



Always Innovating

**South
Texas ISD**

RIO GRANDE VALLEY | GRADES 6-12

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 March 29, 2022, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Biblioteca Las Americas' Lecture Hall, 300 Med High Drive, Mercedes, TX 78570.

1. Welcome.

Henry LeVrier, Board Vice-President, welcomed the guests, staff and fellow Board members.

2. Pledges of Allegiance & District Call to Action.

The pledges were led by Ms. Sylvia Lopez.

3. Moment of Silence.

The Board held a moment of silence and remembering Ms. Irma Perez-Treviño and Pete Garcia (Margarita Garcia's husband).

4. Board Meeting called to order.

The meeting was called to order by Board Vice-President Henry LeVrier at approximately 7:00 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 were present:

Abiel J. Cantú	Raymondville
Martin Castillo, DC	Edinburg
Sasha Crane	McAllen
Javier Farias	McAllen
Richard Fleming, MD	Mission
Adrian Garcia	Brownsville

Margarita Garcia	San Juan
Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D.	Edinburg
Hector Gonzales	Lyford
Robert J. Lerma	Brownsville
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

The following Board members were absent:

Douglas E. Buchanan	Raymondville
Eduardo L. “Larry” Cantu	Los Fresnos
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen
Irma Perez-Treviño	Harlingen
Ruth Villarreal	Mission

The following staff members were present:

Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.	Eric Gutierrez
Efrain Garza	Marcos Flores
Marla R. Knaub	Dr. Janis De Luna
Amanda Odom	Maribel Valdez
Ramon Longoria	Frank Treviño
Nereyda Treviño	Carmen Noriega
Ana Castro	
Janie Ortiz	
Criselda Rodriguez	

Mr. Henry LeVrier announced the following corrections to the agenda:

Correction to Item 15.F.1 Superintendent’s Report – Action: Review and Act on approving the request for a New Professional and a Non-Professional Position for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for the following:

Item currently reads: 1. Central Office: Career Technology Education Coordinator (Professional)

Item corrected to read: 1. Central Office: Career and Technical Education Director (Professional)

Correction to item 16.B.1. Executive Session - Pursuant to Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code, consultation with attorney concerning possible legal issues in connection with DGBA Level III grievance of RC.

Item currently reads: 1. Consideration and possible action regarding DGBA Level III Grievance of RC.

Item corrected to read: 1. Consideration regarding DGBA Level III Grievance of RC.

5. Districts of Innovation Public Hearing.

A public hearing was held to provide an overview of the District of Innovation renewal process. Ms. Nereyda Treviño provided a full report and shared the Proposal of the District of Innovation Plan for August 2022 – August 2027.

The public and the board were given an opportunity to ask questions.

- 6. Awards & Recognitions.
 - A. Recognition of STISD Business Office for receiving the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) Purchasing Award of Merit.

Ms. Marla Knaub, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, and the Business Office were recognized for receiving the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) Purchasing Award of Merit. On behalf of the School Board and Administration, Amanda Odom presented an award to Marla Knaub and the Business Office.

- 7. 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. Cantú, seconded by Dr. Sánchez Garza, approving the consent agenda items as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- 8. *Action: Review and act on the February 22, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- 9. Public Comments for Agenda Topics.

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

- 10. Public Audience for Non-Agenda Topics.

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

- 11. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee - Richard Fleming, MD and Natividad Sosa, Co-Chairs

Ms. Natividad Sosa reported on the following item:

- A. Action: Review and act on adoption of renewal of the District of Innovation Plan.

A motion was made by Mr. Israel Quintanilla, seconded by Ms. Sasha Crane, adopting the renewal of the District of Innovation Plan, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Finance & Operations Committee - Javier Farias and Adrian Garcia, Co-Chairs

Mr. Adrian Garcia reported on the following committee items:

- A. *Report on District Comparison of Revenues/Expenditures.

Approved with the consent agenda.

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Report on school district investments:
 - 1. Investments owned by the district.
 - 2. Investments held by Wilmington Trust for the South Texas ISD Public Facilities Corporation.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. Action: Review and act on the following budget amendment(s):
 - 1. General fund budget amendment #3
 - 2. Health Grant budget amendment #1

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Quintanilla, approving the General Fund budget amendment #3 to provide additional funds for students in co-curricular activities and the Health Grant budget amendment #1. The motion passed unanimously.

- E. Action: Review and act on the following requisitions:
 - 1. Requisition #099909 to Tesoro Corporation dba AAA Electrical Signs for the marquee at the New Central Office in the amount of \$369,564.00.
 - 2. Requisition #099961 to Tele-Pro Communications for the Audio Visual equipment at the New Central Office in the amount of \$637,406.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Quintanilla, approving requisition #099909 to Tesoro Corporation dba AAA Electrical Signs for the marquee at the New Central Office in the amount of \$369,564 and requisition #099961 to Tele-Pro Communications for the Audio Visual equipment at the New Central Office in the amount of \$637,406. The motion passed with one absention (J. Farias).

F. Report on the following projects:

1. New Central Office Building Renovation project
2. New Rising Scholars Academy project
3. New Health Professions Gymnasium project

Mr. Frank Treviño, Construction Manager, shared a verbal report with the Board on the status of each construction project detailing the progress of each project.

G. Action: Review and act on the following Change Orders:

1. Change order #1 in the amount of \$63,389.70 for the New Central Office Renovation project.
2. Change order #2 to the allowances in the amount of \$16,215.81 for the New Central Office Renovation project.
3. Change order #3 to the betterment fund in the amount of \$160,000 for the New Central Office Renovation project.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Lerma, approving Change order #1 in the amount of \$63,389.70 for the New Central Office Renovation project and Change order #2 to the allowances in the amount of \$16,215.81 for the New Central Office Renovation project. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Lerma, tabling Change order #3 to the betterment fund in the amount of \$160,000 for the New Central Office Renovation project. The motion passed unanimously.

A. Action: Review and act on the following payment applications:

1. Payment application #8 to Gerlach Builders for the Science Academy CATE Renovation project in the amount of \$14,155.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Dr. Castillo, approving payment application #8 to Gerlach Builders for the Science Academy CATE Renovation project in the amount of \$14,155. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Payment application #9 (final) to Gerlach for the Science Academy CATE Renovation project in the amount of \$31,276.98.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. A. Cantú, approving payment application #9 (final) to Gerlach for the Science Academy CATE Renovation project in the amount of \$31,276.98. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Payment application #8 to D. Wilson Construction for the New Central Office Renovation project in the amount of \$381,467.07.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Ms. Lopez, approving payment application #8 to D. Wilson Construction for the New Central Office Renovation project in the amount of \$381,467.07. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Payment application #13 to Gignac for the New Central Office Renovation project in the amount of \$9,481.92.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Farias approving payment application #13 to Gignac for the New Central Office Renovation project in the amount of \$9,481.92. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Payment application #3 to Sam Garcia Architect for the New Rising Scholars Academy project in the amount of \$175,415.62.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Ms. Sosa approving the payment application #3 to Sam Garcia Architect for the New Rising Scholars Academy project in the amount of \$175,415.62. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. Action: Review and act on approving the donation from Elizabeth and Richard Cantu to Science Academy Chess Club for flights valued at \$1,969.80.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Farias, approving the donation from Elizabeth and Richard Cantu to the Science Academy Chess Club for flights valued at \$1,969.80. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Action: Review and act on amending the Accounts Payable position on the Non-Exempt pay scale.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Dr. Castillo, approving amending the Accounts Payable position on the Non-Exempt pay scale. The motion passed unanimously.

- D. Action: Consideration and approval of an order approving and authorizing publication of a notice of intent to contract under the Public Property Finance Act for constructing certain public school facilities.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Farias, approving and authorizing publication of a notice of intent to contract under the Public Property Finance Act for constructing certain public school facilities. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Policy, Planning, Projects & Partnerships Committee - Hector Gonzales and Robert J. Lerma, Co-Chairs

Mr. Hector Gonzales reported on the following item:

- A. Action: Annual review and approval of revisions to update the Board Operating Procedures.

A motion was made by Mr. Gonzales, seconded by Mr. A. Cantú approving the revisions to update the Board Operating Procedures. The motion passed with one against (A.Garcia).

- 3. Community & Governmental Relations Committee - Margarita Garcia and Yolanda Kamel, Co-Chairs

Ms. Margarita Garcia reported on the following item:

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- 4. Superintendent's Report - Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.
 - A. *Campus Reports
 - 1. Preparatory Academy - A. Castro
 - 2. Rising Scholars Academy - J. Ortiz
 - 3. World Scholars - J. De Luna, Ph.D.
 - 4. Medical Professions - C. Rodriguez
 - 5. Health Professions - M. Flores
 - 6. Science Academy - E. Gutierrez
 - 7. Virtual Academy - M. Valdez

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Action: Review and act on the following out of district student/staff travel:
 - 1. National High School Chess Championship, April 8-11, 2022 in Memphis, TN.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Action: Review and act on board members to attend the following:
 - 1. Region One School Board Association Conference, May 20-21, 2022, South Padre Island, Texas.
 - 2. TASB's Summer Leadership Institute, June 15-18, 2022 in San Antonio, TX or June 29-July 2, 2022 in Fort Worth, TX.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. *Quarterly report on the Education Foundation of South Texas ISD.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. *Report on the 2021-2022 district's Organizational Chart.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- F. Action: Review and Act on approving the request for a New Professional and a Non-Professional Position for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for the following:
 1. Central Office: Career Technology Education Coordinator (Professional)
 2. Central Office: Accounts Payable Clerk (Non-Professional)

A motion was made by Mr. Rodriguez, seconded by Dr. Sánchez Garza approving the request for a New Professional Position and approval of the Announcement of Vacancy for a Career and Technical Education Director; and the request for a New Non-Professional Position and approval of the Announcement of Vacancy for an Accounts Payable Clerk. The motion passed unanimously.

- G. Report from Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza on the 2022 NSBA Advocacy Institute.

Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza and Mr. Rodriguez gave a report on the 2022 NSBA Advocacy Institute. This was a report only.

- H. Action: Review and act on letter to Congress to support extending waiver authority to USDA for school nutrition programs.

A motion was made by Dr. Castillo, seconded by Dr. Sánchez Garza approving a letter to Congress to support extending waiver authority to USDA for school nutrition programs. The motion was passed unanimously.

- I. Action: Review and act on extending the contract for legal services with Walsh, Gallegos, Trevino, Russo & Kyle PC (RFQ 19-010) or authorize the administration to advertise for legal services.

A motion was made by Mr. Garcia, seconded by Mr. Gonzales approving extending the contract for legal services with Walsh, Gallegos, Trevino, Russo & Kyle PC (RFQ 19-010). The motion passed unanimously.

5. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: A closed 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 to discuss the following:**
- A. 551.074, 551.071 Personnel Matters and consultation with school attorney regarding Personnel Matters: Closed Meeting
 - 1. Recommendation of professional staff for the 2021-2022 school year.
 - a. Data Analytics Director
 - b. Counselor
 - c. Nurse
 - d. Teacher(s)
 - B. Pursuant to Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code, consultation with attorney concerning possible legal issues in connection with DGBA Level III grievance of RC.
 - 1. Consideration and possible action regarding DGBA Level III Grievance of RC.

The Board ended the executive session at 9:14 p.m.

6. 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 recommendation of professional staff for the 2021-2022 school year.
 - a. Data Analytics Director
 - b. Counselor
 - c. Nurse
 - d. Teacher(s)

Dr. Tony Lara, Superintendent of Schools, recommended the employment of the following professional staff for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year: Ms. Sandra Leticia Torres as Data Analytics Director (12 months); Ms. Jordan A. Castanon as Counselor (10 months); Candy Kafka as School Nurse (10 months); and Rocio I. Rosel as Teacher (10 months).

A motion was made by Mr. Gonzales, seconded by Mr. A. Cantu, approving the recommendation for Ms. Sandra Leticia Torres as Data Analytics Director (12 months). The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Solis, seconded by Mr. A. Cantú, approving the recommendation for Ms. Jordan A. Castanon as Counselor (10 months). The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Gonzales, seconded by Mr. A. Cantú, approving the recommendation for Candy Kafka as School Nurse (10 months). The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Dr. Castillo, seconded by Mr. A. Cantu, approving the recommendation for Rocio I. Rosel as Teacher (10 months). The motion passed unanimously.

B. Pursuant to Sections 551.074 of the Texas Government Code, consideration and deliberation of DGBA Level III Grievance of RC.

Mr. Henry LeVrier, Board Vice-President asked for a motion regarding Ms. Rosemary Courtney's Level III Grievance. A motion was made by Mr. Farias, seconded by Dr. Castillo, denying the Level III Grievance in which case the administration's decision was upheld. The Board Vice-President stated the Level III Grievance Hearing was concluded. **The motion passed unanimously.**

7. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Mr. Gonzales, seconded by Mr. A. Cantú, adjourning the board meeting at 9:14 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.