



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 January 24, 2023, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Biblioteca Las Americas' Lecture Hall, 300 Med High Drive, Mercedes, TX 78570.

1. Welcome.

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

2. Board Meeting called to order.

The meeting was called to order by Henry LeVrier, Board President 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:

David Briones	La Feria
Douglas E. Buchanan	Raymondville
Abiel J. Cantú	Raymondville
Sasha Crane	McAllen
Adrian Garcia	Brownsville
Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D.	Edinburg
Hector Gonzales	Lyford
Henry LeVrier	Brownsville
Sylvia S. Lopez	Brownsville
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen
Ricardo Ochoa, MD	Weslaco
Israel G. Quintanilla	Raymondville
Rodolfo “Rudy” Ramirez	Edinburg
Eduardo Roberto Rodriguez	Brownsville
Jaime R. Solis	Edinburg
Norberto “Beto” Salinas	Mission
Natividad Sosa	Mission
David Torres	Edinburg

Rick Villarreal, D.D.S. Brownsville

The following Board members were absent:

Eduardo L. "Larry" Cantu	Los Fresnos
Javier Farias	McAllen
Margarita Garcia	San Juan
Robert J. Lerma	Brownsville
Ruth Villarreal	Mission

The following staff members were present:

Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.	Ramon Longoria
Efrain Garza	Crystal Solis
Lissa Frausto	Carmen Noriega
Marla Knaub	
Amanda Odom	
Brenda De La Garza, Ed.D.	
Eric Gutierrez	
Marcos Flores	
Criselda Rodriguez Flores	
Marco Zamora	
Cynthia Chairez, Ed.D.	
Maribel Valdez	

3. Pledges of Allegiance & District Call to Action.

The pledges were led by Mr. Eduardo Rodriguez.

4. Moment of Silence.

The Board held a moment of silence, remembering Board member, Margarita Garcia.

5. Awards & Recognitions.

A. Recognition of STISD students for excellence in academic, athletic and/or extracurricular endeavors.

On behalf of the Board, Amanda Odom recognized STISD students for excellence in academic, athletic and/or extracurricular endeavors, which included 34 Health Professions BPA students who qualified for State Competition, 24 Science Academy students who earned their Welding Certification, Rising Scholars students who hosted their inaugural 'Sock Hop' event to benefit the community, a Preparatory Academy student named a '2022 Angel Ambassador' for his toy drive contributions, two Science Academy students who placed in the Congressional App Challenge, a Virtual Academy student for achievements at STISD, and Campus Basketball teams from Medical Professions and World Scholars for season achievements.

B. Recognition of South Texas ISD Board of Directors in honor of School Board Recognition Month.

In recognition of Texas School Board Recognition Month, students, campus principals and the Superintendent expressed words of appreciation to board members and presented the Board with tokens of appreciation honoring them for their leadership and dedication to South Texas ISD.

C. Recognition of Mr. Douglas Buchanan for years of service as Board President.

Douglas Buchanan was recognized for his years of service as STISD Board President and was presented with a glass plaque as a token of appreciation for his dedication to the STISD students and school community.

6. Public Comments for Agenda Topics.

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

7. Public Audience for Non-Agenda Topics.

The Board received the following requests to address the Board of Directors:

1. Pete Espinosa – Taxing Authority
2. Joey Lopez – District Direction

Each individual was allowed three minutes to address the Board.

8. 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 Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Doug Buchanan, approving the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

9. *Action: Review and act on the December 6, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

10. *Action: Review and act on the December 13, 2022 Special Called Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

11. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee - David Briones and Sylvia S. Lopez, Co-Chairs

Sylvia S. Lopez reported on the following items:

A. *Report on STISD Leader Monthly Newsletter.

Approved with the consent agenda.

B. Action: Review and act on the following Proposed Actions:

1. Health Professions: Practicum in Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources, Dental Equipment & Procedures, Pharmacy II, Pharmacology, Leadership & Management in Nursing, and Medical Interventions Evaluation & Research.
2. Medical Professions: Dental Equipment & Procedures, Pharmacy II, Pharmacology, Leadership & Management in Nursing, and Medical Interventions Evaluation & Research.
3. World Scholars: Web Communications, Audio/Video Production II w/ Lab, and Practicum in Audio/Video Production.
4. Virtual Academy: Animation II w/ Lab and Practicum in Animation.
5. Science Academy: Manufacturing Engineering Technology I, Manufacturing Engineering Technology II, and Computer Science I -P-TECH course Dual enrollment TSTC.

A motion was made by Sylvia S. Lopez, seconded by Natividad Sosa, approving the following proposed actions: Health Professions: Practicum in Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources, Dental Equipment & Procedures, Pharmacy II, Pharmacology, Leadership & Management in Nursing, and Medical Interventions Evaluation & Research; Medical Professions: Dental Equipment & Procedures, Pharmacy II, Pharmacology, Leadership & Management in Nursing, and Medical Interventions Evaluation & Research; World Scholars: Web Communications, Audio/Video Production II w/ Lab, and Practicum in Audio/Video Production; Virtual Academy: Animation II w/ Lab and Practicum in Animation; Science Academy: Manufacturing Engineering Technology I, Manufacturing Engineering Technology II, and Computer Science I - P-TECH course Dual enrollment TSTC. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Buildings and Grounds Committee - Larry Cantu and Margarita Garcia, Co-Chairs

Jaime R. Solis reported on the following items:

A. Report on Districtwide Intruder Detection Audit Report Findings.

Jaime R. Solis reported on the districtwide Intruder Detection Audit Report Findings.

- B. Report on the following projects:
 - 1. New Central Office Building Renovation project.
 - 2. New Health Professions Gymnasium project.
 - 3. 2022-2023 Capital Projects

Marla Knaub, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, provided a verbal report on the status of the New Central Office Building Renovation project, the New Health Professions Gymnasium project, and the 2022-2023 Capital Projects.

- C. Action: Review and act on approval of the schematic design for the New Preparatory Academy Pavilion project.

With recommendation from the Buildings and Grounds Committee, a motion was made by Rudy Ramirez, seconded by Yolanda Kamel, approving the schematic design for the New Preparatory Academy Pavilion project. The motion passed unanimously.

- D. Action: Review and act on approving the updated rendering for the New Health Professions Gymnasium project.

With recommendation from the Buildings and Grounds Committee, a motion was made by Eduardo Rodriguez, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving the updated rendering for the new Health Professions Gymnasium project. The motion passed with two against (Sylvia S. Lopez and Natividad Sosa).

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

Adrian Garcia reported on the following items:

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Report on first quarter 2022-2023 District Comparison of Revenues/Expenditures.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Report on 2022-2023 first quarter student activity accounts.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. *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.

- E. *Action: Review and act on approving the following donations:
 1. \$300 from Improved Order of Red Men Omaha Tribe #25 for Health Professions HOSA.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- F. *Action: Review and act on authorizing Administration to advertise for a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Public Affairs and Government Relations.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- G. Action: Review and act on the following budget amendment(s):
 1. Carl D. Perkins (244) budget amendment #1.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Israel Quintanilla, approving Carl D. Perkins (244) budget amendment #1. The motion passed unanimously.

- H. Action: Review and act on the following Change Orders:
 1. Change order #66 to the contract in the amount of \$477.40 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.
 2. Change order #67 to the contract in the amount of (\$4,650) for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.

With recommendation from the Buildings and Grounds Committee, a motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving change order #66 to the contract in the amount of \$477.40 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project and change order #67 to the contract in the amount of (\$4,650) for the New Central Office Building Renovation project. The motion passed unanimously.

- I. Action: Review and act on the following payment applications:
 1. Payment application #17 to D. Wilson Construction in the amount of \$155,473.39 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.
 2. Payment application #18 to D. Wilson Construction in the amount of \$442,450.15 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.
 3. Payment application #18 to Gignac & Associates Architects in the amount of \$6,016.63 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.

With recommendation from the Buildings and Grounds Committee, a motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Hector Gonzalez, approving payment application #17 to D. Wilson

Construction in the amount of \$155,473.39 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project, payment application #18 to D. Wilson Construction in the amount of \$442,450.15 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project, and payment application #18 to Gignac & Associates Architects in the amount of \$6,016.63 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project. The motion passed with two against (Sylvia S. Lopez and Natividad Sosa).

- J. Action: Review and act on contract with Moak, Casey & Associates for Financial Data Modeling and Revenue Estimating.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Doug Buchanan, approving the contract with Moak, Casey & Associates for Financial Data Modeling and Revenue Estimating. The motion passed unanimously.

- K. Action: Review and act on approving a proposal for Absolute Business Consulting Group for Public Relations and Communication.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Dr. Rick Villarreal, approving the proposal for Absolute Business Consulting Group for Public Relations and Communication. The motion passed unanimously.

- L. Action: Review and act on approving proceeding with the Health Professions Window System Replacement project, and approving a procurement method with a do not exceed amount.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Jaime R. Solis, approving Administration to proceed with the Health Professions Window System Replacement project and a procurement method with a do not exceed amount of \$94,000. The motion passed unanimously.

14. Policy, Planning, Projects & Partnerships Committee - Doug Buchanan and Abiel J. Cantu, Co-Chairs

Doug Buchanan reported on the following item:

- A. *Action: Review and act on Policy Update 120.

Approved with the consent agenda.

15. Community & Governmental Relations Committee - Sasha Crane and Yolanda Kamel, Co-Chairs

Sasha Crane reported on the following item:

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

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

A. *Campus Reports

1. Preparatory Academy - M. Zamora
2. Rising Scholars Academy - R. Rodriguez, Ed.D.
3. World Scholars - C. Chairez, Ed.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. Chess National High School (K-12) Championship, March 31-April 2, 2023, in Washington, DC.
2. BPA International Leadership Conference, April 25-30, 2023 in Anaheim, CA.

Approved with the consent agenda.

C. *Action: Review and act on approval of Board delegates to attend STISD Day at the Capitol, March 6-7, 2023 in Austin, TX.

Approved with the consent agenda.

D. *Report on 2023-2024 Committee and Co-Chair Assignments for the Board of Directors.

Approved with the consent agenda.

E. Discussion, consideration and possible action on legislative priorities for the 88th Legislative Session.

Sasha Crane, Legislative Committee Chair, shared an update of the legislative priorities. This was an update only. No Board action was taken.

F. Discussion, consideration and possible action on priorities for the \$8 million dollar gift received from MacKenzie Scott.

Dr. Tony Lara reported to the Board on the types of discussions that have been held to-date to determine the best use of the unsolicited \$8 million donation from MacKenzie Scott, and asked

board members for any specific suggestions they have about ways through which the donation can benefit the STISD community.

- G. 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 Adrian Garcia, seconded by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, extending the contract for legal services with Walsh, Gallegos, Trevino, Russo & Kyle PC (RFQ 19-010). The motion passed unanimously.

17. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: A closed or executive session as pursuant to the Texas Government Code Section, 551.071, 551.072, 551.074, 551.076, 551.082, 551.084 and 551.001, the Board may go into Executive Session to discuss the following:**

- A. 551.076 Security
 - 1. Discussion and consideration regarding Districtwide Intruder Detection Audit Report Findings.
- B. 551.074, 551.071 Personnel Matters and consultation with school attorney regarding Personnel Matters: Closed Meeting
 - 1. Recommendation of professional staff for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year.
 - a. Teacher(s)
- C. Summative Evaluation of Superintendent's job performance.
 - 1. STISD - Superintendent contract and fringe benefits

The Board ended the executive session at 10:21 p.m.

18. 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 remainder of the 2022-2023 school year.
 - a. Teacher(s)

There were no recommendations taken to the Board for approval.

- B. Action: Review and act on Summative Evaluation of Superintendent's job performance.
 - 1. Action: STISD - Superintendent contract and fringe benefits

A motion was made by Jaime R. Solis, seconded by Mr. Eduardo Rodriguez, approving the summative evaluation of Dr. Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Superintendent, extending the Superintendent’s employment contract for one additional year, and increasing his annual salary by \$10,000 with benefits to remain the same. The Board President shared congratulatory remarks to Dr. Tony Lara. The motion passed unanimously.

19. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Doug Buchanan, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, adjourning the board meeting at 10:26 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.