



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 May 23, 2023, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Central Office Teaching and Learning Center, 7001 E. Expressway 83, Mercedes, Texas 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
Abiel J. Cantú	Raymondville
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
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen
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

The following Board members were absent:

Douglas E. Buchanan	Raymondville
Eduardo L. "Larry" Cantu	Los Fresnos
Sasha Crane	McAllen
Javier Farias	McAllen
Rick Villarreal, D.D.S.	Brownsville
Ruth Villarreal	Mission

The following staff members were present:

Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.	Ramon Longoria
Efrain Garza	Frank Treviño
Lissa Frausto	Mathew Maciel
Marla Knaub	Carmen Noriega
Amanda Odom	
Nereyda Treviño, 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 Sylvia S. Lopez.

4. Moment of Silence.

The Board held a moment of silence.

5. 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.

6. Public Audience for Non-Agenda Topics.

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

1. Christian Cariaga Leal – Rebuttal of Abandonment of Contract

Individual was allowed three minutes to address the Board.

7. Awards & Recognitions.

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

On behalf of the administration and Board, Amanda Odom acknowledged and congratulated RSA, and specifically RSA Computer Science Teacher Katherine Castaneda, for being recognized by the Expanding Pathways in Computing (EPIC) program at The University of Texas at Austin for reaching gender parity in computer science.

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 Robert Lerma, approving the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

9. *Action: Review and act on the April 25, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

10. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee - Natividad Sosa and Rick Villarreal, DDS, Co-Chairs

Natividad Sosa reported on the following items:

- A. Report on students eligible for College Board National Recognition Programs.

Dr. Nereyda Treviño provided the Board with a report on students eligible for College Board National Recognition Programs. This was a report only.

- B. Action: Review and act on the 2023-2024 District and Campus Improvement Plans (Final Reading).

A motion was made by Rudy Ramirez, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving the 2023-2024 District and Campus Improvement Plans as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Buildings and Grounds Committee - Jaime Solis and David Torres, 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 Renovation project
 - 2. Preparatory Academy Pavilion
 - 3. Health Professions Window System
 - 4. Cameras and Access Controls
 - 5. New Health Professions Gymnasium

Frank Treviño, Construction Manager, provided a verbal report on the status of the New Central Office Building Renovation project, Preparatory Academy Pavilion, Health Professions Window System, Cameras and Access Controls, and the New Health Professions Gymnasium.

- C. Action: Review and act on approving Job Order Contracting through an approved purchasing cooperative for the Preparatory Academy Pavilion project.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving Job Order Contracting through an approved purchasing cooperative for the Preparatory Academy Pavilion project. The motion passed unanimously.

- D. Action: Review and act on approving requisition #110779 to D. Wilson for the Preparatory Academy Pavilion project.
- E. Action: Review and act on approving requisition #110774 to D. Wilson for the Health Professions Window System project.

A motion was made by Jaime R. Solis, seconded by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, tabling item 11.D. Action: Review and act on approving requisition #110779 to D. Wilson for the Preparatory Academy Pavilion project and item 11.E. Action: Review and act on approving requisition #110774 to D. Wilson for the Health Professions Window System project. The motion passed unanimously.

- 12. Finance & Operations Committee - Sylvia S. Garza, Ph.D. and Israel G. Quintanilla, Co-Chairs

Israel G. Quintanilla reported on the following items:

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Report on update of 2023-2024 Budget.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Action: Review and act on removing assets from district inventory.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. *Action: Review and act on approving a donation from TASO Rio Grande Softball Chapter in the amount of \$700 to Health Professions.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. *Action: Review and act on extending the following Request for Proposals (RFPs):
 1. RFP 21-004 Special Education Contracted Services
 2. RFP 21-006 Awards, Incentives & Printed Materials
 3. RFP 23-001 General Merchandise
 4. RFP 23-002 Document Imaging, Shredding, & Retention Services
 5. RFP 23-003 General Maintenance, Building, Grounds Services
 6. RFP 23-004 Building Materials
 7. RFP 23-005 Drug Testing Services
 8. RFP 23-006 Video Productions & Photography Services
 9. RFP 23-008 Petroleum Products
 10. RFP 23-012 Instructional Supplies and Technology Products
 11. RFP 23-014 Employee Uniform

Approved with the consent agenda.

- F. Action: Review and act on awarding the following Request for Proposals (RFPs):
 1. RFP 24-003 Travel Agent & Charter Bus Services
 2. RFP 24-004 Pizza Products
 3. RFP 24-005 Bus & Auto Parts
 4. RFP 24-006 Mats & Linens
 5. RFP 24-007 Tow Truck Services
 6. RFP 24-008 Maintenance & Building Repair Services
 7. RFP 24-009 Building Materials
 8. RFP 24-010 Instructional Materials
 9. RFP 24-011 Unemployment Compensation

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Robert Lerma, awarding Request for Proposals (RFPs) RFP 24-003 Travel Agent & Charter Bus Services; RFP 24-004 Pizza Products; RFP 24-005 Bus & Auto Parts; RFP 24-006 Mats & Linens; RFP 24-007 Tow Truck Services; RFP 24-008 Maintenance & Building Repair Services; RFP 24-009 Building Materials; RFP 24-010 Instructional Materials; and RFP 24-011 Unemployment Compensation. The motion passed unanimously.

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

1. General Fund (199) Budget Amendment #5
2. 2021-2022 IDEA B (224) Carryover
3. 2022-2023 IDEA B (224) Adjustment
4. Schools Safety Standards Formula Grant (429)

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Robert Lerma, approving General Fund (199) Budget Amendment #5, 2021-2022 IDEA B (224) Carryover, 2022-2023 IDEA B (224) Adjustment, and Schools Safety Standards Formula Grant (429). The motion passed unanimously.

H. Action: Review and act on the following requisitions:

1. Requisition #110589 to TESCO Specialty Vehicles for a Mobile Clinic for Medical Professions.
2. Requisition #110602 to Toolkit Technologies, Inc. for a switch electric vehicle for Science Academy.
3. Requisition #110603 to Guamard for a birthing mannequin for Medical Professions.
4. Requisition #110604 to Guamard Scientific Co. for an interdisciplinary simulator mannequin for Medical Professions.
5. Requisition #110605 to Capsahealthcare for a robotic dispensing system for Medical Professions.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving requisition #110589 to TESCO Specialty Vehicles for a Mobile Clinic for Medical Professions; requisition #110602 to Toolkit Technologies, Inc. for a switch electric vehicle for Science Academy; requisition #110603 to Guamard for a birthing mannequin for Medical Professions; requisition #110604 to Guamard Scientific Co. for an interdisciplinary simulator mannequin for Medical Professions; and requisition #110605 to Capsahealthcare for a robotic dispensing system for Medical Professions. The motion passed unanimously.

I. Action: Review and act on approving revisions to the 2022-2023 Stipend Schedule.

A motion was made by Jaime R. Solis, seconded by Natividad Sosa, approving the revisions to the 2022-2023 stipend schedule, as presented. The motion passed with one against (Norberto “Beto” Salinas).

- J. Action: Review and act on approving a retention stipend to returning employees for the 2023-2024 school year.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving a retention stipend of \$1,200 to all employees returning for the 2023-2024 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

- 13. Policy, Planning, Projects & Partnerships Committee - Hector Gonzales and Bobby Lerma, Co-Chairs

No committee items were presented to board.

- 14. Community & Governmental Relations Committee - Eduardo Rodriguez and Norberto 'Beto' Salinas, Co-Chairs

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- 15. 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
 - 8. Attendance Report
 - 9. Enrollment Report
 - 10. Human Resources Report

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Report on professional vacancies.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Report on local certification through the District of Innovation Plan.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. *Action: Review and act on board members to attend the TASA TASB Annual Convention, September 29 - October 1, 2023, in Dallas, TX.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. Action: Review and Act on approving the request for New Professional Positions for the 2023-2024 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for the following:
1. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology Intern (1) – District-Wide
 2. Special Education with Core Teacher (1) – District-Wide
 3. Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Teacher (1) – District-Wide
 4. English Language Arts/ESL Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy
 5. Mathematics Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy
 6. Science Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy
 7. Social Studies Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy
 8. Technology Applications Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy
 9. Mathematics Teacher (1) – Preparatory Academy

A motion was made by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving the request for New Professional Positions for the 2023-2024 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology Intern (1) – District-Wide; a Special Education with Core Teacher (1) – District-Wide; a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program Teacher (1) – District-Wide; an English Language Arts/ESL Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy; a Mathematics Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy; a Science Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy; Social Studies Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy; Technology Applications Teacher (1) – Rising Scholars Academy; and a Mathematics Teacher (1) – Preparatory Academy. The motion passed unanimously.

- F. Action: Review and act on approving members to the District’s Safety and Security Committee.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Israel G. Quintanilla, approving members to the District’s Safety and Security Committee, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- G. Discussion and possible action on items requested by Board Member, Natividad Sosa:
1. Employee and Parent Survey to be conducted by outside firm.

Natividad Sosa recommended that an Employee and Parent Survey be conducted by an outside firm. Dr. Lara shared information on the district’s Strategic Plan, which involves feedback from students and parents. He also shared information on surveys conducted at the campus level this year. Administration will look into options and bring them to the Board.

2. Formation of a district committee on mental health and support programs.

Natividad Sosa requested information on mental health and support programs be shared with the Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee each month. Dr. Lara shared information on Special Programs and services offered to our students. Dr. Treviño will include an update to the committee each month.

3. Monthly Reports on Student Enrollment, Student Discipline, and Staffing Changes including resignations, hires, and leaves.

Natividad Sosa requested the Board be given monthly reports on Student Enrollment, Student Discipline, and Staffing Changes including resignations, hires, and leaves. Dr. Lara provided a report on student enrollment as well as a staffing update. Ms. Sosa requested information on student discipline and how Administration is addressing issues. Dr. Lara will provide updates in the weekly newsletter to the Board.

16. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Board of Directors met on May 23, 2023 at 7:53 p.m. in 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 Secretary, Israel G. Quintanilla served to record 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. Recommendation of professional staff for the 2023-2024 school year.
 - a. Assistant Principal
 - b. Counselor
 - c. Teacher(s)
 - B. 551.071, 551.076, 551.089 Deliberation Regarding Security Devices or Security Audits and consultation with school attorney regarding Security Devices or Security Audits: Closed Meeting
 1. Discussion and consideration regarding Districtwide Intruder Detection Audit Report Findings.
 - C. 551.129, 551.071 Discussion with attorney regarding legal issues related to multi-party legal representation on possible Shared Services Agreement for autism related services between South Texas ISD and Excellence in Leadership Academy.
 - D. 551.071 Consultation with attorney regarding pending or threatened litigation.
 1. Juan De Leon, Jr. – EEOC Complaint # 451-2021-02288
 2. Elva C. Villarreal vs. South Texas Independent School District, Cause No. CL-22-2425-G
 3. Sam Garcia Architects, LLC

The Board ended the Executive Session at 8:57 p.m.

17. 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 2023-2024 school year.
 - a. Assistant Principal
 - b. Counselor
 - c. Teacher(s)

Dr. Tony Lara, Superintendent of Schools, recommended the employment of Leigh Ann Richburg as Assistant Principal (11 months), Laura Moore as Counselor (11 months), Ariel Ivan Torres Burgueno as Teacher (10 months), Jose Leonardo Garcia as Teacher (10 months), Oscar Castillo as Teacher (10 months), Marco Antonio Gonzalez as Teacher (10 months), and Andrea Lopez as Teacher (10 months) for the 2023-2024 school year.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Israel G. Quintanilla, approving the employment of professional staff as recommended. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Discussion, consideration and possible action on Security Devices/Security Audits.

A motion was made by Yolanda Kamel, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving the security audit as discussed in Executive Session. The motion passed unanimously.

- C. Consideration and possible action regarding consent to multi-party legal representation by Walsh Gallegos Treviño Kyle & Robinson, P.C. related to possible Shared Services Agreement for autism related services between South Texas ISD and Excellence in Leadership Academy.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, consenting to multi-party legal representation by the law firm, Walsh Gallegos Treviño Kyle & Robinson P.C., between South Texas ISD and Excellence in Leadership Academy related to a possible Shared Services Agreement for autism related services between both entities and authorize the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee to sign the consent presented by administration. The motion passed unanimously.

- D. Consideration and possible action regarding possible Shared Services Agreement for autism related services between South Texas ISD and Excellence in Leadership Academy, including possible delegation of authority to Superintendent or designee to negotiate and execute an agreement in a form approved by legal counsel.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Natividad Sosa, delegating authority to the Superintendent or designee to negotiate and execute a Shared Services Agreement for autism related services between South Texas ISD and Excellence in Leadership Academy in a form approved by legal counsel and further direct the Superintendent to update the Board regarding the final agreement at a future Board meeting. The motion passed with one against (Norberto "Beto" Salinas).

E. Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding pending or threatened litigation.

1. Juan De Leon, Jr. – EEOC, Complaint # 451-2021-02288

A motion was made by Jaime R. Solis, seconded by Adrian Garcia, approving the settlement agreement for Juan De Leon, Jr., as discussed in Executive Session and authorizing the Superintendent to sign all related documents. The motion passed with two against (Norberto “Beto” Salinas and Natividad Sosa).

2. Elva C. Villarreal vs. South Texas Independent School District, Cause No. CL-22-2425-G

No action was taken on this item.

3. Sam Garcia Architects, LLC

No action was taken on this item.

18. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Sylvia S. Lopez, adjourning the Board meeting at 9:06 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.