



Always Innovating

**South  
Texas ISD**

**RIO GRANDE VALLEY | GRADES 6-12**

## Minutes of Regular Meeting

### The Board of Directors South Texas ISD

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A Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of South Texas ISD will be held August 1, 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:

Abiel J. Cantú	Raymondville
Eduardo L. “Larry” Cantu	Los Fresnos
Sasha Crane	McAllen
Adrian Garcia	Brownsville
Noel Garza, DDS	Mission
Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D.	Edinburg
Hector Gonzales	Lyford
Henry LeVrier	Brownsville
Sandra Garza Ochoa, Ph.D.	Weslaco
Israel G. Quintanilla	Raymondville
Rodolfo “Rudy” Ramirez	Edinburg
Eduardo Roberto Rodriguez	Brownsville
Jaime R. Solis	Edinburg
Natividad Sosa	Mission
David Torres	Edinburg
Ruth Villarreal	Mission

The following Board members were absent:

David Briones	La Feria
Douglas E. Buchanan	Raymondville
Javier Farias	McAllen
Margarita Garcia	San Juan
Robert J. Lerma	Brownsville
Sylvia S. Lopez	Brownsville
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen

The following staff members were present:

Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.	Vanessa Rivera
Efrain Garza	Brenda de la Garza, Ed.D.
Lissa Frausto	Mathew Maciel
Marla Knaub	Carmen Noriega
Amanda Odom	Ramon Longoria
Eric Gutierrez	Frank Treviño
Marcos Flores	
Marco Zamora	
Cynthia Chairez, Ed.D.	
Maribel Valdez	

3. Pledges of Allegiance & District Call to Action.

The pledges were led by E. Larry Cantu.

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

7. Awards & Recognitions.

- A. Presentation of proclamation in memory and honor of board member Eduardo Gonzalez.

On behalf of the Board and Administration, Amanda Odom presented a proclamation to the family of the late Eduardo “Ed” Gonzalez to honor him and recognize his service to STISD.

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 Jaime Solis, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

9. \*Action: Review and act on the June 27, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

10. Review, consideration, and possible action on selecting firm for district legal services.

All six legal firms who submitted a response to RFQ 24-012 were given an opportunity to present to the Board. Each firm was allowed ten minutes to present and an additional five minutes to answer any questions from the Board. The legal firms were as follows:

Eichelbaum Wardell Hansen Powell & Muñoz, P.C.

Law Office of Javier Villalobos, P.C.

The Pruneda Law Firm, P.L.L.C.

O'Hanlon, Demerath & Castillo, P.C.

Powell Law Group, LLP

Walsh Gallegos Treviño Kyle & Robinson P.C.

A motion was made by Natividad Sosa, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving to hire the Law Office of Javier Villalobos for district legal services. The motion passed with six against (Adrian Garcia, E. Larry Cantu, Eduardo Rodriguez, Abiel J. Cantú, Hector Gonzales, Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza).

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

Natividad Sosa reported on the following items:

A. \*Action: Review and act on the administrators to hold ARDs for the 2023-2024 school year.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. \*Action: Review and act on appointment of Campus Appraisers for the 2023-2024 school year.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. \*Action: Review and act on appointment of Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) Members for the 2023-2024 school year.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. \*Action: Review and act on 2023-2024 appraisal calendar.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. Report on the 2023-2024 Schedule of Formal Grade Reporting.

Marcos Flores, Executive Director for Student Support, gave a verbal report on the schedule of Formal Grade Reporting for the 2023-2024 school year.

- F. Report on the 2023-2024 Teacher Incentive Allotment.

Lissa Frausto, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, announced to the Board that TEA has approved the TIA local designation system. Ms. Frausto provided information on plans for the 2023-2024 Teacher Incentive Allotment.

## 12. Buildings and Grounds Committee - Jaime Solis and David Torres, Co-Chairs

Jaime Solis reported on the following items:

- A. Report on the following projects:
  1. Cameras and Access Controls
  2. Preparatory Academy Pavilion
  3. Health Professions Window System
  4. Health Professions Parking Lot project

Frank Treviño, Construction Manager, provided a verbal report on the status of the Cameras and Access Controls, Preparatory Academy Pavilion, Health Professions Window System, and the Health Professions Parking Lot project.

13. Finance & Operations Committee - Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D. and Israel Quintanilla, Co- Chairs

Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza reported on the following items:

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. \*Action: Review and act on approving 13 paychecks for new employees.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. \*Action: Review and act on 2023-2024 school lunch and breakfast prices.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. Review proposed preliminary general fund budget.

The committee reviewed the preliminary general fund budget. This was a report only.

- F. Action: Review and act on setting a date for a public meeting to discuss the 2023-2024 budget and proposed tax rate to be published on the notice of the public hearing.

Ms. Knaub recommended setting the date for a public meeting to discuss the 2023-2024 budget and proposed tax rate for the next Board meeting date, August 22, 2023.

A motion was made by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving the date of August 22, 2023 for a public meeting to discuss the 2023-2024 budget and proposed tax rate to be published on the notice of the public hearing. The motion passed unanimously.

- G. Action: Review and act on the following payment applications:

1. Payment application #20 to D. Wilson in the amount of \$238,065 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.

A motion was made by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, seconded by Israel G. Quintanilla, approving payment application #20 to D. Wilson in the amount of \$238,065 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Payment application #19 to Gignac & Associates Architects LLP in the amount of \$119,856.99 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.

A motion was made by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, to table payment application #19 to Gignac & Associates Architects LLP in the amount of \$119,856.99 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Payment application #2 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$28,999.96 for the Cameras and Access Controls District-wide project.

A motion was made by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving payment application #2 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$28,999.96 for the Cameras and Access Controls District-wide project. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Payment application #2 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$3,195 for the Health Professions Window Replacement project.

A motion was made by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, seconded by Israel G. Quintanilla, approving payment application #2 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$3,195 for the Health Professions Window Replacement project. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Payment application #1 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$21,902.50 for the Preparatory Academy Pavilion project.

A motion was made by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving payment application #1 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$21,902.50 for the Preparatory Academy Pavilion project. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Payment application #1 to TelePro Communications in the amount of \$578,393.20 for the Cameras and Access Controls District-wide project.

A motion was made by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving payment application #1 to TelePro Communications in the amount of \$578,393.20 for the Cameras and Access Controls District-wide project. The motion passed unanimously.

- H. Action: Review and act on request for use of funds from MacKenzie Scott donation for CTE Program.

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, approving the use of funds from the MacKenzie Scott donation for CTE Program in the amount of \$213,778.92. The motion passed unanimously.

- I. Action: Review and act on approving a proposal from LGW Consulting, LLC, for School-Based Law Enforcement Services.

The Board held a discussion on district law enforcement services. A motion was made by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving the proposal from LGW Consulting, LLC, for School-Based Law Enforcement Services. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Hector Gonzales reported on the following items:

- A. \*Action: Review and act on Policy Update 121, final reading.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. \*Action: Review and act on the 2023-2024 STISD Student Code of Conduct.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. \*Action: Review and act on the following Memorandum of Understanding related to the Cameron County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program for the 2023-2024 school year.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. Action: Review and act on Board Operating Procedures, final reading.

A motion was made by Hector Gonzales, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving the Board Operating Procedures as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

15. Community & Governmental Relations Committee - Eduardo Rodriguez and Sasha Crane, 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 and District 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. 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 salary adjustment for acting principal at Medical Professions.

Approved with the consent agenda.

E. \*Action: Review and act on staff travel to attend the National Association of Broadcasters Show New York, October 24-26, 2023 in New York, NY.

Approved with the consent agenda.

F. Report: Superintendent's Update on District Summer Activities.

Dr. Tony Lara provided the Board with a report on the District Summer Activities, including updates on enrollment, Professional Development, and facilities improvements. This was a report only.

G. Action: Review and act on approving the request for a New Non-Professional Position for the 2023-2024 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for the following:



1. Classroom Aide(1)

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by Sasha Crane, approving the request for a New Non-Professional Position for the 2023-2024 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for a Classroom Aide. The motion passed unanimously.

17. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Board of Directors met on August 1, 2023 at 10:15 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. Principal(s)
      - b. 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 of Security Devices/Security Audits.

The Board ended the Executive Session at 10:24 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 2023-2024 school year.
      - a. Principal(s)
      - b. Teacher(s)

Dr. Tony Lara, Superintendent of Schools, recommended retroactive employment of the following professional staff for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year: Michele Danette Guajardo as Principal (12 months), Jose Lucio as Principal (12 months), Karina Marquez as Teacher (10 months), Michael Ryan Garcia as Teacher (10 months), Gina R. Lima as Teacher (10 months), Mamta Pankaj Patel as Teacher (10 months), Anna Marie Mena Ortega as Teacher (10 months), Amanda Lizbet Gutierrez as Teacher (10 months), Jose Arturo Arriaga-Villalobos as Teacher (10 months), Michael Guerra as Teacher (10 months).

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, approving the employment of professional staff as recommended. The motion passed unanimously.

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

No action was taken on this item.

19. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, adjourning the meeting at 10:27 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.