

**Minutes of
Special Meeting of the Governing Board
For Tracy Unified School District
Held on Tuesday, August 22, 2023**

- 5:30 PM:** 1. President Abercrombie called the special meeting to order and adjourned to closed session.
- Roll Call:** 2. Board: S. Abercrombie, O. Alexander, R. Fagin, L. Hawkins, J. Silcox
Absent: Z. Hoffert.
Staff: R. Pecot, T. Jalique, T. Salinas, J. Stocking, S. Smith
- 5:35 PM** President Abercrombie called the Tracy Unified School District Board of Education to order and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Closed Session:** 3. No action taken.
4. Adjourn to Open Session
5. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- Audience:** Bobbie Etcheverry, Zach Boswell, Debra Schneider, Jason Noll, Mary Petty, Walter Gouveia, Merci Gouveia, Jacqui Nott
- Hearing of Delegations** 6. None.
- Action Items:** 7.1 **Administrative & Business Services:**
7.1.1 Conduct Interviews and Approve Provisional Appointment of Board Member for Unexpired Term
- Each member was asked the following three questions and given up to three minutes to respond to each.
- Question 1:** Please introduce yourself and explain why you are interested in this position.
- Question 2:** Please describe your work experience or background that has prepared you to serve as a board member for Tracy Unified.
- Question 3:** What are two of the most important issues the district is facing that are unique to our district? What recommendation would you make to address it?
- Candidate Scott Secker**
1. Scott Secker would like to make a difference. He has a unique skill set to offer the board, he is a parent, a teacher and a quasi-administrator. He knows the business of education. He also spent many years in the

private sector where he sat on many boards. He has experience with team building and public evaluations. He knows what is needed implementing programs with leadership and enthusiasm. There are many mandates that we must meet; addressing the disconnect between divergent groups, listening to parents, challenges today of declining enrollment, and the lack of teachers needs to be addressed. We want to make sure we do not lose track of the goal of creating lifelong learners and outstanding citizens. Now that he is retired, he has the time to really make a difference in the Tracy community.

2. As a board member, he would want to get involved and help where he can; critiquing and evaluating programs to ensure the goals we have, both short term and long term.
3. The lack of teachers is an area to be addressed. He likes the fact that TUSD is setting up workshops and trying to get to the people. There are other outreaches that can be made to find quality teachers for the long term. Listening to parents is another area to address. This is something we hear about in the news daily, and we need to communicate better with parents, inform what we are doing, what differences can be made, and what successes we have had as a school district.

Candidate Viridiana Gonzalez

1. Viridiana Gonzalez is a mother, wife, and future educator. Her reason to be on the board is her passion for her community and her students. She would like to offer her opinion and her voice. She hopes to be an asset to the make the community better.
2. She is college student at Delta College of Stockton. Here she went through the ASDC student elections and has learned policy and procedures, holding meetings similar to the district's board meetings.
3. One of the first is communication. There is a lot of trouble with communication between parents, administrators, and schools. Parents do not hear back. A lot of students do not want to attend school like they used to. She would propose getting more parents involved. Parents don't know how to get to the meetings and do not understand what is going on. Ideas include sending more flyers and adding additional paras to the classroom. Also doing an event to bring people here to get to know the board and administration. Reaching out to students is important and more mental health is needed. A lot of counselors are over worked. She understands the budget issue but thinks we can do it. We have a good community but a lot of them lack knowledge. She has a passion.

Candidate Navi Kahlon

1. Navi Kahlon is a Tracy community member and former student of TUSD. English was not her first language. She came from a low-income family and was an incredibly shy student. Now she is a successfully banker and a woman who has realized the American

dream. Her teachers and counselors have helped her become an effective bridge between cultures. She would like to empower Tracy's children to become leaders of tomorrow.

2. As a technology professional with intensive volunteer experience, she brings a unique set of skills. Her role is to assess gaps and innovate solutions. Through a STEM mindset, she can help prepare students for a technology driven world. Her volunteer work includes being a DARE board member and involvement with the United Sikhs and youth advisory. She has strong interpersonal skills and speaks four languages. Her diverse interactions and experiences can contribute to the growth of our schools.
3. Two issues the district is facing is addressing mental health and closing the achievement gap. Addressing mental health is linked to academics. Students are becoming more disengaged, and this is concerning to her. Students suffering from anxiety and depression have increased tremendously. Some schools do not have a counselor and where we do, the ratio is high. By prioritizing mental health, we can equip students with essential life skills. We can close the achievement gap. We have diverse students but also have a lot with special needs. We need more diversified para educators. We can work with local organizations, and she would like to be a liaison with the community to create more opportunities for our students.

Candidate Celina Johnson

1. Celina Johnson would like to join the board because she is a parent of a special child and has an older child that is in high school. She is currently an EL Aid in the district and would like to continue her education to have a better understanding and to be able to help her children and the community.
2. She has been a SPED Para for three years. Her youngest child motivates her to continue her education. She applied to be an aid. She has the knowledge to understand other parents and to help them out.
3. There is no parent communication. She knows what is sent home and is on websites, but there is no one and one with the parents. There is a lot to improve with communication so parents can know what is happening, so they can have more parent involvement, help teachers, and have a better community relationship with each other.

Candidate Ovester Armstrong

1. Dr. Ovester Armstrong Jr. is a clinical social worker for the US Department of Veteran Affairs. He is active with the community and would like to get involved with the school district. He has two master's degrees from the University of Chicago.
2. He spent three years serving on the library board in Illinois, he has been a pastor for the past ten years and sat on the governing board, not

just locally, but in other areas across the US. He was a Program Supervisor for drug abuse prevention and has experience developing boards, being a member of the board, and working with community partners, youths, and senior citizens.

3. He believes the district needs to be more diversified. Students need to be able to relate to someone that looks like them, not just in the classroom but in the office setting. It will enhance the wellbeing of the student. The board should be more visible in the community by becoming more involved in festivals and community meetings; being social and relatable so the community can have an opportunity to get to know the school board.

Action: Trustee Alexander recused herself from the vote as she has a family member that has applied for a seat on the board.

Trustee Fagin indicated his first choice as Navi Kahlon, second as Scott Secker.

Trustee Hawkin's first choice was Navi Kahlon, second Scott Secker.

Trustee Silcox chose Scott Secker as his first choice, second Navi Kahlon.

Trustee Abercrombie chose Navi Kahlon as his first choice, second Scott Secker.

Motion for Navi Kahlon. **Action:** Hawkins, Fagin

Vote: Yes-5; No-0; Abstain-1 (Alexander)

Superintendent, Dr. Pecot, administered the oath to Navi Kahlon.

Adjourn: 6:07

Clerk

Date