Barbers Hill

Summer 2026

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE . . . BY ANY MEASURE!



VISION STATEMENT

Barbers Hill ISD envisions academic excellence characterized by goal-driven, college / career ready graduates who are responsible, accountable, contributing members of society.

Barbers Hill ISD Board of Trustees

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Chloe Yowell
Curriculum and Instruction

A man, a salt dome & a vision



Dr. Greg Poole
Superintendent

In 2008, former board member Carmena Goss sternly told me the first time she held my new baby, "this boy will graduate an Eagle." I told her if the board didn't fire me during the interim... he would.

I fulfilled my promise to Carmena as Garner Poole was one of 481 graduates of the Class of 2026.

Carmena had a vision that day, and in fact, that visionary leadership of planting seeds is one of the reasons we are a state-leading district.

More on that later, but first something that never gets old... Bragging on our Eagles!

What a year! All A's academically, a likely third place finish in the statewide Lone Star Cup and we finished the year with a perfect graduation and a perfectly pitched state championship in softball! We won our 29th academic district championship in a row and got second place in the state of Texas in One Act Play and girls basketball.

Our football team advanced the farthest since we won the state championship in 1976!

Our accomplishments this year made this arguably our most successful year ever!

The successes are the culmination of many strategic decisions made by district leaders during our 97-year existence. Vision has been embedded in our DNA from the beginning.

Amos Barber donated land and helped build the first school because he wanted a quality public school for area children. I have perused board minutes throughout our history, and it is so clear that our school district has always stood for high expectations and excellence. Benny May, a board member of 32 years, was instrumental decades ago in securing additional land down "dump road" which is now Eagle Drive. The relocation of our schools away from the salt dome and out to the prairie didn't come without criticism. One thing I know about planting seeds is it always comes with the inherent criticism of a vision that has yet to come to fruition. Time has shown that this decision and countless others made by this board and previous boards were exactly what our district needed.

Our college initiative and foundation are also example examples of great foresight that will bear fruit for the rest of our district's history. The college will be ready for students a year from now, and the foundation will help offset the $300 million of our tax money we have been forced to give back to the state since the beginning of "Robin Hood."

We are a state leader and it is not by accident. It's because of the leadership and vision of people like Boots Nelson, Henry Adair, Red Porter and too many others to name who planted seeds of excellence that my son and over 8,000 fellow Eagles enjoyed the fruits of this record-setting school year.





George Barrera



Clint Pipes

Trustees re-elected to three-year terms

Barbers Hill ISD school board members George Barrrera and Clint Pipes were unopposed in the May election, and each earned another three-year term.

Barrera has served on the Board of Trustees since 2002. He has held the position of vice president for the Board and is now the secretary.

Pipes has served on the Board of Trustees since 2019. He has held the position of president, vice president and secretary. Pipes is a Barbers Hill High School graduate, Class of 1987.



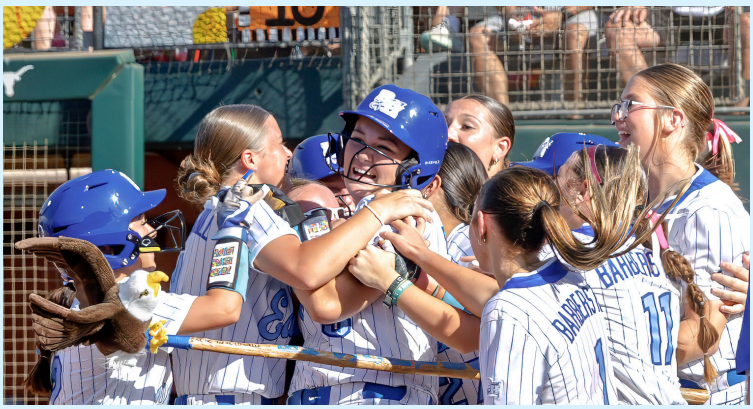
Voters overwhelmingly approve $95 million bond for multi-purpose facility

Barbers Hill ISD voters overwhelmingly approved a $95 million bond package in May aimed at replacing the district's aging fieldhouse with a modern, multi-purpose facility designed to serve both students and the broader community.

The bond's passage will not result in an increase to the school district tax rate.

The new multi-purpose facility will be designed to accommodate a wide range of activities, including volleyball and basketball competitions, fine arts performances, and large-scale district events. The space will also host graduation ceremonies, staff convocations, and community gatherings.

A key feature of the project is its compatibility with fine arts programming allowing for single, unified performances, eliminating the need for multiple showings currently required due to space limitations.



Barbers Hill players celebrate at home plate with Maddi Ray *after her walk-off grand slam to win the state title game.*

Mission Accomplished: Eagles win state softball championship in 11-0 rout

The journey began in January with one goal: return to Austin and finish what was left unfinished.

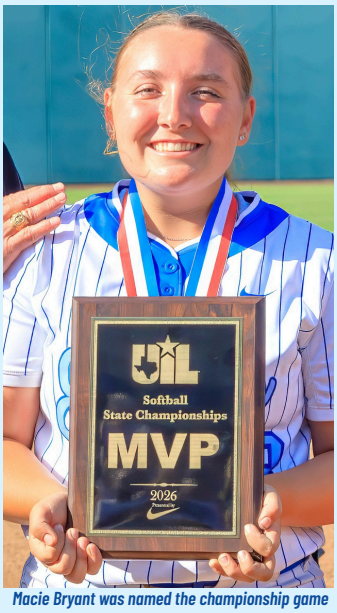
On May 29 at Red & Charline McCombs Field, the Barbers Hill Eagles did exactly that.

Fueled by the heartbreak of last season's state runner-up finish and driven by a year-long determination to return to Texas high school softball's biggest stage, Barbers Hill defeated Aledo 11-0 to claim the UIL Class 5A Division I State Championship and secure the program's second state title.

The Eagles ended the game in dramatic fashion in the fifth inning when Maddi Ray launched a walk-off grand slam to trigger the run rule. Meanwhile, pitcher Macie Bryant delivered a flawless performance, throwing a perfect game.

Bryant, an LSU commit and the game's Most Valuable Player, struck out nine batters while facing the minimum 15 hitters. She threw 75 pitches, including 55 strikes, recording just the second perfect game in UIL Class 5A state championship history and the first since 1996.

At the plate, Ray led the offensive attack with six RBIs, highlighted by her championship-clinching grand slam. Remarkably, the blast marked the third consecutive week she ended a playoff series with a walk-off, mercy-rule home run.



Macie Bryant was named the championship game MVP *after pitching the second perfect championship game in Class 5A history.*

The championship was a fitting conclusion for a team that never lost sight of its mission after falling 4-2 to Melissa in last year's state final. From the first day of practice, the Eagles used that disappointment as motivation.

Mission accomplished.

Barbers Hill entered the state tournament as one of the most complete teams in Texas, combining dominant pitching, timely hitting, and championship experience. The Eagles arrived in Austin with a 39-5 record and a postseason résumé that showcased both their talent and resilience.

Bryant, one of the nation's premier pitchers and a Team USA U18 standout, led the way throughout the season. Entering the state championship game, she had accumulated 320 strikeouts, including 93 during the playoffs, while posting five postseason shutouts and a no-hitter. During the playoffs, Barbers Hill showcased the power that made it one of the state's most dangerous lineups, blasting 16 home runs over a nine-game stretch.

The title matchup also carried a sense of history. Barbers Hill defeated Aledo to win the 2021 state championship, and four years later the two teams met again with a title on the line.

Once again, the Eagles emerged victorious. With a second state championship secured, Barbers Hill left Austin as champions once more, cementing its place in program history and delivering a title that the community will celebrate for years to come.

A Night to Remember: 481 Barbers Hill Seniors Cross the Stage



The 481-member Barbers Hill High School Class of 2026 officially became graduates on May 22 at Eagle Stadium, celebrating a milestone night marked by tradition, inspiration, and perfect Texas weather.

Adding to the excitement, Clark, Barbers Hill's 23-year-old bald eagle, made three graceful passes over the stadium before the ceremony. Superintendent Dr. Greg Poole announced that the beloved eagle flyover is now a permanent tradition at future Barbers Hill graduations.

The evening capped what Dr. Poole described as a phenomenal and highly successful school year. Just one week earlier, forecasts called for a 100 percent chance of rain. Instead, graduates and nearly 10,000 family members, friends, and supporters enjoyed a picture-perfect evening with clear skies and a gentle breeze as 481 seniors received their diplomas.



Valedictorian Adalie Hunt reflected on the lessons she learned during her high school journey.

"More than anything, high school has taught me that passion and discipline can take you further than you ever imagined," Hunt said. "It taught me the value of caring deeply about something and fully committing yourself to it."



Salutatorian Ryan Rodriguez encouraged his classmates to persevere through challenges and setbacks.

"The way your story begins does not decide how it ends," Rodriguez said. "What matters is continuing to push forward, even when progress feels slow. What matters is believing in yourself. Your challenges do not make your dreams impossible."

For Dr. Poole, the ceremony marked a personal milestone as his 20th graduation as superintendent and his son was a Class of 2026 graduate.

"Two things have changed since my first graduation," Dr. Poole said. "My shaking hand is killing me because Barbers Hill students of both genders are raised to give a firm handshake. We are also much more diverse, yet in many ways we are the same, because it was so evident that every graduate was proud to be a blue-and-white Eagle."

As the Class of 2026 turned their tassels and celebrated with family and friends, they left Eagle Stadium carrying not only diplomas, but the pride, traditions, and spirit that define Barbers Hill.









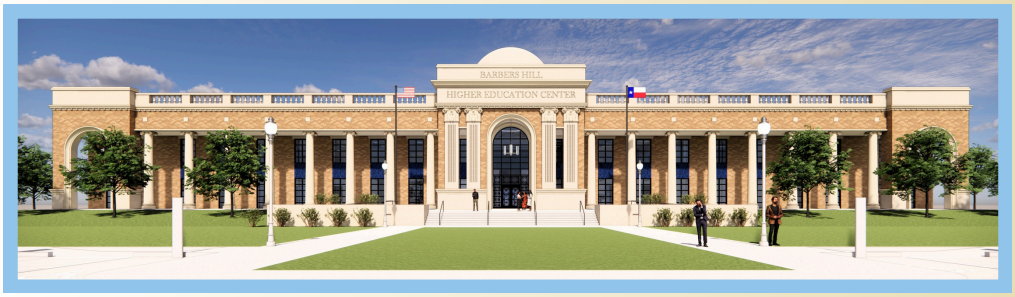


Barbers Hill High School's Salt Dome Theatre Company continued its legacy of excellence on the state stage, earning a second-place finish at the UIL State One Act Play Meet with its powerful production of The Elephant Man. The Eagles also brought home multiple individual honors, highlighting the depth of talent within the company and the strength of the program's decades-long tradition in Texas high school theatre.







Higher Education Center takes shape in Mont Belvieu

The Lee College Barbers Hill Higher Education Center is becoming a reality. An official groundbreaking ceremony was held on Feb. 25 as construction continues on the new branch campus at the corner of FM 1409 and Gill Parkway in Mont Belvieu. The facility is expected to open in fall 2027.

The two-story, 60,000-square-foot building will sit on 20 acres and is designed to serve approximately 1,000 students. Plans call for classrooms, lecture halls and a full range of student support services comparable to those offered at Lee College's main campus in Baytown. Renderings show the building positioned diagonally to face the intersection, with a two-story façade supported by 16 columns and tall archways accenting the center and ends of the structure.

The effort to bring a college campus to Barbers Hill dates back to 2015, when Barbers Hill ISD leaders began pursuing options to expand local higher education opportunities. Legislative attempts in 2015, 2017 and 2019 to establish an independent junior college were unsuccessful.

The path shifted in 2022, when Dr. Poole and then Lee College President Dr. Lynda Villanueva began exploring a partnership.

A steering committee composed of representatives from BHISD, Lee College, Chambers County and the City of Mont Belvieu met in late 2022 to guide the process. The committee toured other campuses, conducted focus groups and surveys, consulted with architects and worked through negotiations that led to an interlocal agreement. The Lee College Board of Regents and the BHISD Board of Trustees approved the agreement unanimously.

In 2024, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board unanimously approved Lee College's request to establish a branch campus within BHISD, contingent upon voter approval of a maintenance tax.
Voters overwhelmingly supported the measure in May 2024, with 78% voting in favor of creating the branch campus.

The new campus will serve BHISD students while also offering expanded opportunities for recent graduates and adult learners. Residents of BHISD will also receive a reduced tuition rate. In addition to core academic courses, leaders have discussed offering workforce and certification programs, including respiratory therapy, sonography, sterile processing, cloud computing, computer maintenance and cybersecurity. Basic education courses, GED preparation and English as a Second Language classes are also expected to be available.



Ralph and Mary Wilson

Honoring a legacy: District dedicates new Ag Complex to Ralph and Mary Wilson

Barbers Hill High School's commitment to its highly regarded Agriculture program was celebrated in November with the dedication of its newly expanded facility. The Barbers Hill ISD agriculture complex now bears the names of two cherished former teachers, Ralph and Mary Wilson, recognizing their combined 65 years of service and dedication to the community's youth.
The new Ralph and Mary Wilson Agricultural Complex represents a significant investment in future generations of Ag students.

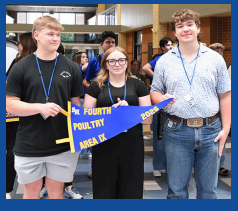
Mary Wilson served Barbers Hill ISD for 29 years, cultivating countless young minds and fostering a passion for agriculture. Ralph Wilson, a veteran educator of 36 years, spent his final 27 years at Barbers Hill, following earlier teaching positions at McLeod, Dayton, and Anahuac school districts.

The Wilsons worked side-by-side to lead the BHISD program, an approach that helped set a standard for husband-and-wife teaching teams across Texas.

Completed on schedule, the $3 million expansion added more than 8,000 square feet to the existing facility, bringing the total complex to over 18,000 square feet. Improvements include new large and small animal pens, expanded parking and sidewalks, upgraded storage and wash areas, a new restroom, and infrastructure enhancements designed to improve student animal projects and operational efficiency.

The Ralph and Mary Wilson Agricultural Complex stands as both a modern facility for students and a lasting tribute to two educators whose life's work helped shape the character of "The Hill."













***The 2025-26 Lady Eagles (37-4) concluded an extraordinary season as the State Runner Up**, marking the program's first trip to the finals in nearly three decades. Also, Head Coach Bryan Harris celebrated his 700th career victory in December and, in a rare feat, three starters surpassed the 1,000-career-point milestone this season: senior Autumn Lecompte and juniors Brooklyn Roberson and Jayci Lackey.*

Athletics Celebrates Another Outstanding Year of Achievement

The 2025–2026 school year was another remarkable chapter in the tradition of excellence that defines Barbers Hill Athletics. Across all programs, the Eagles and Lady Eagles continued to excel at the district, regional, and state levels, showcasing the dedication, talent, and perseverance of our student-athletes and coaches.

This year, Barbers Hill High School captured **12 district championships**, with **all 16 varsity qualifying for postseason competition.** In addition, **seven programs advanced to state-level competition,** further solidifying Barbers Hill's reputation as one of Texas' premier athletic programs.

Among the many highlights from an unforgettable year:

Football

In its final season competing in Class 5A, the Barbers Hill football program enjoyed its deepest playoff run in nearly 50 years. The Eagles advanced to the **fourth round of the UIL State Playoffs**, marking the program's furthest postseason appearance since 1976.

Swimming & Diving

Barbers Hill celebrated a historic season in the pool as **five athletes qualified for the UIL State Swimming Championships** in Austin.

Sophomore **Ethan Miguez** led the charge, capturing regional championships in both the **50-yard freestyle** and **100-yard freestyle** events. The Eagles also achieved a major milestone by qualifying **two relay teams for state competition**, marking the first time in school history that Barbers Hill relay teams advanced to the UIL State Championships.

Girls Basketball

The Lady Eagles advanced to the **UIL Class 5A State Championship Game** in San Antonio. Although Barbers Hill fell to Argyle, 51-42, the Lady Eagles finished as **State Runner-Up**, earning the program's first appearance in the state finals in nearly three decades.

Tennis

Two BH doubles teams earned berths in the **UIL State Tennis Tournament**. **Dallas Alegria** and **Jace Ponder** captured the Regional Championship in Boys Doubles, while **Emery Walker** and **Annsley Perrin** secured a third-place finish in Girls Doubles to advance to state.

Track & Field

The boys **4x100-meter relay team** of **Tripp Davis, Kaegan Morton, Chris Clark,** and **Briggs Cunningham** set a new school record with a time of **40.69 seconds**, won the **Region III Championship**, and qualified for the UIL State Track & Field Championships.

Additionally, **Kaegan Morton** earned an individual state berth in the **100-meter dash,** further highlighting an exceptional season for Eagle Track & Field.

Boys Soccer

Barbers Hill Soccer achieved a historic breakthrough in the postseason. After battling Friendswood to a 1-1 draw through regulation and overtime, the Eagles prevailed **4-3 in penalty kicks** during the Region III-5A Division II bi-district playoffs at Abshier Stadium. The victory marked the **first playoff win in program history.**

Softball

The Lady Eagles capped off an extraordinary season by capturing the **UIL Class 5A Division I State Championship**. Motivated by last year's runner-up finish and determined to return to the state's biggest stage, Barbers Hill defeated Aledo **11-0** in the championship game to secure the program's **second state title.**

Cross Country

Senior standout **Ethan Martinez** earned a berth to the **UIL State Cross Country Championships** in Round Rock, representing Barbers Hill on Texas' biggest stage.

Golf

Freshman **Julianne Lawrence** represented Barbers Hill at the **UIL 5A State Golf Tournament**, delivering an outstanding performance and gaining valuable experience on the state stage.

From district championships to state-level success, the 2025–2026 school year showcased the relentless commitment, sportsmanship, and competitive excellence that define Barbers Hill Athletics. Congratulations to all of our student-athletes, coaches, families, and supporters for another unforgettable year. The future remains bright for the Eagles and Lady Eagles.



Cheerleaders earn top awards at UCA camp

Barbers Hill High School cheerleaders delivered an outstanding performance at this year's Universal Cheerleaders Association Summer Camp, earning numerous top honors.

The varsity team swept its division, earning first-place finishes in every evaluation category. The junior varsity squad captured first place in two of three evaluations and earned second place in the Cheer category.

Both teams were awarded coveted Spirit Sticks, recognizing their enthusiasm and positive energy throughout camp.

Adding to the success, mascot EJ the Eagle was named Best Overall Mascot and also earned a Spirit Stick. The Barbers Hill cheer program was further honored with the St. Jude Spirit Stick, presented to one team for its support of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and its mission.

Among the week's highest distinctions, Barbers Hill earned the prestigious Banana Award, given to the single team that best exemplifies spirit, sportsmanship, kindness and support for others.

The program also celebrated individual achievements, with nine cheerleaders selected as UCA All-Americans. In addition, every BH senior was invited to try out for the UCA staff next year, a significant honor recognizing leadership and excellence.

Earlier this year, the varsity cheer team finished 14th at the UIL 5A Spirit State Championship. Competing against every 5A Division I school in the state (80 teams), the team advanced to finals for the second year in a row.

Middle School North welcomes new principal



Jerrett Fabain

Intermediate School South Assistant Principal **Jerrett Fabain** has been named the new principal of Middle School North. He will succeed Michelle James, who has been named Executive Director of Human Resources following the upcoming retirement of Barbara Ponder at the end of August. Fabain brings a wide range of educational experience to his new role, spanning classroom teaching, campus leadership and district-level administration. He began his career as a special education paraprofessional before becoming a middle school math teacher and coach. Over the years, he has served in multiple leadership capacities, including principal of a PK-12 campus, district testing coordinator, and coordinator for student services and discipline. His work has also included curriculum and instruction development, career and technical education programs, graduation planning, and school safety initiatives.

A Galveston native, Fabain graduated from Ball High School and earned his undergraduate degree from Texas A&M University at Galveston. He later obtained a master's degree in educational administration from Lamar University and has successfully completed his superintendent certification. He is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership.

Fabain's professional experience includes service in High Island ISD from 2022 to 2025, Goose Creek CISD from 2019 to 2022, and Brazosport ISD from 2017 to 2018.

James named Executive Director of Human Resources



Michelle James

Middle School North Principal **Michelle James** has been named Executive Director of Human Resources, succeeding Barbara Ponder, who will retire at the end of August.

James returns to the district's Leadership Support Center following six years of successful campus leadership at the Early Childhood Center, Elementary South and Middle School North.

James has 28 years of experience in education, having served in both Goose Creek CISD and Barbers Hill. Since 2019, she has held several roles in Barbers Hill, including Associate Director of Language Arts, principal of the Early Childhood Center, Elementary South, and most recently Middle School North.

"I am honored to transition from my role as principal into this new opportunity in Human Resources," James said. "I look forward to continuing to serve the students, staff, and community of Barbers Hill ISD in a new capacity, while building upon the district's strong tradition of excellence. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to learn from and follow Mrs. Ponder, whose legacy and impact are truly exceptional."

Ponder will retire on Aug. 31 after 34 years of service to Barbers Hill ISD. She has successfully shepherded the Human Resources department for the past 18 years and previously served the district as a teacher, coach, assistant principal, and intermediate school principal.



Emmert selected to lead Fine Arts Program



Spencer Emmert

Barbers Hill ISD has announced the hiring of **Spencer Emmert** as its new Director of Fine Arts and Head Band Director.

Emmert will succeed Chris Brannan, who is retiring after leading the Barbers Hill band and Fine Arts Department since 2022.

Emmert brings 24 years of teaching experience and a distinguished record of achievement to Barbers Hill ISD. Most recently, he has served as Director of Bands for Sulphur Springs ISD and Head Director at Sulphur Springs High School since 2018. In this role, he has overseen the Wildcat Marching Band, Wind Ensemble and Jazz Band.

Under Emmert's leadership, the Sulphur Springs High School Band has consistently earned UIL Sweepstakes awards, receiving first division ratings in marching, concert, and sight-reading. The marching band has qualified for the UIL State Marching Contest annually and was named a state finalist in 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, finishing in the top five each year. In 2024, the Wind Ensemble placed third at the TMEA Honor Band State Finals for Class 4A.

Prior to his tenure in Sulphur Springs, Emmert served four years as Head Band Director at Winnsboro High School. There, his band program consistently earned UIL Sweepstakes awards, and in 2016, the concert band placed fifth at the Class 3A TMEA Honor Band State Finals.

Emmert and his wife, Christi, have three sons. Christi, who has 18 years of teaching experience, will join Barbers Hill as an elementary music teacher. Their son Brody is completing his freshman year at Texas A&M University, where he is a member of the Corps of Cadets and the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band. Their son Mitchell will be a junior, and their youngest son, Chip, will be entering eighth grade.



Brandon Bourg



Ryan Marsalis



Brent Kunefke

District welcomes three new coaches to lead programs

Barbers Hill ISD is proud to announce the addition of three highly respected and accomplished coaches to its athletic program: Brandon Bourg as head boys basketball coach, Ryan Marsalis as head tennis coach, and Brent Kunefke as head baseball coach.

Coach Bourg succeeds Chris Pennington, who recently accepted the role of athletic director for Magnolia ISD in Arkansas. Coach Marsalis follows longtime head tennis coach Tyler Thames, who is retiring after more than 25 years of dedicated service to Barbers Hill ISD. Coach Kunefke takes over for David Denny, who is retiring after leading the Eagles baseball program for 16 seasons.

Coach Bourg arrives at Barbers Hill from Flour Bluff High School near Corpus Christi with 17 years of experience in Texas public education and 16 years coaching high school boys basketball. Over the past 11 seasons as a head coach at the 5A and 6A levels, Bourg has guided his teams to nine consecutive playoff appearances, five third-round playoff runs, and three district championships in 2019, 2021, and 2026. His championship teams also earned Top 25 rankings in the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches polls.

Coach Marsalis brings more than two decades of coaching experience in the Houston area to the Eagles athletic program. Throughout his 23-year career, he has helped build successful tennis programs at Houston Memorial, Pasadena Memorial, Clear Springs, and Deer Park high schools. His athletes have consistently qualified for regional competition, with several advancing to the state tournament.

Coach Kunefke joins Barbers Hill with nearly 23 years of teaching and coaching experience. He has served in Cuero ISD, Katy ISD, and most recently spent the past 15 years as head baseball coach at Clear Creek High School in Clear Creek ISD. Under his leadership, Clear Creek teams regularly made deep playoff runs and competed at a high level. Beyond the wins on the field, Kunefke has earned a strong reputation for developing character and leadership in his student-athletes.

Congrats to Our 2026 Teachers and Principals of the Year!



Elementary Teacher of the Year (ISN)

Millie Carroll



Secondary Teacher of the Year (HS)

Deandre McBride



Elementary Principal of the Year (ECC)

Fatima Gonzalez



Secondary Principal of the Year (HS)

Lance Murphy

A Salute to Our Retirees



Johnetta Alfred
Behavior Specialist



Lisa Andrus
Teacher, HS



C. T. Ashley
Assistant Principal, MSN



Roberta Baca
Teacher, ESN



Chris Brannan
Fine Arts Director



Michelle Brouillette
Teacher, HS



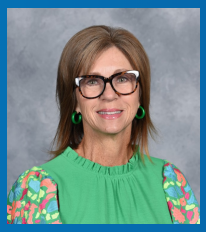
Donna Campbell
Finance Clerk



Sandra Clark
Teacher, MSN



David Denny
Teacher / Coach, HS



Julie Dooley
Teacher, ISS



Allison Griffis
Teacher, MSS



Lesa Hall
Finance Secretary



Lisa Kelley
Maintenance Clerk



Darlene Pearson
Attendance Clerk, ISN



Barbara Ponder
Asst Superintendent of HR



Tammi Prothro
C&I Secretary



Kimberly Schultz
Librarian, ISS



Rosetta Scott
Custodian, ECC



Darren Seymour
Teacher / Coach, MSN



Mary Speights
Custodian, ECC



Teri Thames
Teacher, HS



Tyler Thames
Teacher / Coach, HS



Carri Thompson
Teacher, ISN



Leticia Thompson
C&I LPAC Coordinator



Sally Woods
Transportation



Becky Zucha
SPED Secretary

BARBERS HILL
Independent School District

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First Day of School is August 12!

Barbers Hill Elementary North Earns Top National Honor

Barbers Hill Elementary School North has been named a National Blue Ribbon School, a prestigious honor that recognizes the school's commitment to educational excellence and student achievement. The designation, awarded to a select number of schools nationwide, highlights ESN's dedication to creating a positive and high-achieving learning environment.



Principal Jackie Brown, who has been at the helm of ESN since 2023 and is beginning her 29th year in education, expressed immense pride in the recognition. "It is an incredible honor to be recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School," she said. "Barbers Hill ISD is known for its tradition of excellence, and we are proud that Elementary School North can be a part of that continued success. It is a true blessing to serve as principal of Elementary School North. I have the privilege of working alongside an extraordinary team of educators and support staff who inspire me daily."

Brown emphasized that the district's motto, 'Excellence by Any Measure,' is a core philosophy that guides every decision. She noted the school's focus on educating the "whole child," which includes not just academics, but also personal growth, strong relationships, and emotional well-being. "Every decision we make is centered around what is best for students," Brown stated, crediting the school's educated teachers and staff for bringing this vision to life. The school's culture is guided by the values of respect, responsibility, and relationships, which are reinforced daily. "Each morning on announcements, we remind our students: Eagles value respect, responsibility, and relationships. Together, we rise. We are NORTH!" Brown explained.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools program, which began in 1982 under President Ronald Reagan, celebrates and validates the hard work of students, educators, and communities. Although the federal program was ended by the Department of Education in 2025, the Texas Education Agency continues to run a version of the program for Texas schools.

Schools in Texas are nominated for the honor by the education commissioner based on an analysis of student assessment and demographic data. They are recognized in one of two categories: Exemplary High-Performing Schools, which are among the state's highest-performing schools, or Exemplary Achievement Gap-Closing Schools, which excel at closing achievement gaps between different student groups.