Texas Education Agency

Commissioner Mike Morath

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Via E-Mail,
Certified Mail &
Regular Mail

123-910

April 29, 2026

Dr. Shannon Allen, Superintendent
Thomas Sigee Sr., Board President
Robert C. Dunn Sr., Board Vice President
Denise Wallace-Spooner, Board Secretary
Yolanda Avery, Board Member
Joe A. Evans Jr., Board Member
Matilda Hickman, Board Member
Beaumont Independent School District
3395 Harrison Ave.
Beaumont, Texas 77706

Re: Appointment of Board of Managers and Superintendent

Dear Superintendent Allen and Trustees:

In correspondence dated January 8, 2026, following an informal review, I notified the Beaumont Independent School District ("ISD" or "district") of my decision to appoint a board of managers and superintendent to the district based on the unacceptable performance of two of the district's campuses for five consecutive school years. Additionally, I appointed a conservator to the district to ensure the district supports its low-performing campuses and implements the district's turnaround plans. The correspondence also notified the district of the opportunity to request an administrative review of the appointment of a conservator and a board of managers decision to the State Office of Administrative Hearings ("SOAH").[1]

The district did not submit a petition for a SOAH review. Therefore, no further review of this determination is available under the Texas Education Code or applicable rules.

Since December, the TEA has conducted a comprehensive application, selection, and training process to identify and select qualified members to serve on the board of managers. I am hereby appointing the following seven individuals to serve on the board of managers:

- **Jeff Wheeler (recommended to serve as Board President):** Jeff Wheeler is a business and community leader with more than 14 years leading marketing and corporate relations efforts. A graduate of West Brook High School, he brings a deep connection to the community he calls

[1] Texas Education Code (TEC) §39A.301, and 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §§157.1151(7), (9), 157.1155(a) and (b).

home. Through his professional leadership and volunteer efforts, Wheeler remains focused on creating opportunities, strengthening connections, and supporting the long-term success of the Beaumont community.

- **Arthur Louis Jr. (recommended to serve as Board Secretary):** As a distinguished educator, mentor, and community leader, Arthur Louis Jr. has dedicated his life to youth development, faith, and public service. Holding degrees in education and educational administration, he has spent decades coaching, teaching, and mentoring young people. Through his leadership, he has helped shape the lives of students by instilling discipline, accountability, and respect, while guiding them toward successful pathways.

- **Desmond Bridges Sr.:** Desmond Bridges Sr. is a Beaumont native and West Brook High School graduate, with more than 22 years of experience in education and administration. He has a strong understanding of student and campus needs with a grounding in service, accountability, and a commitment to excellence. As a parent of a current student as well as graduates of Beaumont ISD, he is deeply invested in the district and the community that shaped him. Bridges is involved in the community, supporting mentoring programs and service initiatives that strengthen and uplift Beaumont's youth.

- **Darrian Graves:** Combining a passion for youth mentorship, education, and storytelling, Darrian Graves is dedicated to investing in the future of Beaumont's young people. He is a young adult pastor and former Beaumont journalist, who also volunteers and serves in leadership roles with multiple community organizations. Graves is also a proud father, looking ahead to his child's future in Beaumont ISD.

- **Elias Ibarra:** An honor graduate of Central High School, Elias Ibarra brings a unique blend of high stakes operational expertise and a deep-rooted commitment to school transformation and the success and safety of the next generation. With a career defined by service—first as a Sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps and later as an educator, Ibarra has consistently stepped up to lead when it matters most. He is a father of three and a local business owner, personally invested in the district's future.

- **Laurie Leister:** With deep roots in Beaumont, Laurie Leister is a Beaumont ISD graduate with a longstanding commitment to community service and leadership. Her professional background spans real estate, city planning, and county government. A mother of five Beaumont ISD graduates, she remains dedicated to the continued success of the city, students, and the institutions that serve them.

- **Daniel Parker:** Daniel Parker is the parent of Beaumont ISD graduates whose education provided a strong foundation for success in college and their careers. That experience shaped his commitment to ensuring every child in the community has access to the same opportunities. With 30 years of experience as a commercial lender, Parker brings a focus on financial responsibility and community stability, along with a lifelong commitment to service and mentorship.

These members of the board of managers will be responsible for governing the district, and they will provide the leadership needed to work towards positive change for all students who attend Beaumont ISD schools. Accordingly, with this appointment of a board of managers, the powers of the district's

board of trustees are HEREBY SUSPENDED until further notice and for the duration of the tenure of the board of managers.[2]

State law also requires that I appoint a superintendent.[3] Under that authority, I hereby appoint Mrs. Sandi Massey as the superintendent of Beaumont ISD, effective immediately and with the full authority, rights, and responsibilities as permitted under the Texas Education Code.[4]

Superintendent Massey is a proven education leader with more than three decades of experience serving students across public school systems. Her career spans Texas, from North Texas to the Gulf Coast, including service as Chief of Schools in Houston. She has focused on strengthening instructional quality, developing strong leaders, and using data-driven strategies to improve student outcomes across entire school systems. Superintendent Massey is committed to high expectations and strong systems that support teaching and learning, with a proven record of translating vision into measurable results. Her leadership experience and focus on academic improvements will be a critical asset to advancing student success and benefiting students across Beaumont ISD.

I want to express my gratitude to the district's former superintendent, Dr. Shannon Allen, for her leadership and dedicated service to the district. Throughout her tenure, Dr. Allen served the students and community of Beaumont ISD with integrity and a commitment to improving student outcomes.

Mr. Andrew Kim will continue to serve as the appointed conservator to the district. He will assist with the board transition, while retaining his existing authority and responsibilities.

The appointment of a board of managers to a district is not permanent, and state law sets forth a timeline that governs the board's return to elected control.[5] Since the board will return to elected control, trustee elections will continue during the tenure of the board of managers. My hope is that members of the board of trustees will remain engaged in an advisory capacity so that the transition will be seamless when the time comes for the elected officials to return to the board.

I wish Superintendent Massey and the board of managers all my best. It is my sincere hope that all parties work together in a cooperative and productive manner to address the current and future needs of all the district's students.

Sincerely,

Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education

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[2] TEC §39A.202(a)(1).
[3] TEC §39A.202(a)(2).
[4] 19 TAC §97.1073(f).
[5] TEC §39A.208(b).