicana came open,” Rogers said. “The good Lord put pressure on my heart to accept the call. ...

“It’s been going the way it was planned.”

That includes already seeing change in his student-athletes. The pace has quickened. He is making sure they understand that he loves them and wants what’s best for them.



“Coaches often live that nomadic lifestyle, building a resume of many stops over the course of their career,” Dr. Frost said. “In Coach Rogers’ case, most of those stops have been very successful. In those places where perhaps the wins and losses did not stand out to a casual fan, he gained invaluable experiences with leadership, handling adversity, and growing relationships with students.”

All three are needed here.

Some of getting Corsicana football back to prominence is on the team, giving the student athletes a stake in the rebuild. One of the first things Rogers did was ask his new charges who wanted to play football for CHS. Every hand was raised. He made sure they understood that was the decision they made, and that it was his responsibility henceforth – or moving forward, to show them the way to greener pastures.

There are three core values Rogers wants to instill: be on time, be respectful, and work hard.

“Those are the things I am going to hold them accountable for,” he said.

Rogers then goes into the role of head coach, addressing his players: “If I tell you ahead of time what I am going to hold you accountable for, you can’t be mad because I told you, right? Can we agree on all three?’ To a man, they all said they can.”

The understanding is cemented. Now, it’s all about that forward march, that progress. It’s about mixing some old school blue and gold with a new generation.



EUGENE ROGERS

HEAD FOOTBALL COACH &
ASSISTANT ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

AGE: 58

FAMILY:

WIFE CANDRA (COLLINS INTERMEDIATE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL), CHILDREN ELYANE, CORRIGAN (AND WIFE SARAH), CHANDLER, ETHAN, AND GRANDDAUGHTER ZOELLA

NOTABLES:

- 1984 GRADUATE OF CORSICANA
- CAPTAIN AND QB OF 1983 TIGERS FOOTBALL TEAM
- MEMBER OF 1983 ALL-AMERICAN SPRINT RELAY TEAM
- FRESHMEN OF THE YEAR AND ALL-CONFERENCE CORNERBACK AS A SOPHOMORE AT SOUTHWEST TEXAS STATE (NOW TEXAS STATE)





CLASS OF '24 WALKS MAY 24

UNDER THE BRIGHT NIGHT STARS, CORSICANA HIGH SCHOOL'S CLASS OF 2024 WILL WALK THE STAGE DURING GRADUATION NIGHT, MAY 24. WEATHER PERMITTING, OF COURSE. IT IS TEXAS.



PER TRADITION, THE SOCIAL EVENT OF THE HIGH SCHOOL YEAR IS SCHEDULED FOR TIGER FIELD AT COMMUNITY NATIONAL BANK & TRUST STADIUM. THE STADIUM SEATS 10,001 PATRONS, SO ENTIRE FAMILIES ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND.

SHOULD WEATHER DICTATE A CHANGE IN PLANS, GRADUATION WILL BE HELD AT THE CHS COMPETITION GYM AND TICKETS WILL BE LIMITED.

PLANNING TO ATTEND? TAKE SOME TIME TO SCOUR THESE PAGES TO "KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!"



QUICK FACTS

WHAT:

GRADUATION FOR THE CHS CLASS OF 2024

WHERE:

COMMUNITY NATIONAL BANK & TRUST STADIUM

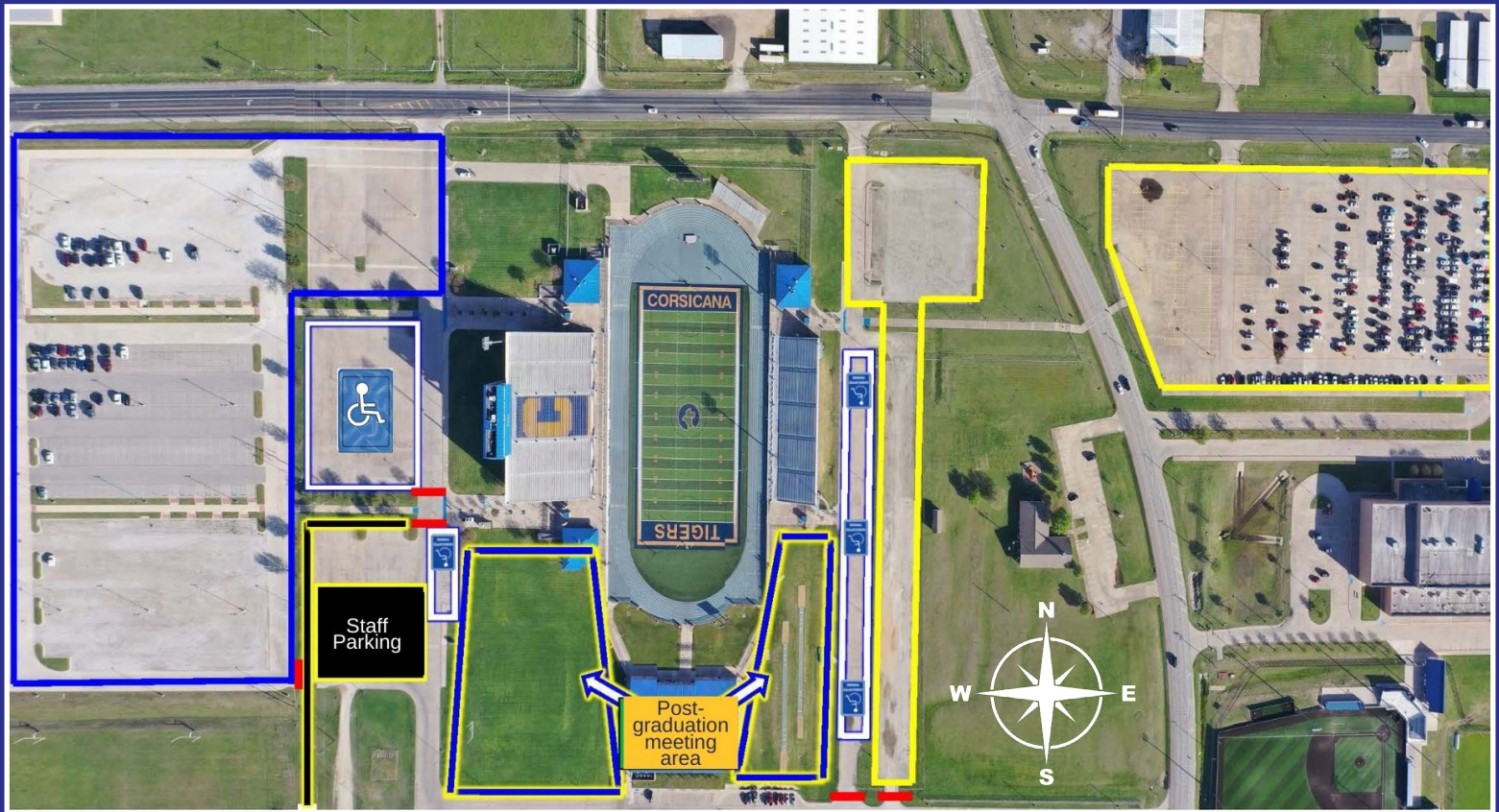
WHEN:

8 P.M., FRIDAY, MAY 24

ADMISSION:

FREE





FAQs

Q. Will the number of guests per graduate be limited?

A. No, unless inclement weather forces the event inside. If moved into the gym due to bad weather, then 5 guests per graduate will be allowed.

Q. What is the cost of parking?

A. Parking is free in the stadium lot and at available places in the adjoining high school and middle school lots.

Q. May I bring food or drinks?

A. No, but water will be available for purchase in the concession stands.

Q. Can parents bring tripods, cameras, etc.?

A. Cameras are fine, but extra equipment will not be allowed.

Q. Will a video and pictures of the ceremony be available?

A. Yes, graduates will receive information in their packets and CISD will livestream the event on Facebook.

Q. Are noisemakers allowed? What about balloons and umbrellas?

A. No, no, and no. We want all of our guests to enjoy the night peacefully and have a clear line of sight to their graduates.

Q. Can seats be reserved in the stadium or gym?

A. No, seating is first come, first served.

Q. Is handicap seating available?

A. Yes, near the railing closest to the field.

Q. Where can parents/family take pictures?

A. During the ceremony, only from the seats. No one will be allowed in the aisles, standing near the railings, or on the field. But, after graduation, there will be areas on each side of the stadium for family and friends to visit with our graduates!

Q. What type of security should I expect at the gates?

A. CISD PD and district security will have weapons detectors operational at all gates and will check bags.

ONCE A TIGER,

MEET MEMBERS OF OUR TIGER FAMILY WHO CONTINUE TO LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE.



CATHY (JONES) MOORE
Class of 1973

Cathy Moore's achievements during high school included being an honor graduate, Collins Scholarship recipient, and active participant in various extracurricular activities, such as the Acapella Chorus and CHS Tiger Band. Moore earned a bachelor's degree in social work and Secondary Education certification from Texas Woman's University. She taught English at Brownsville Independent School District and coached and directed drama clubs. In 1980, Moore was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force, and her service in the Air Force took her to various locations across the United States and overseas. Highlights of her career include her transition to the USAF Nurse Corps, where she earned commendations serving in different capacities.



AMY AND AARON TIDWELL
Aaron Class of 2001
Amy Class of 2005

Aaron and Amy Tidwell are proud Tigers who moved back to Corsicana in 2017. After high school, Aaron played baseball at Navarro College and later attended Texas Tech University where he earned his Bachelor of Arts in History. He later earned his master's in educational administration at UT Tyler. Aaron has been in education for 18 years and was excited to return to CISD in Spring 2024. Amy attended Kilgore College where she was a Rangerette and later earned her Bachelor of Arts in Dance with a Minor in Business Administration from Texas Woman's University. Amy is currently the Director of Main Street and Tourism for the City of Corsicana where she enjoys helping make Corsicana a more vibrant place for its residents and visitors.

ALWAYS A TIGER!



DANIEAL MANNING
Class of 2001

Danieal Manning is a former NFL safety known for his successful career at various levels of football. He began as a standout defensive back at Corsicana High School before playing college football at Abilene Christian University where he was named an All-American. Manning's achievements include being named second-team all-state during his senior year. Manning also excelled in high school track, finishing second in the state in both the 100-meter dash and triple jump in Class 4A. Manning went on to play in the NFL for the Chicago Bears, Houston Texans, and Cincinnati Bengals.



TOMMY BOTELLO
Class of 1998

Tommy Botello works as a Top Store Leader for H-E-B Grocery Company in Ennis. He was one of the first CISD students to earn a soccer scholarship, attending the University of the Ozarks in Arkansas. He takes immense pride in his high school soccer achievements, setting a record of 21 goals in 13 games, ending his high school soccer career with 86 goals in four seasons. He said surviving cancer changed the way he lives and thinks about life, and he finds fulfillment in sharing his soccer knowledge with young athletes.



CARLY HAYNIE
Class of 2012

Carly Haynie lives in the DFW area where she owns Carly Haynie Design Co., specializing in branding, murals, and illustrations. She credits much of her success to connections she made at Corsicana ISD where she found her passion for the arts nurtured by her teachers. Her time in high school, particularly as the yearbook editor and as an art student, influenced her decision to pursue art. She said her proudest accomplishment was starting her own company. Some may be surprised to learn that, as a child, she was in a Walmart commercial with Garth Brooks. Carly said she remains grateful to CISD and Corsicana, where she continues to find support and opportunities to contribute her talents.





MARK M. CULWELL ELEMENTARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

THE MACKENZIE IRVIN FILE

SCHOOL: CARROLL ELEMENTARY
GRADE: FIRST
YEARS TEACHING: FIVE

“SHE FINDS SOLUTIONS AND DOESN'T TAKE 'NO' FOR AN ANSWER...SHE BRINGS AN ATMOSPHERE OF HIGH ENERGY TO OUR CAMPUS AND CONTINUES TO PROVIDE OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO OUR STUDENTS.”

- TIM BETTS, CARROLL PRINCIPAL

THE NATASHA POLK FILE

SCHOOL: CARROLL ELEMENTARY
GRADE: K THROUGH FOURTH
YEARS TEACHING: 12

“THE TRUTH SHE BEARS IS HER PERSONALITY, HER WILLINGNESS TO SERVE IN WHATEVER CAPACITY OF SERVITUDE...WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO DO IT WITHOUT MRS. POLK.”

- TIM BETTS, CARROLL PRINCIPAL



THE ENERGIZER TEACHER

IRVIN EXHIBITS ENDLESS ENTHUSIASM

The Energizer Bunny, known for its relentless energy, symbolizes the idea of perseverance and endurance. This year, Carroll Elementary School teacher Makenzie Irvin was likened to the Energizer Bunny for her tireless dedication and enthusiasm. For this she was named co-recipient of the Mark M. Culwell Award for Excellence in teaching, the highest honor for elementary school teachers.

Irvin brings vitality to her campus and students daily, and her contributions include leading various campus programs, volunteering with youth groups, advocating for campus needs, and spearheading professional development initiatives district-wide.

As a teacher, creating a sense of community in the classroom is paramount for Irvin.

Inspired by the book “Our Class is a Family” by Shannon Olsen, she fosters an environment where students feel safe, accepted, and loved.

“After reading the book, I have an honest discussion with my students about how we all look different, have different abilities, different skin colors, and come from different backgrounds, but we all want to feel included and represented so that we are able to reach our full potential,” she said. “I tell my students that no matter what they experienced before, they belong and are accepted in my classroom.”

Through discussions about empathy and compassion, as well as using symbols like the ASL sign for love, she emphasizes inclusivity and support among her students. Throughout the year, she reinforces these values with various activities and readings.

Carroll Principal Tim Betts is proud to have Irvin on campus and said she is instrumental in all programs.

“She finds solutions and doesn’t take ‘no’ for an answer,” he said. “She brings an atmosphere of high energy to our campus and continues to provide outstanding service to our students.”



TEACHER OF TRUTH

POLK RISES TO MEET ANY CHALLENGE

Natasha Polk, co-recipient of the Mark M. Culwell Award for Excellence in Teaching, exemplifies the essence of teaching by going beyond her job description.

Her versatility in various roles, including teacher, behavioral analyst, and administrator have left a lasting impact on the lives she has touched.

For those reasons Polk earned the highest honor for elementary school teachers, which was named after Culwell, former CISD coach, athletic director, and principal, who served 13 years as superintendent.

“I just learned about the legacy of Mr. Culwell and what he stood for in education,” Polk said after accepting her award. “I hope I can be as effective as he was and make a difference in students’ lives.”

As Technology Applications instructor at Carroll Elementary School, Polk realizes that, in addition to preparing a generation of tech-savvy students, she must also find innovative ways to preserve social relations.

“I understand the significance of building relationships, effective communication, and having exceptional interpersonal skills,” she said. “I implement unplugged lessons and activities integrated with other content areas in our classroom to promote peer engagement, collaboration, and team building.”

To engage students of all backgrounds and abilities, Polk created a safe and judgement free space so her students can be vulnerable and display their unique abilities.

“Implementing this method allows students a voice and choice in what they are interested in learning and how they want to access that knowledge,” she said. “My instructional decisions are based on what is suitable for my students, and practices that will help maximize their level of achievement.”

Carroll Elementary School Principal Tim Betts said her contributions have been essential to the school’s success.

“The truth she bears is her personality, her willingness to serve in whatever capacity of servitude,” he said. “We would not be able to do it without Mrs. Polk.”



TONE SETTER

IMPACTFUL IN MANY AREAS, TALLEY EXEMPLIFIES TEAM SPIRIT

GOLDEN APPLE SECONDARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

ELIZABETH TALLEY

If one would prefer to laud Elizabeth Talley based on her classroom skills, one could. Easily. If the praise came as a result of her many roles throughout Corsicana High School, that box can be checked as well.

Mrs. Talley is a go getter, a tone setter, someone who leads by example. And at a very high level.

The junior and senior English instructor at CHS was named the Corsicana ISD Golden Apple Award winner, given annually to the top secondary teacher in the District. The win after almost three decades caught her off guard.

On a night when 50 teachers were honored for Teacher Incentive Allotment designations, Talley learned of her nod.

"This award came as a surprise," said Talley, the CHS English department lead. "I was expecting to come as the department chair for the TIA teachers.

"I am very honored to have gotten this award. It means a lot to me."

Teaching English at the highest levels at CHS, Talley is a

foundational teacher. What does that mean? There are no surprises for students taking a really demanding course.

"I teach the scoring lesson before the students write one on their own in order to familiarize the students with the rubric, the format of the essay, and the expectations for high scoring essays," Talley said. "(That) raised the AP Language scores to 88% passing last year."

If difficult rhetorical analysis and literary arguments is not enough on its own, Talley is a doer. Her touch can be felt and seen in many different layers of life on campus.

The CHS graduate serves as a National Honor Society sponsor, has been the cheer coach, and currently serves as the Assistant Calico coach. On top of that, she mentors young teachers.

"She is a true team player in every sense of the word," CHS Principal Scott Doring said. "Mrs. Talley embraces the 'Live As One' mentality and leads her team like a family (and) has created the perfect balance of sharing her expertise while still allowing each member of the team to have a voice and be heard."

THE ELIZABETH TALLEY FILE

SCHOOL: CORSICANA HIGH SCHOOL

GRADE: JUNIOR AND SENIOR ENGLISH

YEARS TEACHING: 28

"SHE IS A TRUE TEAM PLAYER IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD...MRS. TALLEY EMBRACES THE 'LIVE AS ONE' MENTALITY AND LEADS HER TEAM LIKE A FAMILY (AND) HAS CREATED THE PERFECT BALANCE OF SHARING HER EXPERTISE WHILE STILL ALLOWING EACH MEMBER OF THE TEAM TO HAVE A VOICE AND BE HEARD."

- SCOTT DORING, CHS PRINCIPAL

TOPS ON CAMPUS!

IN EARLY SPRING, CORSICANA ISD NAMED ITS CAMPUS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR!



BOWIE ELEMENTARY
Jessica Gardner



CARROLL ELEMENTARY
Mackenzie Irvin



CARROLL ELEMENTARY
Natasha Polk



FANNIN ELEMENTARY
Anna Allen



NAVARRO ELEMENTARY
Tiffany Gillen



SAM HOUSTON ELEMENTARY
Rossy Bonilla



COLLINS INTERMEDIATE
Holly Cannon



COLLINS INTERMEDIATE
Paula Carrico



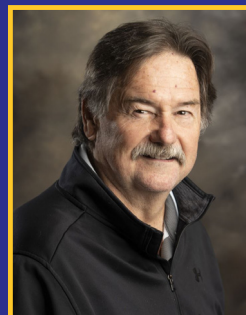
CORSICANA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Daniel Bearden



CORSICANA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Misty Boring



CORSICANA HIGH SCHOOL
Julie Chambers



CORSICANA HIGH SCHOOL
Dean Hollingsworth



CORSICANA HIGH SCHOOL
Elizabeth Talley



2024 CORSICANA VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

8.30 CLEBURNE

9.5 WACO HIGH THURSDAY

9.13 HALLSVILLE

9.20 TERRELL *

9.27 CRANDALL * HOMECOMING

10.11 MESQUITE POTEET *

10.18 GREENVILLE *

10.25 KAUFMAN *

11.1 MIDLOTHIAN HERITAGE *

11.7 ENNIS * THURSDAY

#R20

HOME | **AWAY** | * DISTRICT
ALL GAMES KICKOFF AT 7 P.M.



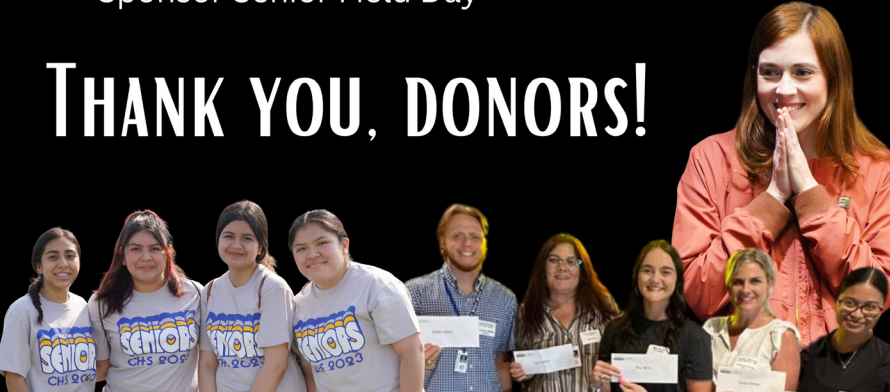


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- Sponsor Senior Field Day



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CORSICANA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

SAVE
the
DATE

9.7.24

INVITATION TO FOLLOW

