



**SANTA MARIA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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**Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, February 16, 2016  
6:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

Notice is hereby given that a scheduled Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Santa Maria Independent School District was held on Tuesday, February 16, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Santa Maria ISD Cafeteria, 11119 Military Hwy Santa Maria, Texas 78592.

The Santa Maria Independent School District offers reasonable accommodations for persons accessing its school facilities, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you require special accommodations, please contact Dalia Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools at (956) 565-6308 for assistance.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board President called Regular Board Meeting to order at 6:02p.m.

**ESTABLISH QUORUM**

**Present:**

Belinda Lugo, Board President  
Rambaldo "Ram" Rivera, Jr., Board Vice-President  
Miguel Zavala, Secretary  
Noe Aleman, Board Member  
Consuelo De la Rosa, Board Member  
Adolfo Hinojosa, Board Member  
Oralia "Lala" Ortiz, Board Member

**Present from the District:**

Maria J. Chavez, Superintendent of Schools  
Enrique Cuellar, Business Manager  
Alyssa L. Romero, District Counsel, Law Offices of Guerra & Farah, PLLC  
Dalia Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools  
Rogelio Campa, TGE Principal  
Maria Rodriguez, Middle School Principal  
Cindy Taylor, High School Principal

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**OPEN FORUM**

No requests received to speak at Open Forum.



SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. Report from Financial Advisor on Tax Rate Increase/Homestead Exemption Increase on Homeowners' Tax Obligations for 2016-2018 and 2018-2019 forward, Dr. Miguel De Los Santos, Estrada-Hinojosa Investment Bankers.

Mr. De Los Santos stated you have an item on the agenda calling an order for election. I have analyzed the numbers a couple of times for you and finally Ms. Chavez informed me that the Board felt like they wanted to go out for the maximum which was about \$9,410,000 and so I ran the information all kinds of ways and you are in a good position right now because of the \$10,000 increment in the home set exemption that's coming in after we talked about that the last time. I had not analyzed the numbers for you at that time. Today I have a major item that we will be bringing to the community in terms of trying to help them understand that in fact for anyone whose house is valued at under \$60,000 will not pay any additional taxes for borrowing this money. For one whose house is valued at \$100,000, for three years they would pay \$136 a year and after that, actually from what they are paying this year, it would be going down \$35. What the community needs to understand is that you are in a position to borrow a substantial amount of money for very little to no impact on the regular homeowners. This particular year that we are in right now, the homestead exemption, anyone who owns a home and files a homestead exemption gets a \$15,000 reduction from their home value. Your tax rate for this year a \$1.30 cents, but starting next year for the next two year (2016-2018) your homestead exemption goes up to \$25,000. What that means is that whatever the value of you home is, you deduct \$25,000 and you're not going to be taxed on that. If you pass the bond election, next year your tax rate is growing substantially by 35.53 cents to \$1.6553 cents. The following year because the EDA state program will kick in and your taxes would go down and your tax rate would go down to \$1.4254 so if you look at those three lines, those three lines are going to impact what I'm going to talk about in terms of actual costs to the tax payer. The first column in the table itself lists home values. I think the average home value in this area is \$30,000. On the second column is this year 2015-2016. Right underneath it I have the tax rate at \$1.30 cents and the homestead exemption is \$15,000. This year when those who own property in Santa Maria went to pay their property taxes, the homeowner of a \$30,000 house paid \$195.00 in school taxes. For a person with a \$75,000 home, that person after their \$10,000-\$15,000 exemption pays \$780.00. Between 2016-2018 there are two changes that happen, your tax rate if your bond election happens goes up to \$1.65.53. Your homestead exemption goes up to \$25,000 so the person that owns a home that's \$30,000 actually pays on \$15,000 last year for this year. Next year they will be paying only \$5,000 of value. So the taxes from a person that owns a \$30,000 home would be less. They would only pay \$82.77. Next year which actually \$112.23 less than what they paid this year and that is with the district incurring \$9,000,000 plus dollars' worth of debt. When you get to the \$75,000 range anywhere you see those red numbers, those individuals are actually paying a little bit more than what they paid the year before. \$75,000 is paying \$47.00 a year more. \$90,000 is paying \$100.00 a year more and \$100,000 \$136.00 a year more and \$150,000 is paying \$314.00 a year more. That's only for two years because on the fourth column where I have 2018 forward, the tax rate drops to \$1.42. The homestead exemption pays the same at \$25,000 and the actual payments for each of these homeowners that year, all those in green are actually paying less than they are paying this year. Only the person that owns \$150,000 home is actually paying more than they paid this year. All of the homeowners \$100,000 are actually paying less than what they paid last year. The last column that's there is a net increase or decrease in taxes paid from 2015-2016 thru 2018 forward. You will be borrowing



\$9,410,000 through your high school project. Each person that owns a \$30,000 home from 2018 forward will actually be paying \$23.00 less than they paid this year. A person that owns a \$40,000 home will pay \$111.00 less than they paid this year. A person that owns a \$60,000 home will pay \$86.11 less than they paid this year. All these all the way to \$100,000 will be paying less. So the numbers in terms are very favorable, it a good time and what really is helping you in terms of the community understanding that your borrowing a lot of money, your building a high school and yet your taxes are going to go up only if you have homes that are at very high value. If homestead exemption that just kicked in that the legislature passed, it's balancing up. The increase in taxes is being balanced out by the exemption in the value of homes that you have to pay. In the next couple of weeks I will be working closer with Ms. Chavez and administration to develop a brief power point presentation so that you can get it to all community members and show how it is going to be paid for, how much it's going to cost them, and the main interest that people have after it's all said and done is what are getting for it and you'll be getting a brand new high school and how much is it going to cost us and how are going to pay for it and this is how it's going to be paid.

2. Presentation update of TGE 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Wing by Mr. George Lazaro, Fulcrum Consulting Services. Mr. Lazaro stated tonight I would like to report that the contractor M-5 Enterprises continues to work aggressively towards the goal of finishing the building. Fulcrum Consulting Services and Ms. Chavez continue meeting with the contractor twice a week to get status reports as to what is being planned and what is being completed. As of today all the brick masonry for that building has been completed. All the steel has been erected. Necessary inspections have cleared for the steel. That was sent to our office this afternoon. Their intent is to move forward with covering up the roofing system. Additionally on the inside they have commenced and completed all the steel framing to separate the partitions for each classroom. They commenced working on the electrical for that facility. They have the doors and windows in line for installation this week. As soon as they get the material on the roof system, they are going to commence working on the plumbing and ac systems but they need to have the building secured in order to prevent from somebody potentially taking that equipment once they start installation. As of today, they have about two weeks to really come together with that building. We have expressed to them that we will continue meeting with them on a timely basis and we will continue pushing for them to try to have the completed project.
3. Student/Attendance Enrollment  
Ms. Chavez stated I want to thank the school administration and the staff at the high school level as well as the middle school and elementary school for working very closely with all of their staff to make school attendance a priority. At the elementary we closed with 352 students with an overall attendance of 97.03%. At the middle school we closed with 150 students enrolled with an overall attendance of 96.4% and at the high school 201 students enrolled and attendance at 97.5%. Overall district attendance is at 97.02 and at this time I would like to thank all parents for making school a priority.
4. Student Recognition

## ACTION AGENDA



## Governance

5. Consider and approve an order of the Board of Trustees of Santa Maria Independent School District calling an election to seek voter approval for the issuance of unlimited tax bonds for the construction and equipment of school buildings in the district and acquiring the sites thereof.

Motion made by Noe Aleman, seconded by Oralia "Lala" Ortiz. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Discussion and Report regarding Senate Bill 1812-Eminent Domain Transparency submission report.  
No action taken.

## Finance

7. Discussion and possible action for the Administration to conduct bids to address Santa Maria High School Gym Re-Roofing Project.

Ms. Chavez stated the administration recommends your approval so that we can out for superintendent bids and we would open that bid process effective tomorrow and you will have all the documents related to deadline in your packet.

Motion made by Consuelo De la Rosa, seconded by Oralia "Lala" Ortiz. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Discussion and possible and action to approve Fulcrum Consulting Services engineering service fees for the month of January 2016 for new High School Project

Motion made by Rambaldo Rivera, Jr., seconded by Noe Aleman. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Discussion and Possible action to approve payment For Fulcrum Consulting Services for inspection services rendered for Santa Maria ISD 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Building Project.

Ms. Chavez stated the administration recommends your approval, we have already visited with Fulcrum in reference to the number of months and what we had set aside for project management so we will come back and revisit based on this because you are already passed the budgeted amount.

Motion made by Miguel Zavala, second by Oralia "Lala" Ortiz. Motion passed unanimously.

## Curriculum and Instruction

10. Discussion and possible action regarding Harmony Science Academy-San Antonio intends to submit an application to the State Board of Education in response to the Generation Twenty-One open-enrollment charter school application process. Statutory guidelines require that applicants send the enclosed Statement of Impact form and a copy of the completed application coversheet to each district and open-



enrollment charter school that may be affected by the proposed charter school. Our district is receiving this information because the proposed charter school's designated geographic boundary (or transfer boundary) overlaps with our district's boundary.

Motion made by Miguel Zavala, second by Noe Aleman. Motion passed unanimously.

11. Discussion and possible action on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Santa Maria ISD and BISD Adult Continuing Education for 2015-2016

Motion made by Miguel Zavala, second by Noe Aleman. Motion passed unanimously.

12. Discussion and possible action on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Santa Maria ISD and Cameron County Children's Advocacy Centers, Inc., (Maggie's and Monica's House) January 27, 2016-January 27, 2019.

Motion made by Miguel Zavala, second by Oralia "Lala" Ortiz. Motion passed unanimously.

### Travel

13. Discussion and possible action to approve Out of Valley Travel Requests for Santa Maria High School Gear-Up Enrichment Trip to the University of Houston, Friday April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

Motion made by Noe Aleman, second by Miguel Zavala. Motion passed unanimously.

### Technology

14. Discussion and possible action for the Administration to conduct bids on E-Rate year 2016-2017 Application Form 470.

Motion made by Miguel Zavala, second by Noe Aleman. Motion passed unanimously.

### Finance

15. Approval of Check Payments since last report for January 01, 2016
16. Approval of the Tax Collection Report for January 01, 2016 to January 31, 2016
17. Approval of Monthly Investment Report for the period of January 1, 2016 to January 31, 2016
18. Approval of Revenue and Expenditure Report ending January 31, 2016

Motion made by Rambaldo "Ram" Rivera, second by Oralia "Lala" Ortiz. Motion passed unanimously.

Board President asked for a motion to go into executive session.

Motion made by Noe Aleman, second by Consuelo De la Rosa. Motion passed unanimously.

Board President announced it is 7:03 p.m. and the Board of Trustees is now going into executive session.



**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Discussion under the authority of Section 551, Texas Government Code: If, during the course of the meeting covered by this Notice, the Board should determine that a closed session of the Board should be held or is required in relation to any item included in this Notice, then such closed session as authorized by Section 551.001 *et. seq.* of the Texas Government Code (the Open Government Act) will be held by the Board after the commencement in open session of the meeting covered by this Notice. Such closed session may concern any or all of the subjects and be conducted for any and all purposes permitted by Section 551.071 through and including Section 551.084 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, including, but not limited to, private consultation with the Board's attorney on any or all subjects or matters authorized by law.

- A. Section 551.071—Consultation with Attorney on Any Permitted Subject Including, But Not Limited to:
  - 1) Discussion with School Attorney on Item(s) Exempted under Attorney-Client Privilege
  - 2) Discussion regarding settlement negotiations and approval of settlement, Edwin Barrera v. SMISD
- B. Section 551.072—Deliberation Regarding Real Property
- C. Section 551.073—Deliberation Regarding Prospective Gift
- D. Section 551.074—Personnel Matters
  - 1) Discuss all items as appropriate on Superintendent's personnel recommendations
- E. Section 551.076 – Deliberations on Security Devices or Security Audits
- F. Section 551.082—School Children; School District Employees; Disciplinary Matters or Complaint
- G. Section 551.0821—Personally Identifiable Information about Public School Student

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

The Board President asked for a motion to reconvene in open session.

Motion made by Oralía "Lala" Ortiz, seconded by Rambaldo "Ram" Rivera. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board President announced it is 7:48p.m. and the Board of Trustees is now in session.

**1. Discussion and possible action on items discussed in Executive Session**



- a) Discussion and possible action on recommendations on all items as appropriate on Superintendent's personnel recommendations

Motion made by Rambaldo "Ram" Rivera, seconded by Oralia "Lala" Ortiz. The motion passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

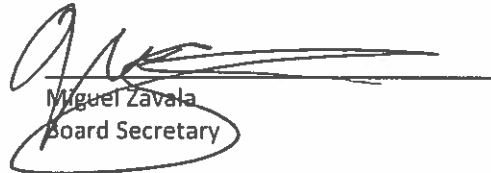
The Board President asked for a motion to adjourn meeting.

Motion made by Rambaldo "Ram" Rivera, seconded by Consuelo de la Rosa. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board President announced it is 7:49 p.m. the meeting is now adjourned.



Belinda Lugo  
Board President



Miguel Zavala  
Board Secretary

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This notice has been publicly posted at the administrative offices of the Santa Maria Independent School District, 11119 Military Rd., Cameron County, Santa Maria, Texas, at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the above mentioned meeting, as required by the following sections of the Texas Government Code: 551.071 through 551.084. During the regular school year, this notice is also posted in all schools in the District. The school district also posts its board meeting agendas on the District's internet web site ([www.smysd.net](http://www.smysd.net))

*Consent Agenda:* All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the Board of Trustees and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired on a specific item(s), that item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

***Maria J. Chavez, Superintendent of Schools***

**Board of Trustees**

***Belinda Lugo, President***  
***Rambaldo "Ram" Rivera, Jr., Vice-President***  
***Miguel Zavala, Secretary***  
***Noe Aleman, Member***  
***Consuelo De La Rosa, Member***  
***Adolfo Hinojosa, Member***  
***Oralia "Lala" Ortiz, Member***

