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**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 March 26, 2024, 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 Antonio 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
Eduardo L. “Larry” Cantu	Los Fresnos
Adrian Garcia	Brownsville
Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D.	Edinburg
Hector Gonzales	Lyford
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen
Henry LeVrier	Brownsville
Sylvia S. Lopez	Brownsville
Sandra Garza Ochoa, Ph.D.	Weslaco
Israel G. Quintanilla	Raymondville
Eduardo Roberto Rodriguez	Brownsville
Jaime R. Solis	Edinburg
David Torres	Edinburg

The following Board members were absent:

Sasha Crane	McAllen
Javier Farias	McAllen
Margarita Garcia	San Juan
Noel Garza, DDS	Mission
Robert J. Lerma	Brownsville
Rodolfo “Rudy” Ramirez	Edinburg
Natividad Sosa	Mission
Rick Villarreal, DDS	Rancho Viejo
Ruth Villarreal	Mission

The following staff members were present:

Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.	Mathew Maciel
Efrain Garza	Frank Trevino
Lissa Frausto	Brenda De La Garza, Ed.D.
Marla Knaub	Sandra Torres
Amanda Odom	Vanessa Rivera
Marcos Flores	Ramon Longoria
Nereyda Trevino, Ed.D.	Carmen Noriega
Reynaldo Rodriguez, Ed.D.	
Michele Guajardo, Ph.D.	
Eric Gutierrez	
Jose Lucio	
Marco Zamora	
Maribel Valdez	
Cynthia Chairez, Ed.D.	

3. Pledges of Allegiance & District Call to Action.

The pledges were led by David Briones.

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.

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

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Administration, Amanda Odom recognized the Health Professions Boys Cross Country Team and Medical Professions Girls Cross Country Team for placing in the State Competition; Science Academy Cross Country Girls & Boys Individual State Qualifiers; the Health Professions Boys Volleyball Team for placing at State; the Science Academy Girls Volleyball Team for participating in the State Competition; and Preparatory Academy Girls Premier Basketball Team and Health Professions Girls Varsity Basketball Team for being State Qualifiers.

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 E. Larry Cantu, seconded by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, approving the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

9. *Action: Review and act on the February 27, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

10. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee - Sylvia S. Lopez and Sandra Garza Ochoa, Ph.D., Co-Chairs

Sylvia S. Lopez reported on the following items:

- A. *Report on STISD Leader Monthly Newsletter.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. Report on the Teacher Incentive Allotment Expansion/Modification Application.

Mr. Alberto Tudon, Teacher Incentive Allotment Coordinator, provided an update on the Teacher Incentive Allotment Expansion/Modification Application.

- C. Report on the 2024 summer programs.

Dr. Nereyda Trevino reported on the 2024 Summer Programs for each campus.

11. Buildings and Grounds Committee - Margarita Garcia and Jaime Solis, Co-Chairs

Jaime Solis reported on the following items:

- A. *Action: Review and act on extending the lease agreement with Karle Farms for the maintenance of the orange grove on the Mercedes grounds.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. Report on the following projects:
 - 1. Health Professions Parking Lot project
 - 2. Health Professions Gymnasium project
 - 3. 2023-2024 Capital Projects

Marla Knaub provided an update on the Health Professions Parking Lot project, Health Professions Gymnasium project, and the 2023-2024 Capital Projects.

- C. Action: Review and act on approving the AIA contract with Gerlach Builders for the Health Professions Gymnasium project, and authorizing the Board President to execute the contract.

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by E. Larry Cantu, approving the AIA contract with Gerlach Builders for the Health Professions Gymnasium project, and authorizing the Board President to execute the contract. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Finance & Operations Committee - Adrian Garcia and Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D., Co-Chairs

Adrian Garcia reported on the following items:

- A. *Report on District Comparison of Revenues/Expenditures.

Approved with the consent agenda.

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *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.

- D. *Report on the 2023-2024 second quarter student activity accounts.

Approved with the consent agenda.

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- F. *Action: Review and act on approving the following donations:
1. Donation of popcorn from Cesar Barbin to Science Academy's Electric Car Club in the amount of \$100.00.
 2. Donations totaling \$290.00 to Medical Professions' Senior Class from the following vendors at the Medical Professions Senior Night Bazaar event:
 - a. Linda Saucedo/Ind. Scentsy Consultant \$25
 - b. Laura Luva/Laura's Succulents \$25
 - c. Noemelch Lumang/Slomotion Studios \$25
 - d. Erica Guerra/Yo Mama Bubble Tea \$25
 - e. Kimberly Garcia & Laura L. Garcia/Girl Scouts Troop 4138 \$25
 - f. Daena Aguilar/DA Creations \$25
 - g. Manuel Cuvillier/Single Stitched \$25
 - h. Aaron Trains/Aaron Trains Apparel \$25
 - i. Madeleine/Robert Hernandez/Madeleine's Crafts \$25
 - j. Charles Cuvillier Jr./Cuviller's Cafe \$15
 - k. Victoria Lara/Common Scents \$25
 - l. Jackie Blankenship/Crazy Cows Keepsakes \$25

Approved with the consent agenda.

- G. Action: Review and act on the following payment applications:
1. Payment application #4 to The Warren Group in the amount of \$3,760.00 for the New Health Professions Gymnasium project.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving payment application #4 to The Warren Group in the amount of \$3,760.00 for the New Health Professions Gymnasium project. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Payment application #22 to D. Wilson Construction Company in the amount of \$79,269.09 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Yolanda Kamel, approving payment application #22 to D. Wilson Construction Company in the amount of \$79,269.09 for the New Central Office Building Renovation project. The motion passed with one abstention (Eduardo Rodriguez).

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

1. General Fund (199)
2. Title I, Part A (211)
3. Title I, Part C Migrant (212)
4. Title II, Part A (255)
5. Title III, Part A – ELA (263)
6. Title IV, Part A SSAEP (289)
7. Supply Chain Assistant Grant (240)
8. TCLAS – GR (P-Tech) (429)

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving budget amendments for the following: General Fund (199), Title I, Part A (211), Title I, Part C Migrant (212), Title II, Part A (255), Title III, Part A – ELA (263), Title IV, Part A SSAEP (289), Supply Chain Assistant Grant (240), and TCLAS – GR (P-Tech) (429). The motion passed unanimously.

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

1. Requisition #119487 to Tri-County Communications for district-wide Emergency and Cell signal.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, approving requisition #119487 to Tri-County Communications for district-wide Emergency and Cell signal. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Requisition #119214 to Trane for Science Academy HVAC units.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving requisition #119214 to Trane for Science Academy HVAC units. The motion passed unanimously.

J. Action: Review and act on approving the Memorandum of Understanding to develop a Special Education Co-Op with La Villa ISD.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Doug Buchanan, approving the Memorandum of Understanding to develop a Special Education Co-Op with La Villa ISD. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Policy, Planning, Projects & Partnerships Committee - Abiel J. Cantú and Hector Gonzales, Co-Chairs

Abiel J. Cantú reported on the following items:

- A. *Action: Review and act on the Memorandum of Understanding related to the Hidalgo County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program for the 2024-2025 school year.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. Action: Review and act on the proposed 2024-2029 Strategic Plan.

Dr. Ana Villarreal, World Scholars Teacher and EIC Chair, reported on the proposed 2024-2029 Strategic Plan.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Hector Gonzales, approving the 2024-2029 Strategic Plan as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

14. Community & Governmental Relations Committee - Eduardo R. Rodriguez and Yolanda Kamel, Co-Chairs

Eduardo R. Rodriguez reported on the following items:

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

Amanda Odom provided an update to the Board on the current marketing campaign for Virtual Academy and World Scholars.

- B. Report on planning for STISD 60-Year Anniversary Celebration.

Amanda Odom reported on the planning for the STISD 60-Year Anniversary Celebration, which will prioritize student involvement.

15. 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 - J. Lucio
 5. Health Professions - M. Guajardo, Ph.D.

6. Science Academy - E. Gutierrez
7. Virtual Academy - M. Valdez
8. Enrollment & Attendance Report
9. Human Resources Report

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Report on professional vacancies.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Action: Review and act on the following out of district student/staff travel:
 1. US Chess 2024 National Middle School Championship, May 10-12, 2024 in Atlanta, Georgia.
 2. The National Forum National Schools to Watch, June 19-22, 2024 in Washington, DC.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. Report from Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza and Yolanda Kamel on the 2024 TASB Texas Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC.

Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza and Yolanda Kamel reported on important information from the 2024 TASB Texas Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC.

- E. Report on Future Planning for areas including facilities, programs, and partnerships.

Dr. Lara provided the Board with a verbal report on future planning in the areas of facilities, programs, and partnerships. He proposed having a full-day Board Workshop to discuss and plan for future projects and partnerships. Possible dates will be communicated to the Board.

- F. Action: Cast votes for Place 4 and Place 7 of the Region One ESC Board of Directors.

A motion was made by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, seconded by E. Larry Cantu, casting all 7 votes for Place 4 of the Region One ESC Board of Directors to Homero Garcia. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by E. Larry Cantu, seconded by Eduardo R. Rodriguez, casting all 7 votes for Place 7 of the Region One ESC Board of Directors to Raul R. Chapa. The motion passed unanimously.

- G. Action: Review and Act on approving the request for new Professional and Non-Professional positions for the 2024-2025 school year and the Announcement of Vacancies for the following:
1. Professional positions
 - a. Co-op Speech Language Pathologist
 - b. Co-op Educational Diagnostician
 - c. Co-op Licensed Specialist in School Psychology
 - d. Special Education Teachers (6)
 2. Non-Professional positions
 - a. Co-op Special Education Clerk
 - b. Co-op Bookkeeper
 - c. Special Education Classroom Aide (1)

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by E. Larry Cantu, approving the request for new Professional and Non-Professional positions for the 2024-2025 school year and the Announcement of Vacancies for Co-op Speech Language Pathologist, Co-op Educational Diagnostician, Co-op Licensed Specialist in School Psychology, Special Education Teachers (6), Co-op Special Education Clerk, Co-op Bookkeeper, and Special Education Classroom Aide (1). The motion passed unanimously.

Yolanda Kamel left the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

16. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Board of Directors met on March 26, 2024 at 8:40 p.m. as pursuant to the Texas Government Code Section, 551.001, 551.071, 551.072, 551.074, 551.082, and 551.084. 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 remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.
 - a. School Nurse
 2. Discussion and consideration regarding employees placed on administrative leave.
 - B. 551.071 Consultation with attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation: Closed Meeting.
 1. Ryan Busse, Josh Klostermann, Russell Klostermann, Mitch Thomas, Olivia Rincones, Robert Rincones, Ruben Rincones, Enrica Rincones, Adelaida Garcia, Gary Busse, Alison Savage and Lyford Consolidated Independent School District vs. South Texas Independent School District, Elizabeth Barnhart, Willacy County Tax Assessor-Collector in her Official Capacity, and Willacy County, Texas, Cause No. 2023-CV-0282-A.

The Board ended the Executive Session at 9:01 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 remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.
 - a. School Nurse

Dr. Tony Lara, Superintendent of Schools, recommended the employment of Carol Ann Ochoa as School Nurse (10 Months) for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year.

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

18. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Hector Gonzales, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, adjourning the meeting at 9:03 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.