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:	June 21, 2021
Time:	9:15 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/zVIx4jMkT3w***

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

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

II. Establishment of a Quorum

A 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
Isidoro Nieto, Trustee
Jacklyn Sustaita, Trustee

Andrew Gonzalez was absent.

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 addressed the Board.

Mr. Marcos De Los Santos made the motion to change the order of the day and move the closed meeting to the beginning of the meeting. Dr. Jaime Rodriguez seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IX. Closed Meeting to Discuss:

The Board convened in closed meeting at 9:26 p.m. to discuss the following items:

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

1. Employment of Personnel – Certified Professional & Non-Contractual Personnel
2. Resignations
3. 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)

   a. Discussion for the Board to Consider the Hiring of 21st Century Community Learning Centers – Texas ACE Program Employees on an At-Will Basis Beginning July 1, 2021 and Ending July 30, 2021

   b. Superintendent's Recommendation for the Position of Director of Safety and Security

B. Deliberation Regarding Acquisition of Real Property (Tx. Gov't Code 55.072)

C. Consultation with Attorney Regarding: a) Pending or Contemplated Litigation: b) a Settlement Offer: or c) a Matter in Which the Duty of the Attorney to the Weslaco ISD under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas Clearly Conflicts with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code (Tex. Gov't. Code 551.071)

X. Reconvene in Open Meeting:

The Board returned to open meeting at 12:11 a.m. to take action on the following items:

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

1. Discussion and Possible Action on New Employment - Certified Professional & Non-Contractual Personnel

   The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve certified and non-contractual personnel as discussed in closed meeting.

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL		
Name	**Position**	**Location**
1. Jesus Angel Salinas	Social Studies Teacher	Weslaco High School
2. Diana Trevino	4th Grade Teacher	Cleckler-Heald Elementary School
ADDENDUM		
1. Susana Aguirre	Counselor	Weslaco East High School
2. Heather Gonzales	6th Grade Math Teacher	Mary Hoge Middle School
3. Kristina Renee Martinez	Special Education Teacher	Weslaco East High School
4. Aimee Nunez	Counselor	Weslaco East High School
5. Senaida Salinas	Educational Diagnostician	Special Education Department
6. Brenda Nataly Valdez	Elementary Teacher	Margo Elementary School

REASSIGNMENT OF CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL		
Name	**From:**	**To:**
1. Maria Soledad Flores	Gear-Up Counselor Weslaco East High School	College, Career & Military Readiness (CCMR) Specialist Weslaco East High School

NON-CONTRACTUAL PERSONNEL		
Name	**Position**	**Location**
1. Rosemary Judith Gomez	Attendance At/Risk Clerk	Weslaco High School
2. Reena Villarreal	Special Education Aide	B. Garza Middle School
3. Diego Salvador Ayala	Custodian	Custodial Department
4. Sergio De La Cruz	Custodian	Custodial Department
5. Maria Natalia Hannah	Custodian	Custodial Department
6. Noelia Elizabeth Hernandez	Custodian	Custodial Department
7. Irma Nelly Martinez	Substitute Custodian	Custodial Department
8. Julian Martinez	Custodian	Custodial Department
9. Maria Guadalupe Ramirez	Custodian	Custodial Department
ADDENDUM		
1. Raul Rene Ramos	Special Education Aide	Weslaco High School
2. Ruben Romero	Custodian	Custodial Department
3. Victorina Rico Sarazua	Custodian	Custodial Department

REASSIGNMENT OF NON-CONTRACTUAL PERSONNEL – ADDENDUM		
Name	**From:**	**To:**
1. Jose G. De Leon	Skilled Carpenter Maintenance Department	Carpentry Foreman Maintenance Department
2. Hector Loredo	Plumber Assistant Maintenance Department	Skilled Plumber Maintenance Department
3. Maria Pinon	Plumber Assistant Maintenance Department	Skilled Plumber Maintenance Department

ADVANCED ACADEMICS 2021 SUMMER PROGRAM	
Name	**Position**
1. Vinessa Guzman	Tutor
2. Sophia Olivares	Tutor
Tutors will work 14.5 hours per week for 10 weeks. Hourly wage: $8.00	

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to approve certified and non-contractual personnel as recommended by the Superintendent. Mr. Marcos De Los Santos seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2. Discussion and Possible Action on Resignations

The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve the resignation/retirements of certified professional personnel.

Name	Position/Location	Reason/Effective Date
1. Erin Ebarb	Nurse B. Garza Middle School	Erin Ebarb resigned for personal reasons. Her resignation is effective May 28, 2021.
2. Alonzo Garza	Agricultural Science Teacher Weslaco High School	Alonzo Garza resigned for personal reasons. His resignation is effective June 30, 2021.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to approve the resignations/retirements of certified professional personnel as recommended by the Superintendent. Mr. Marcos De Los Santos seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider the Hiring of 21st Century Community Learning Centers – Texas ACE Program Employees on an At-Will Basis Beginning July 1, 2021 and Ending July 30, 2021

The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve the At-Will letter of employment notice for ACE personnel effective July 1-30, 2021. The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (After School Centers on Education) Program grant will expire July 31, 2021.

Katie Reyes, ACE Director, submitted the Cycle 11 Grant to the Texas Education Agency on January 20, 2021. Notice from TEA is pending on the extension of the grant.

Name	Campus
1. Arleen Marin	Airport Elementary School
2. Elizabeth Cano	Cleckler-Heald Elementary School
3. Norma Pena	Gonzalez Elementary School – 50%
4. Veronica Rivas	Margo Elementary School
5. Edith Hernandez	Memorial Elementary School
6. Heraldo Gonzalez	North Bridge Elementary School
7. Rebecca Ozuna	Rico Elementary School
8. Kassandra Pichardo	Sam Houston Elementary School
9. Norma Pena	Silva Elementary School – 50%
10. Billy Salazar	Ybarra Elementary School
11. Katie Reyes, Director 12. Michelle De Los Santos 13. Marissa Zavala, Secretary	ACE Department

Mr. Marcos De Los Santos made the motion to approve the At-Will letter of employment notice for ACE personnel effective July 1 through July 30, 2021. Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and Possible Action on Superintendent's Recommendation for the Position of Director of Safety and Security

The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve Mr. Danny Reyna for the position of Director of Safety and Security.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to approve Mr. Danny Reyna for the position of Director of Safety and Security as recommended by the Superintendent. Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IV. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider the Selection of An Independent Auditing Firm to Conduct the Independent Fiscal and Compliance Audit of the District for the Fiscal Year Ending August 31, 2021 with An Option to Extend the Contract for Two Additional One-Year Terms for Fiscal Years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 (RFQ #21-06-29)

The Board heard presentations from six (6) independent audit firms during a workshop held prior to this meeting.

Firm Name	Location	School Audits Conducted in RGV	Timeline to Complete WISD Audit
Beasley, Mitchell & Co.	El Paso, Texas	Yes	5 months
Burton, McCumber & Longoria, LLP	McAllen, Texas	Yes	3 months
Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC	McAllen, Texas	Yes	4 months
Cascos & Associates, PC	Brownsville, Texas	Yes	Subject to Readiness by District
Juarez CPA, PLLC	Brownsville, Texas	No	4 months
Luis C. Orozco, CPA	Pharr, Texas	Yes	4 months

All firms have the required qualifications solicited by the district to conduct the independent audit for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2021, and they all met the criteria set forth by TEA. A ranking sheet was provided to the Board of Trustees to document their ranking of the audit firms.

Mr. Jesse Trevino preferred to go with the majority in selecting a firm rather than rank the firms. Mr. Isidoro Nieto said that he would abstain from voting because he did not hear the first presentation and it would not be fair to the firms. However, he would support any decision made by the Board.

Mr. Trevino conducted business with the firm of Carr, Riggs & Ingram, and LLC last year and therefore would have to abstain if they were selected. He could vote in support of any other firm, but not this firm.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to select the firm of Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLC. Mr. Marcos De Los Santos seconded the motion.

Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita commented that all the firms had done a great job and provided good presentations. She thanked the firms for their time.

Mr. De Los Santos also acknowledged all the firms. He felt they all had fine points and provided good services, but he supported the firm selected by Dr. Rodriguez.

Voting in favor of the motion were Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita, Mr. Marcos De Los Santos, and Dr. Jaime Rodriguez. Mr. Isidoro Nieto and Mr. Jesse Trevino abstained. Motion carried.

Mr. Jesse Trevino made the motion to select the firm of Cascos & Associates as the #2 firm in case the Board was not able to negotiate with the first firm. Dr. Jaime Rodriguez seconded the firm. Voting in favor of the motion were Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita, Mr. Marcos De Los Santos, Mr. Jesse Trevino, and Dr. Jaime Rodriguez. Mr. Isidoro Nieto abstained. Motion carried.

V. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Renewal of the Contract with Valley Risk Consulting of McAllen, Texas to Provide Insurance and Employee Benefit Consulting Services

The Superintendent recommended that the Board renew the contract with Valley Risk Consulting to provide insurance and employee benefit consulting services and to authorize the Administration to execute the contract subject to legal counsel review.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to renew the contract with Valley Risk Consulting to provide insurance and employee benefit consulting services and authorized the Administration to execute said contract subject to legal approval. Dr. Jaime Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Mr. Jesse Trevino commented that at the last board meeting he mentioned that WISD has an individual on board who takes care of all the health needs for the district; therefore, he is not in favor of paying an additional $49,000 for another set of eyes. Mrs. Sustaita added that the district has a workers' comp. specialist, an insurance specialist, a Health Services Coordinator, and a Risk Management/Employee Benefits Director. The district pays $279,000.00 for these four individuals who are responsible for the same duties listed on the scope of work. She stated, "Why are we going to pay $49,500 extra to have a second set of eyes when we already pay four positions $279,000.00 a year to do this."

Dr. Rodriguez pointed out that the district's health insurance is a $20 million dollar budget item and he would prefer that it be evaluated by VCR or any another company because he wants to make sure that the district is going to provide the best product to the employees.

Mr. Nieto mentioned that the consultant has assisted the district in evaluating insurance coverage and many other items.

Mr. De Los Santos did not see justification in hiring a consultant since Mr. De La Rosa has always provided the necessary information to the Board and has always presented at the workshops. Thus, there are talented individuals working in his department that can handle the same duties as the consultant.

A vote was called on the motion made by Mr. Isidoro Nieto and seconded by Dr. Rodriguez to renew the contract with Valley Risk Consulting to provide insurance and employee benefit consulting services and to authorize the Administration to execute the contract subject to legal review. Voting in favor of the motion were Dr. Jaime Rodriguez and Mr. Isidoro Nieto. Voting against the motion were Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita, Mr. Jesse Trevino, and Mr. Marcos De Los Santos. Board President Armando Cuellar voted in favor of the motion. Motion tied with a 3-3 vote.

Mr. De Los Santos asked if they could table this item until all board members were present.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto rescinded his motion to renew the contract. All board members voted in favor to rescind.

Mr. Marcos De Los Santos made the motion to table this item. Mr. Isidoro Nieto seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VI. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Approve the Reinstatement of the Weslaco ISD Gifted and Talented Pull-Out Program Effective the 2021-2022 School Year

Mrs. Samantha Mize, Advanced Academics Coordinator, gave a presentation on the Gifted and Talented Pull-Out Program at the workshop held prior to this meeting.

The reinstatement of this program at the elementary and middle schools will meet the requirements of the Texas State Plan for the education of Gifted Talented students. This program had eleven teachers before the 2020-2021 school year, but due to the district's budget constraints, the eleven teachers were reassigned to general education classrooms during the 2020-2021 school year. This program needs a minimum of

seven (7) teachers to provide services and meet the needs of the identified gifted and talented students in elementary and middle schools. Staff is proposing five (5) GT teachers for elementary and two (2) GT teachers for middle school. These teachers will provide an in-depth and rigorous curriculum for the gifted and talented students as required by the State.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve the reinstatement of the Weslaco ISD Gifted and Talented Pull-Out Program effective the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Marcos De Los Santos seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VII. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of the Revision to Policy DBD (Local) Employment Requirements and Restrictions: Conflict of Interest

This item was presented to the Board at the regular board meeting held on June 14, 2021. The Board tabled the item in order to include additional information regarding suspended employees with pay and suspended employees without pay. During the board meeting Trustee Jaclyn Sustaita requested to delete the word "Approved" from the policy to indicate that employees shall not participate in any outside employment activities during hours they are required to perform District related work tasks. Trustee Jaime Rodriguez asked if this policy would apply to employees who are suspended with pay. Another board member suggested that language should be included to indicate that employees suspended with pay should not participate in outside employment while those suspended without pay should be allowed to participate in outside employment.

Dr. Sergio Garcia contacted TASB to inquire if the inclusion of these stipulations would create any issues. TASB recommended that specific language regarding employee suspensions with or without pay not be used because possible employee grievances for discrimination could arise. TASB also recommended that staff include specific language in the suspension letter along with information that the employee should be ready to return once the suspension is lifted, rather than putting it into policy. Dr. Garcia informed the Board that changes could be made to the policy if the Board was inclined to do so, since it was a local policy.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve the changes requested by Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita, but not to include specific language regarding the suspension with or without pay as recommended by TASB. Mr. Isidoro Nieto seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

District staff will include specific language in the suspension notice to the employees.

VIII. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of a Resolution to Adopt Text for Inclusion at CB (Local)

The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve a resolution adopting text for inclusion at Policy CB (Local). Dr. Canales provided the following information:

- TEA guidance on the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief III (ESSER III) Fund application process references required public notice for all federal grant applications before the district submits an application to TEA. To meet this requirement, a district may provide a summary of the application and plan for the use of funds as an information item at a board meeting or by other means of public notice.

- The required Use of Funds Plan and Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan also require public notice and comment, and the TEA guidance indicates that approval of these plans must be based on local policies regarding approval of such types of plans.

- Due to the number of public notice requirements in federal grant statutes, TEA recommends that school districts develop local board policy to address how the district will provide required public notice regarding federal grants and awards for consistency. Auditors may request documentation of the district's policies and procedures.

- To ensure that districts have policy provisions recommended by TEA in place by the ESSER III application deadline of July 27, 2021, TASB Policy and Legal Services developed a resolution with sample text for adoption and inclusion in CB (Local) on grants and awards.

- Upon board approval, TASB will update the district's CB (Local) policy with the text from the approved resolution. This policy will be changed on the TASB's Update 117.

The resolution reads as follows:

Whereas, on April 28, 2021, TEA notified school districts of the opportunity to apply for their allocation of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief III (ESSER III) Fund, which should be used to respond to the pandemic and to address student learning loss as a result of COVIDE-19;

Whereas, TEA published guidance regarding how these funds can be used and local compliance requirements school districts must follow, including a recommendation that districts develop local board policy to address how the district will provide the required public notice regarding federal grants and awards for consistency;

Whereas, Texas Education Code 11.151 gives the Board of Trustees the exclusive power and duty to govern and oversee the management of the public schools of the District; and

Whereas, the Board finds that a need exists to adjust local policy provisions to address public notice for federal grants and awards and approval of required grant plans;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Trustees of Weslaco Independent School District adopts the following text for inclusion at CB (LOCAL), State and Federal Revenue Sources:

- The District shall provide public notice of federal grant applications through an information item at a Board meeting and by publishing information on the District's website. The District shall make available opportunities for public input as required by law or the granting agency.

- Approval of required grant and award plans shall be by the Superintendent.

The change to CB (LOCAL) is effective based on the adoption date of this resolution.
Adopted this 21st day of June, 2021, by the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve the resolution to adopt text for inclusion at CB (Local). Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:36 a.m.