WESLACO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
THE RIGHT CHOICE

Board of Trustees
Armando Cuellar, Jr., President
Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, Vice President
Jesse Trevino, Secretary
Marcos De Los Santos
Andrew Gonzalez
Isidoro Nieto
Jaclyn Sustaita

Dr. Priscilla Canales
Superintendent of Schools

319 W. Fourth Street / P.O. Box 266, Weslaco, TX 78599-0266 • 956-969-6503

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting:	Special Board Meeting
Place:	Board Room/Virtual
Location:	319 W. Fourth Street
Date:	March 4, 2021
Time:	5:35 P.M.

THIS MEETING WAS POSTED ONLINE FOR AT LEAST 72 HOURS AS PERMITTED BY THE SUSPENDED PORTIONS OF THE TEXAS OPEN MEETINGS ACT AS APPROVED BY GOVERNOR ABBOTT. THE MEETING WAS LIVESTREAMED AT THE FOLLOWING WEB LINK: ***https://youtu.be/GH4sQrut6os***

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Armando Cuellar, Board President.

II. Establishment of a Quorum

A full quorum was established. The following board members were present.

Armando Cuellar, President
Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, Vice President
Jesse Trevino, Secretary
Marcos De Los Santos, Trustee
Andrew Gonzalez, Trustee
Isidoro Nieto, Trustee
Jaclyn Sustaita, Trustee

III. Public Comments

The public had the opportunity to participate in public comments by registering no later than 5:15 p.m. at the following web link: ***https://www.wisd.us/superitendentboard/new-page***.

No one signed up to address the Board.

IV. Closed Meeting to Discuss:

The Board convened in closed meeting at 5:37 p.m. to discuss the following items:

A. Personnel Matters (Tex. Gov't Code 551.074)

1. Deliberation Regarding the Appointment, Employment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline, or Dismissal of a Public Officer or Employee (Tex. Gov't Code 551.074 and 551.071)
2. Discussion and Possible Action to Suspend Superintendent Pending Audit
3. Discussion and Possible Action to Name Interim Superintendent (If Necessary)

V. Reconvene in Open Meeting:

The Board returned to open meeting at 6:36 p.m. to take action on the following items.

A. Possible Action, If Necessary, on Items Discussed in Closed Meeting

1. Deliberation Regarding the Appointment, Employment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline, or Dismissal of a Public Officer or Employee (Tex. Gov't Code 551.074 and 551.071)

   No action.

2. Discussion and Possible Action to Suspend Superintendent Pending Audit

   Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to table this item until a future board meeting.

   Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita mentioned that she did not want to drag this item further or have another special meeting. She would prefer to take action at this time.

   Mr. Nieto rescinded his motion.

   Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita made the motion to suspend the Superintendent pending the audit. Mr. Marcos De Los Santos seconded the motion.

   Comments from the Board:

   Trustee Andrew Gonzalez: "No matter what the outcome is - Dr. Canales, thank you for all you do for our staff, students, and our community. I really do appreciate you. Whatever is voted upon of what was said in the back is not a reflection of who you are. Thank you and I think all of us here feel the same way."

   Trustee Isidoro Nieto: "I echo the sentiments of Mr. Gonzalez especially during this pandemic in trying to bring students back. It's a difficult time to suspend the Superintendent and not have the leadership that we've had for the last five years."

   Trustee Jaclyn Sustaita: "Like I told her in closed session – I think she's a caring, genuine individual and sometimes everything falls back on a leader and unfortunately this is a position she's been placed in. She is a leader of the ship. It's nothing personal at all. She's a great intelligent woman."

Trustee Dr. Jaime Rodriguez: "When this issue came up I said, 'Is this good for our students?' How is this gonna help our students during this time, during the pandemic. It's already a difficult situation. I believe Dr. Canales has been doing a great job leading our district. Like I've said before, we're not perfect; there's a lot of room for improvement but I think at the present time our students need to be our focus. I hope that after tonight we can get back on track and focus on our students, our principals, and all our WISD employees."

Trustee Jesse Trevino: "I don't think we've lost focus on student, we keep repeating this. We've only been here three or four official meetings and all the extra-curricular meetings that we've called are obviously trying to address issues in this district. I'm one for getting kids back in school and doing all that. I've visited schools and was in the school system so I don't think the focus is on the students all the way. It's everything else that needs to be re-corrected here in this district of what I'm trying to do, so I vote to suspend the Superintendent."

Trustee Marcos De Los Santos: "Like I said, I think like everyone else. When I decided to run, I felt my qualifications and experience would make me a very strong advocate for students, staff, parents, taxpayers, and the community overall. WISD has a long track record of success, and when it comes down to that, it comes down also to all the teachers and all the auxiliary staff and support staff on the campuses, especially the campus administration who have years managing those campuses. And that's something that I felt I could come in and join this group and be a positive member in keeping the district moving forward, and I also took a personal oath that every single decision I make is going to be based off on facts. When I see something or I evaluate something, that's gonna dictate my decision. I want to tell you that I respect everybody's vote. Everybody that is currently sitting in your seats, you are in the same situation that I am. This seat is on loan, and this seat belongs to the taxpayers, to the parents, and to the students of this community. Like I said, I respect your opinions, I respect your perspective, I respect your votes, and in the end like I said – I'm not one to judge. The ones that are gonna judge whether we stay here past our term or our conditioning is gonna be the voters and the community members. So I just wanted to note that every time I make a decision, I am making a decision that I feel will hopefully benefit all students, all staff, parents, and the taxpayers. Thank you for your time."

Board President Armando Cuellar: "My thought on this; obviously, there are concerns, there are issues and that's why we invested into an audit group to come in and address these concerns and they've been given quite a few, and I don't think it's gonna stop there. They will take care of any concerns that are brought to their attention and with that being said, I'm gonna put my faith in that audit and not lose focus on the bigger picture here, that is WISD. I don't know that a change right now that we're looking at is gonna significantly change anything that the audit is gonna reveal."

A vote was called for on the motion made by Jaclyn Sustaita and seconded by Marcos De Los Santos to suspend the Superintendent. Voting in favor of the motion were Jaclyn Sustaita, Marcos De Los Santos and Jesse Trevino. Voting against the motion were Isidoro Nieto, Andrew Gonzalez, Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, and Board President Armando Cuellar. Motion failed with a 3 to 4 vote.

3. Discussion and Possible Action to Name Interim Superintendent (If Necessary)

   Non-action item.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.