



Always Innovating

**South
Texas ISD**

RIO GRANDE VALLEY | GRADES 7-12

Minutes of Regular Meeting

The Board of Directors

South Texas ISD

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of South Texas ISD was held on April 27, 2021 beginning at 7:00 PM and was conducted via Video/Audio Conference Pursuant to Governor Greg Abbott’s Temporary Suspension of Open Meetings Laws issued on March 16, 2020. The board meeting was audible to the Board and public and allowed for two-way communication.

1. Welcome.

Doug Buchanan, Board President, welcomed the guests, staff and fellow Board members.

2. Pledges of Allegiance & District Call to Action.

The pledges were led by Board President Doug Buchanan.

3. Moment of Silence.

The Board held a moment of silence and remembering Bonnie Saucedo & Irma Perez-Treviño.

4. Board Meeting called to order.

The meeting was called to order by Board President Doug Buchanan at 7:10 p.m. at which time he was assured by Superintendent, Dr. Marco A. Lara, Jr. that notices of the meeting were posted properly according to the laws of Texas and that a quorum of the board was present.

The following board members participated remotely:

Douglas E. Buchanan	Raymondville
Abiel J. Cantú	Raymondville
Eduardo L. “Larry” Cantu	Los Fresnos
Sasha Crane	McAllen
Javier Farias	McAllen
Adrian Garcia	Brownsville
Margarita Garcia	San Juan
Sylvia Sanchez Garza, Ph.D.	Edinburg
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen
Henry LeVrier	Brownsville

Sylvia S. Lopez	Brownsville
Ricardo Ochoa, MD	Weslaco
Israel G. Quintanilla	Raymondville
Eduardo Roberto Rodriguez	Brownsville
Jaime R. Solis	Edinburg
Natividad Sosa	Mission
David Torres	Edinburg
Rick Villarreal, D.D.S.	Brownsville
Ruth Villarreal	Mission

The following Board members were absent:

Martin Castillo, DC	Edinburg
Hector Gonzales	Lyford
Richard Fleming, MD	Mission
Robert J. Lerma	Brownsville
Irma Perez-Treviño	Harlingen

The following staff members participated remotely:

Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.	Jeff Hembree
Marla R. Knaub	Lorena Madrigal
Lissa Frausto	Sonia E. Rodriguez
Amanda Odom	Ana Castro
Marcos L. Flores	Criselda R. Flores
Efrain Garza	Jose Lucio
Janie Ortiz	Ramon Longoria
Nereyda Treviño	

5. Awards & Recognitions.

- A. Recognition of STISD for receiving a Superior Performance 2020 FIRST Rating, and presentation of plaque from Region One Education Service Center.

On behalf of the school Board and administration, Amanda Odom recognized Ms. Marla Knaub and her staff for having earned a Superior Performance 2020 FIRST Rating and having received a perfect score. Ms. Odom presented a plaque from Region One ESC to Ms. Marla Knaub for earning this achievement. This is the 14th year in a row that the district receives Superior Performance rating on the FIRST report.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda.

In order to promote efficient meetings, the Board may act upon more than one item by a single vote through the use of consent agenda. Consent items shall be items placed on the Agenda marked with an asterisk (*) for which no Board discussion is anticipated and for which the Superintendent recommends approval. Prior to the meeting, at the request of any member of the Board of Directors, any item on the consent agenda shall be removed and given individual consideration. Requests for individual consideration are made at least a half-hour prior to Board meetings and requests must be directed to either the Board President or the Superintendent.

A motion was made by Mr. A. Cantu, seconded by Dr. Garza, approving the consent agenda items as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

7. *Action: Review and act on the March 30, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

8. Public Comments for Agenda Topics.

The Board did not receive requests to address the Board of Directors on agenda topics for this meeting.

9. Public Audience for Non-Agenda Topics.

The Board did not receive requests for public audience for non-agenda topics for this meeting.

Mr. Eduardo Rodriguez expressed gratitude for the visits by board members at his brother's funeral and for the flowers, thoughts and prayers.

10. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee - Sylvia S. Lopez & Rick Villarreal, DDS, Co-Chairs

Dr. Rick Villarreal reported on the following committee items:

- A. *Report: District-wide Professional Development for the months of March & April.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Action: Review and act on the annual instructional materials allotment and TEKS certification for 2021-2022.

Approved with the. consent agenda.

11. Finance & Operations Committee - Martin Castillo, DC & Henry LeVrier, Co-Chairs

Mr. Henry LeVrier reported on the following committee items:

- A. *Report on checks written since last report.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Report on 2020-2021 second quarter student activity accounts.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. Report on tax delinquent collection from Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson.

Mr. Michael Cano presented a tax delinquent collection report on behalf of Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson. This was for board information only.

- D. Report on the following projects:

1. Edinburg Bus Barn/Maintenance Facility
2. Edinburg Exterior Restroom project
3. Preparatory Academy Parking Lot Expansion
4. Science Academy CATE Building Renovation project
5. New Central Office Building Renovation project

Ms. Marla Knaub reported on the progress of each of the construction projects listed above. The Edinburg Bus Barn/Maintenance Facility, Edinburg Exterior Restroom, Preparatory Academy Parking Lot Expansion, Science Academy CATE Building Renovation projects are nearing completion. Ms. Knaub reported Dr. Lara is negotiating a contract with the contractor for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.

- E. Action: Review and act on Change Order #1 to the betterment fund for the Edinburg Bus Barn/Maintenance Facility project.

A motion was made by Mr. LeVrier, seconded by Mr. Solis, approving the Change Order #1 to the betterment fund for the Edinburg Bus Barn/Maintenance Facility project providing a credit in the amount of \$67,364 to the betterment fund as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- F. Action: Review and act on the following payment applications:

1. Payment application #9 to Gomez, Mendez, Saenz Inc. for the Edinburg Bus Barn/Maintenance Facility project in the amount of \$5,990.40.
2. Payment application #8 to D. Wilson Construction for the Edinburg Bus Barn/Maintenance Facility in the amount of \$371,364.88.
3. Payment application #6 to Gonzalez Enterprise for the Preparatory Parking Lot Expansion project in the amount of \$33,411.55.
4. Payment application #6 to Gomez, Mendez, Saenz Inc. for the Science Academy CATE Building Renovation project in the amount of \$1,533.60.
5. Payment application #6 to Gerlach Builders for the Science Academy CATE Renovation project in the amount of \$77,914.27.
6. Payment application #4 to Gomez, Mendez, Saenz, Inc. for the Edinburg Exterior Restroom project in the amount of \$441.00.

7. Payment application #3 to D. Wilson for the Edinburg Exterior Restroom project in the amount of \$28,094.35.

A motion was made by Mr. LeVrier, seconded by Mr. Solis, approving payment application #9 to Gomez, Mendez, Saenz Inc. for the Edinburg Bus Barn/Maintenance Facility project in the amount of \$5,990.40; payment application #8 to D. Wilson Construction for the Edinburg Bus Barn/Maintenance Facility in the amount of \$371,364.88; payment application #6 to Gonzalez Enterprise for the Preparatory Parking Lot Expansion project in the amount of \$33,411.55; payment application #6 to Gomez, Mendez, Saenz Inc. for the Science Academy CATE Building Renovation project in the amount of \$1,533.60; payment application #6 to Gerlach Builders for the Science Academy CATE Renovation project in the amount of \$77,914.27; payment application #4 to Gomez, Mendez, Saenz Inc. for the Edinburg Exterior Restroom project in the amount of \$441.00; and payment application #3 to D. Wilson for the Edinburg Exterior Restroom project in the amount of \$28,094.35. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Action: Review and act on the following donation(s):

1. \$87,686 from the Musk Foundation to South Texas ISD

A motion was made by Mr. LeVrier, seconded by Mr. A.J. Cantu, approving the Musk Foundation donation of \$87,686 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

H. Action: Review and act on the following budget amendment(s):

1. General Fund (199) budget amendment #5
2. Title I, Part A (211) budget amendment #2
3. Title II, Part A (255) budget amendment #1
4. Title III, Part A (263) budget amendment #2
5. Title IV, Part A, ELA budget amendment #1

A motion was made by Mr. LeVrier, seconded by Mrs. Kamel, approving the General Fund budget amendment #5 for summer camp to Texas A & M University, Kingsville Summer Camp and Texas A & M University Aggie STEMS summer camp; and Title I Part A budget amendment #2, Title II, Part A budget amendment #1, Title III, Part A budget amendment #2 and Title IV, Part A, ELA budget amendment #1 to increase budget final award amounts as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

I. Action: Review and act on the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) Compensation Plan and approve payments for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years.

A motion was made by Mr. LeVrier, seconded by Mr. A. J. Cantu, approving the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) Compensation Plan as presented (page 97 of board packet) and approved the payment for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Policy, Planning, Projects & Partnerships Committee - Abiel J. Cantu & Larry Cantu, Co-Chairs

Mr. Larry Cantu reported on the following committee items:

- A. Action: Review and act on possible policy changes as per March 2021 Local Review. Policies BA (LOCAL) and BBFA (LOCAL).

Mr. Cantu reported that TASB provided feedback on the proposed changes to policies BA(LOCAL) and BBFA (LOCAL). He reported there will be no action taken as per TASB's recommendation.

- B. Report on the April 2021 Review of Local Policies CAA through CNA (LOCAL).

This was for board information. The Committee is not recommending any changes to local Policies CAA through CAN (LOCAL).

13. Community & Governmental Relations Committee -Sasha Crane & Jaime Solis, Co-Chairs

Ms. Sasha Crane reported on the following committee items:

- A. Report: Update regarding the current marketing campaign and future possibilities for student recruitment.

This was for board information only. No action was taken.

14. Superintendent's Report - Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.

- A. *Campus Reports
 1. Preparatory Academy - A. Castro
 2. Rising Scholars Academy - C. Rodriguez
 3. World Scholars - J. Ortiz
 4. Medical Professions - J. Lucio
 5. Health Professions - M. Flores
 6. Science Academy - L. Madrigal
 7. Attendance Reports - J. Hembree

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Report on professional vacancies.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Action: Review and act to retroactively authorize specific district officials to sign personnel records for the South Texas Independent School District.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. *Action: Review and act on request for new professional positions for (1) Welding Teacher and (3) Special Education Teachers for the 2021-2022 school year and approval of the announcement of vacancies.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. *Action: Review and act on request to approve acting Maintenance Coordinator and salary adjustment.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- F. *Action: Review and act on amending summer 2021 office hours.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- G. *Action: Review and act on board members to attend the following:
1. Region One School Board Association Conference, May 21-22, 2021, South Padre Island, Texas.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- H. Action: Review and act on Resolution for the COVID-19 Pandemic Staff Retention Incentive.

A motion was made by Mr. A.J. Cantu, seconded by Dr. Garza, approving the Resolution for the COVID-19 Pandemic Staff Retention Incentive as presented and authorized the Superintendent of Schools to take such actions necessary and appropriate to implement the intent of this Resolution as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- I. Report on the Musk Foundation Donation.

Dr. Lara was pleased to report on the generous donation by the Musk Foundation. The district received \$87,686 and will be used for new programs and/or facilities for our Cameron County Schools. Dr. Lara hopes to expand the programs at our middle school. Dr. Lara reported we are committed partners in providing opportunities for our students.

Mr. Rodriguez suggested as part of our appreciation for the generous donation received, extend an invitation to Elon Musk to come visit our schools and possibly address our students.

J. Report on application to TEA to establish a Virtual School for next school year.

Dr. Lara reported we did submit an application for a Virtual School for next school year. TEA will award 50 school districts the opportunity to engage in a Blended, Hybrid, or 100% Virtual school. Dr. Lara participated in an interview with TEA and he believes STISD is poised to be the best option for virtual learning given our academic performance, student daily attendance, technology resources, service area, and professional development. This opportunity is pending the decision of the legislature this session as to whether or not this project will proceed with accreditation and funding.

15. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Board of Directors met on April 27, 2021 at 7:45 p.m. in a closed meeting or executive session as pursuant to the Texas Government Code Section, 551.071, 551.072, 551.074, 551.082, 551.084 and 551.001, the Board may go into Executive Session, The Presiding Officer recorded the minutes of the closed session to discuss the following:
 - A. 551.074, 551.071 Personnel Matters and consultation with school attorney regarding Personnel Matters: Closed Meeting
 1. Review recommendation to rescind proposed non-renewal recommendation of teacher's employment term contract for the 2020-2021 school year and renew teacher's employment contract for the 2021-2022 school year (JDL).
 2. Discussion and consideration of filing a written complaint with the State Board of Educator Certification regarding the resignation of an Educator's 2020-21 term contract without good cause pursuant Board Policy DFE (LEGAL), (CL & AG).

The Board of Directors ended the executive session at 8:02 p.m.

16. **OPEN SESSION:** Action on any Item Deliberated in Closed Meeting
 - A. 551.074, 551.071 Personnel Matters and consultation with school attorney regarding Personnel Matters:
 1. Action: Review and act on rescission of proposed non-renewal recommendation of teacher's employment term contract for the 2020-2021 school year and renew teacher's employment contract for the 2021-2022 school year (JDL).

Dr. Lara recommended the rescission of the proposed non-renewal of teacher's employment term contract for the 2020-2021 and recommended the renewal of teacher's employment contract for the 2021-2022 school year for JDL.

A motion was made by Dr. Garza, seconded by Mrs. Lopez rescinding the proposed non-renewal of teacher's employment term contract for 2020-2021 school year and renew teacher's employment contract for 2021-2022 school year (J.D.L.) as recommended. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Discussion and possible action to file a written complaint with the State Board of Educator Certification regarding the resignation of an Educator's 2020-21 term contract without good cause pursuant Board Policy DFE (Legal), (CL & AG).

The Superintendent recommended to file a written complaint with SBEC as discussed in executive session.

A motion was made by Mr. LeVrier, seconded by Mrs. Kamel, finding that good cause does not exist under Sec. 21.105(c)(2) of the Tex. Education Code regarding the resignation of an Educator's 2020-21 term contract and authorized the Superintendent and Board President to file a written complaint with the State Board of Educator Certification as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

17. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Dr. Garza, seconded by Mrs. Lopez adjourning the board meeting at 8:05 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.