

CARROLL

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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School Press Release

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Carroll ISD Earns *Exemplary* Rating

The Texas Education Agency announced today that Carroll ISD has been rated *Exemplary* for the 2007-2008 school year. All campuses in the district were also rated *Exemplary*, with the exception of Old Union Elementary which was given the *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues* rating following an investigation of testing procedures there last spring.

"We are extremely proud of the hard work evidenced by the *Exemplary* ratings for our district and campuses," said Superintendent David J. Faltys. "Passing the state test is only one measure of our success and accountability, but it is no small feat for a district our size. Our students and staff continue to meet the challenge of high standards and expectations by performing at an exemplary level time and time again. We celebrate today the effort they have put forth; what a tremendous testament to the job they are doing."

Commissioner Robert Scott held a press conference at 1 p.m. today to announce release of statewide campus and district ratings. Earlier this week he notified Superintendent Faltys in writing that Old Union would not retain its *Exemplary* status. The letter said the extent of the documented violations at the campus warranted the designation of *Not Rated: Data Integrity Issues*, instead of the *Exemplary* rating that would have been otherwise assigned to the campus.

"It's unfortunate for Old Union Elementary students and staff that their rating is affected by the findings of our investigation there in the spring, especially since all of the students at that campus passed the test," Faltys added. "We are obviously disappointed, but we understand the importance of test integrity, accountability and following state and federal laws. We'll continue to support Old Union as they serve the children and families of that campus. I have full confidence that they will be able to put this situation behind them and accomplish great things in the future."

Commissioner Scott went on to point out that the campus' federal rating would also be affected, resulting in an Adequate Yearly Progress designation of "*Missed AYP*" in early October. However, he indicated there would be no change to the state rating the district earned due to "the school district's comprehensive response to the alleged violations followed by the review of the documentation and practices on each campus for each student served in special education." During this extensive review, CISD found no violations of state and or federal laws at other campuses.

School officials notified Old Union staff and parents of the rating news by mail earlier in the week. The Agency noted that the *Not Rated* designation is only used in the rare situation where the accuracy and/or integrity of performance results are compromised and it is not possible to assign a rating label based on the evaluation of performance.

Carroll self-reported the investigation at Old Union to TEA officials in March after concerns surfaced about test procedures, student records management and the work environment at the campus. Attorneys for the district confirmed problems with the manner in which special education student modifications and records were handled. The matter was turned over to the state agency, which continues to investigate. Ultimately, the campus principal resigned, and CISD submitted a corrective action plan that was approved by TEA.

The district hired Mary Johnston to lead the campus in the coming year. Johnston was serving as an elementary principal in Dallas ISD at the time, but has experience as an assistant principal at Eubanks Intermediate and Johnson Elementary Schools in Southlake. She is a former Old Union parent, as well, having two children who attended the campus in the past. Johnston will be the honored guest at a welcome reception sponsored by the campus PTO on Tuesday.

For more information, contact the Communications & Marketing Department at 817-949-7080.