The LONGHORN
DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

A Season of Learning, Growth, and Community

Message from the Interim Superintendent, Dr. Randal O'Brien



The school year is well underway, and we have begun to experience that feeling of community we missed as a school district over the summer break! Teachers have gotten into their groove, and students are beginning to find a little balance in their lives between their involvement with fine arts, athletics, academics, agriculture, and extracurricular activities. Across our campuses, students have been actively engaged in learning, leadership, service, and activities that continue to make our schools vibrant places to learn and grow.

Our Homecoming activities were a time to celebrate our students, families, and alumni. Our fall semester athletes were celebrated at campus pep rallies, and it was wonderful to see so many parents attend. Our volleyball team continues to compete hard and remains in the playoff picture. Football is experiencing a rebuilding year, and while falling short of the victory line, the team has demonstrated grit and fortitude in its "never-give-up spirit," leaving everything on the field. Middle school sports have experienced good success while working to model the same game plans in order to build upon skill alignment across the program.

It was also an honor to participate in "See You at the Pole," where hundreds of students gathered alongside teachers, support staff, administrators, and law enforcement officers to join hands and offer up a prayer for the safety and success of our school district and all schools across America. Students in Fellowship of Christian Athletes invited pastors from local churches to host and lead the event. Events such as these are a reminder of the strong connection between our schools, families, and community.

As we close out the first nine weeks, marking the halfway point of the semester, we are beginning to measure academic progress across the district. This enables teachers to adjust instructional delivery methods as needed and align strategies with the most successful outcomes. With those adjustments in mind, we encourage our parents to continue to support our teachers by simply having daily conversations with your children to expand upon the students' creative thinking skills by having them explain their learning of the day to you. We also want to thank those parents who have already opened dialogue with teachers early in the year in order to best support student learning. We are expecting great things this year as we implement our campus and district improvement plans.

October brings several opportunities for our families and community to stay connected and involved with Tarkington ISD. Upcoming events such as the TES Boo Bash on October 29 and the Tarkington Student Foundation Round-Up on October 31 offer opportunities to come together, enjoy time with family and friends, and support our schools.

October is also Principal Appreciation Month, and I encourage our students, staff, families, and community members to take a moment to thank our principals for the leadership, dedication, and care they provide to our campuses each day.

Great things are happening across our school district, and I invite our community to come see for yourselves. In addition to attending campus events, district and campus administrators are happy to schedule building tours for community members who would like to learn more about our schools and see some of our needs firsthand.

As always, thank you for supporting our schools. It is an honor to serve Tarkington Prairie.

Dr. Randal O'Brien



Early Childhood & Elementary Schools

Lisa Stephens, Principal

This nine weeks, Pre-K and Kindergarten students will explore fall themes and community helpers while building foundational skills in phonics, reading, math, science, and social studies. Pre-K students will practice rhyming and syllables, retell stories in sequence, identify shapes and numbers, and explore life cycles. Kindergarten students will strengthen phonemic awareness, high-frequency word recognition, reading comprehension, number sense, and early research skills.

In grades 1–5, our focus continues to be strong reading comprehension and mathematical thinking. Students will build reading fluency, identify main and central ideas, make inferences, analyze an author's purpose, and support their thinking with text evidence. In math, students will progress from composing and decomposing numbers in first grade to fractions and computation in second grade, multiplication models in third and fourth grades, and decimal division in fifth grade.

Every day of learning matters! Our attendance goal is 97%, and we need every student at school, on time, and ready to learn each day. Once students are enrolled, their attendance counts. Consistent attendance gives students the best opportunity to master the important skills being taught each day. Families can also help us keep students' belongings where they belong by labeling jackets, lunch boxes, water bottles, backpacks, and other personal items with the student's name.

Reminder: TES Picture Makeup Day is Oct. 15 and Boo Bash is Oct. 29, 5:00-6:30pm

Middle School

Dr. Mary Lariviere, Principal

As we begin the second six weeks, we are proud of the positive start our students have made and appreciate the continued partnership of our TMS families. Students are earning LiveSchool Points for positive behavior, responsibility, participation, attendance, and demonstrating our campus values. Our next School Store shopping days will be October 5–7, and donations of chips, hot chips, full-size candy bars, sour candy, and larger prizes such as Bluetooth speakers, headphones, ring lights, and other middle-school-friendly items are greatly appreciated. We also continue to recognize students through Positive Referrals and other incentives that celebrate good choices, leadership, kindness, and strong attendance.

Academically, students have completed CBA 1, giving us an important early look at student learning and the areas where we need to grow. Parents can have students log in to Edugence to review their individual scores, and students have already spent time in class analyzing their results and setting personal academic goals. TMS is working toward our 2026–27 campus goal of 70% Approaches, 50% Meets, and 21% Masters overall.

Our data show encouraging early performance in Reading and Science, while Mathematics and Social Studies remain important areas of focus. Teachers are using CBA results in PLCs to plan targeted reteaching, small-group support, additional practice, and rigorous grade-level instruction. We encourage parents to ask students about their CBA results, the goals they set, and what they are doing to grow before CBA 2.

We are also increasing academic support through High-Impact Tutoring, which begins the week of October 5 for Math and the week of October 12 for Reading. Families of students recommended for tutoring will receive both an email and a phone call, and consistent attendance is extremely important. At home, families can also support our campus math focus by practicing multiplication facts, reviewing grade-level math newsletters, checking math folders, and asking students what they are learning each week. Building math fluency and confidence a few minutes at a time can make a significant difference.

Finally, we continue to emphasize a safe, respectful campus culture. Parents can support us by reinforcing expectations for behavior during transitions, in the cafeteria, and in restrooms; reminding students to keep hands and feet to themselves; and encouraging them to seek adult help when conflicts occur. October is also Bullying Prevention Month, and we will continue reminding students to Be Kind, Speak Up, and Stand Together. Across academics, behavior, attendance, and relationships, our message remains the same: we will continue to raise expectations, provide support, celebrate growth, and help every student rise.

High School

Chris McClanahan, Principal

Tarkington high school students and staff have settled in to a new year and routines well through the first six weeks. Pep rallies, testing, and Homecoming Week have been a few of the big events around campus. Students completed CBA tests in the final week of the 1st Six Weeks. These tests track student progress and knowledge in specific content areas while preparing them for STAAR EOC exams. During the week of September 28th, our 9th and 10th graders took MAP tests which are adaptive tests measuring student knowledge in general content areas.

One area of emphasis this school year is the expectation that students wear ID badges at school. Students were provided with an initial ID, clear sleeve, and lanyard. Students may pay for a temporary ($1) or replacement ID ($5) if they come to school without an ID. Lanyards and clear ID sleeves may also be purchased for $1.

Congratulations to the 2026 Homecoming King, Joseph Apiag, and Queen, Kylie Landry. Thank you to the community that filled the stands and sidelines to cheer on our Longhorns! Thanks to Mrs. Morgan for coordinating the Homecoming Court, and to all who participated in the various activities. Congrats to volleyball for a big win Friday night and football for an exciting game.

School Service Projects



Help **THS BETA Club** raise funds just by donating gently worn, used, and new shoes! Be sure to ask friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers to donate too! Collected shoes not only help support us, but they will be reused and given a second life by those in need through #microenterprise. It's a win-win! Drop-off boxes are located at **TMS or THS September 21-Nov. 19.**

THS TAFE students (Texas Association of Future Educators) are collecting school supplies and partnering with BEAR (Be Resource) to donate to At-Risk Students and Students in CPS to ensure they have a successful school year. Drop off school supplies to THS during the month of October.

Lucky's Elves Christmas Program The TISD Counseling Department is preparing for the holiday season. Community members, businesses, and families are invited to sponsor a student and help make the season a little brighter. Those interested can contact: jowens@tarkingtonisd.net or stlambert@tarkingtonisd.net.

Child Nutrition's 3rd Annual Pumpkin Decorating Contest

Kristy Fruia, Child Nutrition Supervisor

Tarkington ISD Child Nutrition is bringing back its Pumpkin Decorating Contest for a third year! Students in PreK through 8th grade are invited to show off their creativity and decorate a pumpkin for a good cause.

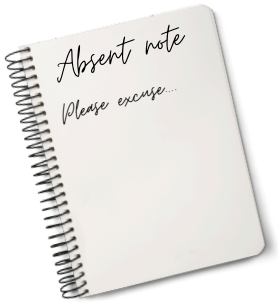
Pumpkins must be real, no larger than 16 inches round, and **cannot be carved or punctured**. No edible decorations may be used. The entry fee is $5, and all proceeds benefit Tarkington ISD Christmas Kids.

Completed pumpkins and entry fees may be turned in to school cafeteria staff **October 26–28**. Winners will be announced October 29. We can't wait to see the creative, colorful, and spooky designs our Longhorns come up with!



Campus Information

Campus Numbers:
TECS: 281-592-6134
TES: 281-592-7736
TMS: 281-592-7737
THS: 281-592-7739



Attendance Notes:
TECS: Rhonda Oliver
roliver@tarkingtonisd.net
TES: Staci Lambert
stlambert@tarkingtonisd.net
TMS: Shari Gilmore
sgilmore@tarkingtonisd.net
THS: Toye Dugat
tngrays@tarkingtonisd.net

Technology Services

Cory Rasberry, Director of Technology

The Technology Department continues to focus on strengthening the security, reliability, and appropriate use of technology across Tarkington ISD. We would also like to recognize district staff members who have stepped beyond their comfort zones to provide immediate technology support on their campuses.

Transition from Reactivity to Proactivity
Tarkington ISD is no longer in the practice of responding to our many technology challenges; we are putting systems in place that prevent them altogether. From systems automation to security enhancements, we are taking steps to ensure that our students and staff have every available asset to be productive in the classroom while maintaining the safety and security we expect our students to have. As stewards of your students' data, and as parents ourselves, we are making information accessibility and security our highest priorities.

Going Above and Beyond With Technology Liaisons
Tarkington ISD has the distinct privilege of having a team of educators who have taken on the additional responsibility of providing localized technology support to our campuses. These liaisons, or as they prefer to be called, Tech-Ninjas, have stationed themselves at every campus to provide immediate technology support. They assist our students and staff with our day-to-day challenges such as resetting passwords, managing campus technology inventory, providing user-level guidance, and serving as the first line of defense against technology-related interruptions in the classroom. As our small technology department endeavors to bring enterprise-level support to our community, these champions help to ensure classroom instruction remains as unimpeded as possible. There are not enough words to describe the impact they have on our students' success with technology.

Get Connected!

Don't miss out on news and events! Subscribe to our Facebook pages.

Tarkington ISD

Tarkington Middle School

Tarkington Early Childhood School & Tarkington Elementary School

Tarkington Athletics

Safe Gun Storage Reminder

Jared Nettles, Director of School and Student Services

Texas law requires school districts to share information with families about the safe storage of firearms. Safe storage helps prevent children from accessing firearms, reduces the risk of accidental injury, and helps keep firearms from being stolen or misused.
Under Texas law, firearm owners may be held responsible if a child gains access to a readily dischargeable firearm that was not properly secured.

The Texas Department of Public Safety recommends three important steps:
(1) Secure firearms using a gun safe, lock box, gun case, trigger lock, or other locking device.
(2) Safely store and lock ammunition.
(3) Restrict access so children and other unauthorized individuals cannot access stored firearms.

A hidden firearm is not necessarily a safely stored firearm. Secure storage should be practiced at home, in vehicles, and anywhere firearms are kept.

For additional information, storage options, safety checklists, and resources for families, visit the Texas Department of Public Safety's Keep 'Em Safe, Texas website.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Events subject to change. To view the most up-to-date events, visit the TISD website.

National Principal Appreciation Month

October 1
TES Campus Improvement Meeting 5 p.m.

October 2
School Custodian Appreciation Day
THS Volleyball vs. Kountze, Teacher Appreciation Night
THS Varsity Football vs. Coldspring

October 3
Band Pre-UIL Performance, 9:00 a.m.
Tarkington Volleyball Tournament
FFA Fish Fry, 5:00–11:00 p.m.

October 5
TMS Volleyball vs. Orangefield
Band Booster Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Bully Prevention Week: Camouflauge Day

October 6
THS Volleyball vs. Orangefield, Middle School Night
Bully Prevention Week: Western Day

October 7
Bully Prevention Week: Hat Day

October 8
Fire Prevention Presentations, PK–3
1st Grade Field Trip to Gator Country
TMS Football vs. Mauriceville
THS Volleyball vs. Buna
TECS Campus Improvement Meeting 5 p.m.
Bully Prevention Week: Favorite Team Jersey Day

October 10
TMS Talent Show

October 12–16
National School Lunch Week

October 12
TMS Volleyball vs. Hardin

October 13
TMS Football vs. Kirbyville
TMS Pep Rally, 3:12–3:40 p.m.
THS Volleyball vs. Hardin
THS JV Football vs. Kirbyville

October 15
THS Varsity Football vs. Kirbyville
TES Makeup Picture Day

October 16
THS Volleyball vs. East Chambers, Senior Night

October 17
UIL Marching Contest

October 19–23
National School Bus Safety Week

October 19
TMS Volleyball vs. Kirbyville

October 20
THS Volleyball vs. Anahuac

October 22
TMS Football vs. Buna
THS JV Football vs. Buna

October 23
THS Volleyball vs. Kirbyville
THS Varsity Football vs. Buna

October 24
Area C Marching Contest

October 26
TMS Volleyball vs. Kountze
Red Ribbon Week: Wear a hat
Child Nutrition Pumpkin Decorating Contest

October 27
FFA Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
Red Ribbon Week: Wear neon/shades
Child Nutrition Pumpkin Decorating Contest

October 28
Red Ribbon Week: Crazy sock day
Child Nutrition Pumpkin Decorating Contest

October 29
TMS Pep Rally, 3:12–3:40 p.m.
TES Boo Bash, 5:00–6:30 p.m.
TMS Football vs. East Chambers
THS JV Football vs. East Chambers
Red Ribbon Week: PreK-5th Book Character and 6th-12th Fall/Halloween T-shirts

October 30
THS Varsity Football vs. East Chambers

October 31
TSF Round-Up, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.