



Always Innovating

**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 September 17, 2024, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Central Office Teaching and Learning Center, 7001 E. Expressway 83, Mercedes, Texas 78570.

1. Welcome.

Mr. Henry LeVrier, Board President, welcomed 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
Sasha Crane	McAllen
Adrian Garcia	Brownsville
Margarita Garcia	San Juan
Noel Garza, DDS	Mission
Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D.	Edinburg
Henry LeVrier	Brownsville
Sandra Garza Ochoa, Ph.D.	Weslaco
Israel G. Quintanilla	Raymondville
Eduardo Roberto Rodriguez	Brownsville
Oscar Salinas	Edinburg
Jaime R. Solis	Edinburg
Rick Villarreal, DDS	Rancho Viejo

The following Board members were absent:

Douglas E. Buchanan	Raymondville
---------------------	--------------

Eduardo L. “Larry” Cantu	Los Fresnos
Hector Gonzales	Lyford
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen
Robert J. Lerma	Brownsville
Sylvia S. Lopez	Brownsville
Rodolfo “Rudy” Ramirez	Edinburg
David Torres	Edinburg
Ruth Villarreal	Mission

The following staff members were present:

Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.	Sandra Torres
Efrain Garza	Vanessa Rivera
Lissa Frausto	Frank Trevino
Marla Knaub	Ramon Longoria
Amanda Odom	Carmen Noriega
Nereyda Trevino, Ed.D.	
Marcos Flores	
Brenda De La Garza, Ed.D.	
Chief Steven Cortez	
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 Jaime Solis.

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 Javier Farias for years of service on the South Texas ISD Board of Directors.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Board President Mr. Henry LeVrier recognized former Board member Javier Farias for his dedicated years of service on the South Texas ISD Board of Directors. Although Mr. Farias was unable to attend the meeting, the Board took the opportunity to express their heartfelt gratitude for his contributions and commitment during his tenure.

- 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 recommendation was made by Board President, Mr. Henry LeVrier, moving item 12.F from the consent agenda.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Eduardo Rodriguez, approving the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- 10. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee - David Briones and Sylvia S. Lopez, Co-Chairs

David Briones reported on the following items:

- A. *Action: Review and act on appointing Education Improvement Council Members for the 2024-2025 school year.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. Report on the 2024 College Entrance Scores.

Dr. Nereyda Trevino, Chief Academic Officer, reported on the 2024 College Entrance Scores.

- C. Report on the 2024-2025 Science Fair.

Dr. Nereyda Trevino provided an update on the 2024-2025 Science Fair.

D. Report on the 2024-2025 Science Bowl Competition.

Dr. Nereyda Trevino provided an update on the 2024-2025 Science Bowl Competition.

E. Report on the 2024-2025 Social Studies Fair.

Dr. Nereyda Trevino provided an update on the 2024-2025 Social Studies Fair.

11. Buildings and Grounds Committee - E. Larry Cantu and Margarita Garcia, Co-Chairs

Margarita Garcia reported on the following items:

A. Report on the following projects:

1. Health Professions Gymnasium project

Nathaniel Perez from The Warren Group was present and provided the Board with an update on the Health Professions Gymnasium project.

2. Roofing project

3. Athletic Fields project

David Monreal from Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. was present and provided the Board with an update on the Health Professions Parking lot project and Roofing project.

B. Action: Review and act on approving the contract for Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. for the 2024-2025 Capital Projects.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Dr. Rick Villarreal, approving the contract for Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. for the 2024-2025 Capital Projects. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Action: Review and act on approving the procurement method for the Audio Video/Intercom System at Medical Professions.

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by David Briones, approving Job Order Contracting as the procurement method for the Audio Video/Intercom System at Medical Professions. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Finance & Operations Committee - Israel G. Quintanilla and Adrian Garcia, Co-Chairs

Israel G. Quintanilla reported on the following items:

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Report on the 2023-2024 fourth quarter student activity accounts.

Approved with the consent agenda.

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. *Action: Review and act on approving the following bank resolutions to update the campus bank signatures:

1. World Scholars
2. Medical Professions
3. Health Professions
4. Science Academy
5. Preparatory Academy
6. Virtual Academy

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. *Action: Review and act on the proposed calendar for the South Texas ISD Audit.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- F. *Action: Review and act on approving the use of MacKenzie Scott funds for the Fine Arts program at World Scholars and Preparatory Academy, and Health Professions CTE.

Item was removed from the consent agenda. On behalf of the Board, Dr. Sylvia Sánchez once recognized MacKenzie Scott for her contributions to our district and the impact it has made, specifically to the Fine Arts Program.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, approving the use of MacKenzie Scott funds for the Fine Arts program at World Scholars and Preparatory Academy, and Health Professions CTE, in the amount of \$358,462.00. The motion passed unanimously.

- G. Action: Review and act on approving the following budget amendments for the 2023-2024 federal rollover:
1. Title I Part A (211)
 2. Title I Part C (212)
 3. Title II Part A (255)
 4. Title III Part A, LEP (263)
 5. Title IV Part A, SSAEP (289)
 6. School Safety Standards (429)
 7. Safe Grant Cycle 1 (429)
 8. Safe Grant Cycle 2 (429)
 9. Advance Placement Incentives (397)
 10. Instructional Materials Allotment (410)

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving budget amendments for the 2023-2024 federal rollover, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- H. Action: Review and act on the following payment applications:
1. Payment application #2 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$245,502.29 for the Athletic Fields project.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Dr. Noel Garza, approving payment application #2 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. in the amount of \$245,502.29 for the Athletic Fields project. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Payment application #9 to The Warren Group in the amount of \$5,235.80 for the New Health Professions Gymnasium project.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Dr. Noel Garza, approving payment application #9 to The Warren Group in the amount of \$5,235.80 for the New Health Professions Gymnasium project. The motion passed unanimously.

- I. Action: Review and act on the following requisitions:
1. Requisition #123718 to Silsbee Ford for the purchase of a vehicle for the district.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving requisition #123718 to Silsbee Ford for the purchase of a vehicle for the district. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Requisition #123949 to Rush Truck Center for the purchase of five new buses for the district.

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Adrian Garcia, approving requisition #123949 to Rush Truck Center for the purchase of five new buses for the district. The motion passed unanimously.

- J. Action: Review and act on approving the ranking and authorizing Administration to negotiate a contract regarding Request For Qualifications for Architectural Services (RFQ 26-001).

A motion was made by Israel G. Quintanilla, seconded by Dr. Rick Villarreal, approving the ranking and authorizing Administration to negotiate a contract regarding Request For Qualifications for Architectural Services (RFQ 26-001) with Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc. The motion passed with three against (Jaime Solis, Sasha Crane, and Oscar Salinas).

- K. Action: Review and act on approving the ranking and authorizing Administration to negotiate a contract regarding Request For Qualifications for Real Estate Broker Services (RFQ 26-002).

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by Dr. Noel Garza, approving the ranking and authorizing Administration to negotiate a contract regarding Request For Qualifications for Real Estate Broker Services (RFQ 26-002) with BIC Realty. The motion passed with one abstention (Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza).

- 13. Policy, Planning, Projects & Partnerships Committee - Abiel J. Cantú and Noel Garza, D.D.S., Co-Chairs

Abiel J. Cantú reported on the following items:

- A. *Action: Review and act on appointing School Health Advisory Council Members for the 2024-2025 school year.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. Action: Review and act on updates to Policy FFAC (LOCAL) Wellness and Health Services Medical Treatment.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Dr. Noel Garza, approving recommended updates to Policy FFAC (LOCAL) Wellness and Health Services Medical Treatment. The motion passed unanimously.

- 14. Community & Governmental Relations Committee - Sasha Crane and Eduardo Rodriguez, Co-Chairs

Eduardo Rodriguez reported on the following item:

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

Approved with the consent agenda.

15. Superintendent's Report - Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.

- A. *Campus 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

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Report on progress toward Superintendent's Goals.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Action: Review and act on the following out-of-district staff travel:
 - 1. Association of Title IX Administrators (ATIXA) Annual Conference, October 27-30, 2024 in Philadelphia, PA.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. District Reports
 - 1. Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
 - a. Report on resignations and retirements of professional staff.
 - b. Report on professional vacancies.
 - c. Report on required Staff Development Training.

Ms. Lissa Frausto, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, provided updates on resignations and retirements for professional staff, professional vacancies, and required Staff Development Training.

- 2. Executive Director for Student Support
 - a. Enrollment & Attendance Report
 - b. Report on Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs.
 - c. Report on Health and Wellness updates.
 - d. Report on Counseling Program.

- e. Report on Athletic Program updates.

Mr. Marcos Flores, Executive Director for Student Support, provided updates on enrollment and attendance, CTE Programs, Health and Wellness, Counseling, and Athletics.

- f. Action: Review and act on approving the 2024-2025 Physician's Standing Orders.

A motion was made by Sasha Crane, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving the 2024-2025 Physician's Standing Orders as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- 3. Executive Director for Special Programs
 - a. Report on South Texas Tri-County Special Education Co-Op updates.
 - b. Report on upcoming Special Programs community events.

Dr. Brenda De La Garza, Executive Director for Special Programs, provided updates on the South Texas Tri-County Special Education Co-Op updates and upcoming Special Programs community events.

- 4. Chief of Security Operations
 - a. Report on safety and security updates district-wide.

Chief Steven Cortez, Chief of Security Operations, provided updates on the safety and security initiatives district-wide.

- b. Action: Review and act on approving members to the District's Safety and Security Committee for the 2024-2025 school year.

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving members to the District's Safety and Security Committee for the 2024-2025 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

- E. Action: Review and act on resolutions for nominations of candidate(s) to the Appraisal District Board of Directors for the following:
 - 1. Cameron County
 - 2. Hidalgo County

Rolando Garza, Chief Appraiser for the Hidalgo County Appraisal District was present at the meeting to provide information on the process for nominations of candidates to the Appraisal District.

A motion was made Adrian Garcia, seconded by David Briones, nominating Frutoso Gomez, Everardo Sanchez, and David Garza as candidates to the Cameron County County Appraisal District Board of Directors. The motion passed with one abstention (Dr. Noel Garza).

A motion was made by Dr. Noel Garza, nominating Richard A. Garza and Amador Requeñez as candidates to the Hidalgo County County Appraisal District Board of Directors. No second was received, therefore, motion failed.

A motion was made by Sasha Crane, seconded by Jaime Solis, nominating all five current members (Albert Cardenas, Joe Olivarez, Eddy Betancourt, Amador Requeñez, and Richard Garza) as candidates to the Hidalgo County Appraisal District Board of Directors. The motion passed with one abstention (Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza).

16. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Board of Directors met on September 17, 2024 at 8:32 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 remainder of the 2024-2025 school year.
 - a. Teacher(s)
 - B. 551.071 Consultation with attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation regarding Cause No. 2024-CCL-00247 and Cause No. 2024-CCL-00249: Closed Meeting.
 - C. 551.071, 551.076, 551.089 Deliberation Regarding Security Devices or Security Audits and consultation with school attorney regarding Security Devices or Security Audits.

The Board ended the Executive session at 9:00 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 2024-2025 school year.
 - a. Teacher(s)

Dr. Tony Lara, Superintendent of Schools, recommended the employment of Gerardo Vela as Teacher (10 months) for the remainder of the 2024-2025 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.

B. Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding Cause No. 2024-CCL-00247 and Cause No. 2024-CCL-00249.

No action taken.

18. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Dr. Noel Garza, adjourning the meeting at 9:02 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.