



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 was held June 18, 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
Abiel J. Cantú	Raymondville
Adrian Garcia	Brownsville
Margarita Garcia	San Juan
Noel Garza, DDS	Mission
Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D.	Edinburg
Hector Gonzales	Lyford
Henry LeVrier	Brownsville
Sylvia S. Lopez	Brownsville
Sandra Garza Ochoa, Ph.D.	Weslaco
Israel G. Quintanilla	Raymondville
Jaime R. Solis	Edinburg
David Torres	Edinburg

The following Board members were absent:

Douglas E. Buchanan	Raymondville
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Eduardo L. “Larry” Cantu	Los Fresnos
Sasha Crane	McAllen
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen
Robert J. Lerma	Brownsville
Rodolfo “Rudy” Ramirez	Edinburg
Eduardo Roberto Rodriguez	Brownsville
Rick Villarreal, DDS	Rancho Viejo
Ruth Villarreal	Mission

The following staff members were present:

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

3. Pledges of Allegiance & District Call to Action.

The pledges were led by Abiel J. Cantú.

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 all four high schools for ranking among the best in the state and nation in the U.S. News & World Report 2024 Best U.S. High Schools.

- B. Recognition of Natividad Sosa for years of service on the South Texas ISD Board of Directors.
- C. Recognition of retirees who have dedicated 25 years or more to STISD.

On behalf of the Board, Amanda Odom acknowledged all four high schools for their outstanding rankings in the U.S. News & World Report 2024 Best U.S. High Schools, both statewide and nationally. Additionally, former Board Member Natividad Sosa received recognition for her tenure on the STISD Board of Directors, alongside retirees who had devoted 25 years or more to STISD. The Board President expressed gratitude to the honorees and their families for their unwavering commitment to the district.

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 David Briones, approving the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

9. \*Action: Review and act on the May 28, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

10. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee - Rick Villarreal, DDS, and David Briones, Co-Chairs

David Briones reported on the following items:

A. Report on 2024 STAAR Preliminary results.

Dr. Nereyda Trevino reported on the 2024 STAAR Preliminary results.

B. Report on the 2024-2025 District and Campus Improvement Plans (First Reading).

Dr. Nereyda Trevino reported on the 2024-2025 District and Campus Improvement Plans (First Reading).

11. Buildings and Grounds Committee - David Torres and Ruth Villarreal, Co-Chairs

David Torres reported on the following items:

- A. Report on the following projects:
  - 1. Health Professions Parking Lot project
  - 2. Athletic Fields project
  - 3. Roofing project
  - 4. Health Professions Gymnasium project

David Monreal, Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc., was present and provided the Board with an update on the Health Professions Parking Lot project, Athletic Fields project, and the Roofing project. Nataniel Perez, The Warren Group, was present and provided the Board with an update on the Health Professions Gymnasium project.

- B. Action: Review and act on approving commissioning services for the Health Professions Gymnasium project.

A motion was made by David Torres, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving Ethos Engineering, LLC, as the provider for commissioning services on the Health Professions Gymnasium project. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Finance & Operations Committee - Israel G. Quintanilla and Rudy Ramirez, Co-Chairs

Israel G. Quintanilla 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 the 2023-2024 third quarter student activity accounts.

Approved with the consent agenda.

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. Report on the district's Public Notice to Apply for 2024-2025 ESSA Federal Grant Funding.

Marla Knaub reported on the district's Public Notice to Apply for 2024-2025 ESSA Federal Grant Funding.

F. Action: Review and act on the following payment applications:

1. Payment application #5 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$5,736.62 for the Health Professions Parking Lot project.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving payment application #5 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$5,736.62 for the Health Professions Parking Lot project. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Payment application #5 to Noble Texas Builders in the amount of \$298,286.70 for the Health Professions Parking Lot project.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Sylvia Sánchez Garza, approving payment application #5 to Noble Texas Builders in the amount of \$298,286.70 for the Health Professions Parking Lot project. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Payment application #1 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$282,276.01 for the Athletic Fields project.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Sylvia S. Lopez, approving payment application #1 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$282,276.01 for the Athletic Fields project. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Payment application #1 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$83,180.47 for the Roofing projects.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Sylvia S. Lopez, approving payment application #1 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$83,180.47 for the Roofing projects. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Payment application #6 to The Warren Group in the amount of \$2,989.20 for the Health Professions Gymnasium project.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving payment application #6 to The Warren Group in the amount of \$2,989.20 for the Health Professions Gymnasium project. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Payment application #1 to Gerlach Builders, LLC. in the amount of \$171,151.84 for the Health Professions Gymnasium project.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Sylvia S. Lopez, approving payment application #1 to Gerlach Builders, LLC. in the amount of \$171,151.84 for the Health Professions Gymnasium project. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Invoice #512093 to Automated Logic in the amount of \$247,078.66 for the replacement of the HVAC automation system.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Adrian Garcia, approving invoice #512093 to Automated Logic in the amount of \$247,078.66 for the replacement of the HVAC automation system. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Invoice #2321 to Tri-County Communications in the amount of \$1,040,000 for the Signal Booster project.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving invoice #2321 to Tri-County Communications in the amount of \$1,040,000 for the Signal Booster project. The motion passed unanimously.

- G. Action: Review and act on the following budget amendment(s):
  1. SAFE Grant Cycle 2 (429)

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Israel G. Quintanilla, approving budget amendment SAFE Grant Cycle 2 (429). The motion passed unanimously.

- H. Action: Review and act on extending RFP 23-007 Worker's Compensation for one year.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving the extension of RFP 23-007 Worker's Compensation for HUB International for one year. The motion passed unanimously.

- I. Action: Review and act on approving the revised Memorandum of Understanding developing a Special Education Co-Op.

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by Dr. Sandra Garza Ochoa, approving the revised MOU developing a Special Education Co-Op, to include La Villa ISD and Rio Hondo ISD. The motion passed unanimously.

- J. Consideration and possible approval of an order authorizing the exercise of the option to purchase pursuant to a lease agreement and effectuating the defeasance and optional redemption of the South Texas Independent School District Public Facility Corporation school facility lease revenue bonds, taxable series 2013 (direct-pay subsidy bonds), and other matters related thereto.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving an order authorizing the exercise of the option to purchase pursuant to a lease agreement and effectuating the defeasance and optional redemption of the South Texas Independent School District Public Facility Corporation school facility lease revenue bonds, taxable series 2013 (direct-pay subsidy bonds), and other matters related thereto. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Policy, Planning, Projects & Partnerships Committee - Robert J. Lerma and Noel Garza, DDS., Co-Chairs

Abiel J. Cantú reported on the following item:

- A. Annual review of district policy CDA (LOCAL) Other Revenues & Investments.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Adrian Garcia, approving district policy CDA (LOCAL) Other Revenues & Investments. The motion passed unanimously.

14. Community & Governmental Relations Committee - Sasha Crane and Yolanda Kamel, Co-Chairs
  - A. \*Report: Update regarding the current marketing campaign and future possibilities for student recruitment.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. Report: Update regarding STISD's 60th Celebration.

Amanda Odom provided an update on the planning for STISD's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

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 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 Resolution authorizing the Superintendent to contract for school-related services.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. Report on potential partnerships with surrounding districts.

Dr. Lara provided a report on potential partnerships with the surrounding districts. This was a report only.

- E. Action: Review and Act on approving the request for New Professional Positions for the 2024-2025 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for the following:
  1. Educational Diagnostician Co-Op (1)
  2. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology Co-Op (1)
  3. Speech Language Pathologist Co-Op (1)
  4. Speech Language Pathologist Assistant Co-Op (1)
  5. Executive Director for Special Programs (1)
  6. Career and Technical Education Coordinator (1)

A motion was made by Dr. Sandra Garza Ochoa, seconded by Israel G. Quintanilla, approving the request for New Professional Positions for the 2024-2025 school year and the announcement of Vacancy for Educational Diagnostician Co-Op (1), Licensed Specialist in School Psychology Co-Op (1), Speech Language Pathologist Co-Op (1), Speech Language Pathologist Assistant Co-Op (1), Executive Director for Special Programs (1), and Career and Technical Education Coordinator (1). The motion passed unanimously.

- F. Action: Review and act on the resignation of Javier Farias from the South Texas ISD Board of Directors.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Jaime Solis, accepting the resignation of Javier Farias from the South Texas ISD Board of Directors. The motion passed unanimously.

16. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Board of Directors met on June 18, 2024 at 8:14 p.m. 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 2024-2025 school year.
    - a. Chief of Police



- b. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology
- c. Assistant Principal(s)
- d. Counselor
- e. School Nurse
- f. Teacher(s)

The Board ended the Executive Session at 8:29 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 2024-2025 school year.
    - a. Chief of Police
    - b. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology
    - c. Assistant Principal(s)
    - d. Counselor
    - e. School Nurse
    - f. Teacher(s)

Dr. Tony Lara, Superintendent of Schools, recommended the employment of Captain Steven Cortez as Chief of Police (12 months); Olga Jazmin Sanchez as Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (11 months); Marisella Mercado as Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (11 months); Karla Gabriela Lopez as Assistant Principal (11 months); Cindy Ireen Key as Assistant Principal (11 months); Kristina Venecia as Assistant Principal (11 months); Francisco Javier Vazquez-Gutierrez as Counselor (11 months); Sofia Alexandra Quiroga as Teacher (10 months); Jacob Timothy Goins as Teacher (10 months); Naomi Robinson as Teacher (10 months); Vanessa Maree Hernandez as Teacher (10 months); Nydia Koren Gonzalez as Teacher (10 months); Elizabeth Ruiz as Teacher (10 months); and Julia Alysse Trevino as Teacher (10 months).

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

18. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Henry LeVrier, seconded by Israel G. Quintanilla, adjourning the meeting at 8:33 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.