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**National School Foundation Association (NSFA) Selects  
Dr. Rodney E. Watson of the Spring Independent School District in  
Houston, TX as 2021 NSFA Superintendent of the Year**

*Watson will accept the award on February 26<sup>th</sup> at the 16<sup>th</sup> annual NSFA National Conference*

**Houston, TX** – Dr. Rodney E. Watson from the Spring Independent School District in Houston, TX is to be awarded with the 4<sup>th</sup> annual NSFA Superintendent of the Year Award. NSFA will convene for their 16<sup>th</sup> annual conference virtually for the 2021 year. This conference is set to attract 450 attendees from across the U.S.

NSFA designed the Superintendent of the Year Award to recognize a superintendent whose visionary leadership and collaboration, develops a partnership with their education foundation which provides every student the opportunity for success. The association accepts nominations from Superintendents across the country. Dr. Watson's leadership experience was chosen among the 21 nominations submitted for 2021. His nomination was submitted by the Spring Independent School District Education Foundation.

Toba Cohen-Dunning, MSW, MPA, CEFL, NSFA President and Executive Director of the Omaha Public Schools Foundation, Omaha, NE, observed, "Dr. Watson has excelled in all categories that create a wonderful superintendent for not only the district, but also the community. After learning the accomplishments of Dr. Watson over the past six years, we are not only proud to name him NSFA Superintendent of the Year, but to nationally recognize his inclusivity of equality, support, and dedication."

The Spring Independent School District of Houston has a current enrollment of approximately 33,000 students. Dr. Watson has served as superintendent for the district for the past six years. In this time, Watson has proven to exemplify the four categories of this award according to the NSFA panel of his peers. The Four Categories are, Foundation Engagement and Results, Community Engagement on Behalf of District Students, Advancement of the education foundation with external stakeholders, the business community or others, and Superintendent's service to other organizations.

Dr. Watson is a proven leader and supporter for every student, teacher, foundation member, and parent in the district. Watson understands and can clearly articulate his vision for the students in a diverse and growing urban community in Harris County. Dr. Watson is a strong advocate for community partnerships and a dedicated collaborator with the district's Education Foundation. Watson has proven excellence in specific areas that include:

- A five-year strategic plan, EVERY CHILD 2020, and has continued the work with EVERY CHILD 2025. Every aspect of the plan is student-centered – from human resources to community engagement initiatives.
- Launched seven, new, full-day prekindergarten programs leading to a 17% increase in kindergarten students reading on grade level.
- In addition, the number of students taking AP exams increased 41% while students scoring three or better increased 40%, paving the way for increased college acceptance and more students graduating with associate degrees.

Sandra Scott, Executive Director of the Spring ISD Foundation, commented “Dr. Rodney Watson continues to promote excellence in education through leadership, promoting innovation and modeling excellence as he navigates the challenges and celebrates the triumphs in Spring ISD schools. He encourages professional development, and collaboration of SISD staff to help meet the goals set out in the district's strategic plan, which will provide every child with the best education available.

“Dr. Watson engages the community through his direct participation, hands on involvement and partnership with the Education Foundation as well as other community leaders and SISD stakeholders,” says Scott. “Dr. Watson has been a great partner to the Foundation and supporter of our mission.”

Dr. Watson strongly believes that the school district is only as strong as the community and the community only as strong as the school district, therefore the district and community must work together to realize collective goals.

The NSFA Superintendent of the Year Award is sponsored by National University, a private, nonprofit university in San Diego, CA that provides accessible, achievable higher education to adult learners.

### **About National School Foundation Association (NSFA)**

NSFA is the primary thought leader, convener and advocate for the education foundation community, providing support to preK-12 public education foundations through professional development, evidence-based best practices and research in order to increase community investment in our nation's students. Our vision is that students in public schools across America have equitable access to outstanding educational opportunities through the work of our member education foundations. Learn more at [www.SchoolFoundations.org](http://www.SchoolFoundations.org).

### **About Spring Independent School District**

The district serves more than 33,000 students in a diverse community approximately 20 miles north of downtown Houston, in an urban area of Harris County, Texas. Along with its 26 elementary schools, seven comprehensive middle schools and three comprehensive high

schools, Spring ISD offers families two middle schools of choice, a nationally recognized early college academy and an award-winning high school career academy.

Located near the heart of one of the largest, most culturally diverse and most vibrant metropolitan areas in the country, Spring ISD's mission is to prepare students to contribute, compete, and lead in a global society as well as in their own communities. Through classroom instruction, extracurriculars, enrichment activities, internships and robust CTE pathways, volunteering and other forms of civic engagement, the district's students are encouraged to become lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and responsible citizens of good character. Learn more at <https://www.springisd.org>.