



MEDIA RELEASE
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919 N Broad Street • Brooksville, FL 34601

Student Representative takes his seat

Brooksville – The Hernando County School Board welcomed its 2024-25 Student Representative last night as Santiago Pinkney took his seat at the dais. Pinkney, 17, a senior at Springstead High School, was elected to the seat by the student delegates who assembled on Monday at the annual Delegate Election.

Born and raised in Spring Hill, Pinkney is a product of Hernando County Schools – he attended Pine Grove Elementary, where he served as the school's delegate in the 5th grade! He also attended Powell Middle School. He has been heavily involved with Springstead's chorus and musical theater since his freshman year. In fact, he will be performing in the school's musical production, *White Christmas*, that will be this Thursday through Sunday at Springstead Theatre. He is also a member of his church, Antioch Fellowship Baptist Church, where he serves as a minister of music and as a missionary, helping others in need. He is the son of Edward and Ruthann Pinkney, and is the youngest of five siblings. After he graduates in May, Pinkney plans to go to college and double major in psychology and fine arts. While he's applied to several schools in Florida and in New York City, his heart is set on going to New York University.

As this year's student representative, Pinkney said he has already talked with many of the younger delegates to gather their ideas and concerns. For example, some high school senior delegates would like to see some changes in counseling and guidance. "We would love to see a better counseling system," Pinkney said. "We see a lot of pile-ups, sometimes waiting for hours to speak with a counselor...I'm not sure of a solution, but I feel talking with delegates, teachers and faculty, we can brainstorm together." As the student representative, "I am the spokesperson and solution leader, and I am able to gather these thoughts and bring a consensus to the board."

Noting his enthusiastic participation in a variety of school and community activities, Springstead Principal Dana Pearce agreed he is a great choice, "Santiago is the perfect person to have in this position because he really cares about what's going on," she said. "He is such an amazing kid, talented and truly special. I can't say enough about him. I've been in education a long, long time. And he's just one of those kids that will stick with me forever."

"I am so happy and excited to have this opportunity," Pinkney said. "My obligation as a student and leader is to be able to take a better pathway," Pinkney said. "We need to come together and lift hands with one another. We need to be united, despite our differences, and have an effective communication chain. That's my goal."

