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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 June 17, 2025, 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
Noel Garza, DDS	Mission
Sylvia Sánchez Garza, Ph.D.	Edinburg
Henry LeVrier	Brownsville
Sandra Garza Ochoa, Ph.D.	Weslaco
Rodolfo “Rudy” Ramirez	Edinburg
Oscar Salinas	Edinburg
Jaime R. Solis	Edinburg
David Suarez	Weslaco
Rick Villarreal, DDS	Rancho Viejo
Ruth Villarreal	Mission
Zach Zamora	Mission

The following Board members were absent:

Douglas E. Buchanan	Raymondville
Eduardo L. "Larry" Cantu	Los Fresnos
Margarita Garcia	San Juan
Andrea E. Gonzales-Loya	Raymondville
Yolanda Kamel	McAllen
Robert J. Lerma	Brownsville
Sylvia S. Lopez	Brownsville
Eduardo Roberto Rodriguez	Brownsville
Sue Ann Villarreal	Raymondville

The following staff members were present:

Marco Antonio Lara, Jr., Ed.D.	Sandra Torres
Efrain Garza	Vanessa Rivera
Lissa Frausto	Mathew Maciel
Marla Knaub	Ramon Longoria
Chief Steven Cortez	Carmen Noriega
Frank Trevino	
Amanda Odom	
Brenda De La Garza, Ed.D.	
Reynaldo Rodriguez, Ed.D.	
Jose Lucio	
Marco Zamora	
Cynthia Chairez, Ed.D.	

3. Pledges of Allegiance & District Call to Action.

The pledges and District Call to Action were led by Zachary Zamora.

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.

- B. Recognition of the 2025 STISD District Teacher of the Year.
- C. Recognition of retirees who have dedicated 25 years or more to STISD.
- D. Recognition of Science Academy student, Joseph Garza, for his service at the American Legion Texas Boys State in Austin June 8-13, 2025.

On behalf of the Board, Amanda Odom recognized the following retirees for their service to STISD:

Clemente Del Campo, Health Professions – 32 Years of Service
Linda Saucedo, Medical Professions – 28 Years of Service
Janie Sanchez, Rising Scholars Academy – 33 Years of Service
Kristi Auensmith, World Scholars – 26 Years of Service

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 Jaime Solis, approving the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

9. *Action: Review and act on the May 20, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes.

Approved with the consent agenda.

10. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Committee - Sylvia S. Lopez and Andrea E. Gonzales Loya, Co-Chairs

David Briones reported on the following:

A. Report on 2025 STAAR EOC Preliminary Results.

Efrain Garza, Deputy Superintendent, provided a report on the 2025 STAAR EOC Preliminary Results.

B. Report on STAAR Grades 3-8 Preliminary Results.

Efrain Garza provided a report on the 2025 STAAR Grades 3-8 Preliminary Results.

C. Report on the Instructional Professional Development & Curricular Enhancement.

Efrain Garza reported on the Instructional Professional Development & Curricular Enhancement.

11. Buildings and Grounds Committee - Rick Villarreal, D.D.S. and David Suarez, Co-Chairs

Dr. Rick Villarreal reported on the following:

A. Report on the following projects:

1. Health Professions Gymnasium
2. Athletic Fields
3. Medical Professions Audio/Video Intercom System
4. CTE Expansion
5. Edinburg Admin Entrance Correction

Nathaniel Perez, The Warren Group, was present and provided the Board with an update on the Health Professions Gymnasium project. David Monreal and Isaac Ochoa, GMS Architects, were present and provided the Board with an update on the Athletic Fields projects, Medical Professions Audio/Video Intercom System, CTE Automotive Expansion project.

12. Finance & Operations Committee - Doug E. Buchanan and Adrian Garcia, Co-Chairs

Adrian Garcia 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 the following donations:

1. Donation of \$100 from the Weslaco Elks Lodge to Health Professions.
2. Donation of TCSAAL banners to Rising Scholars Academy valued at \$150 each from Lupe Zuniga.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- D. *Action: Review and act on approving a Teacher Stipend for the District Curriculum Design.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- E. Report on the district's Public Notice to Apply for 2025-2026 ESSA Federal Grant Funding.

Marla Knaub, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, provided a report on the district's Public Notice to Apply for 2025-2026 ESSA Federal Grant Funding.

- F. Action: Review and act on the following payment applications:
 1. Payment application #14 to The Warren Group in the amount of \$14,476.00 for the New Health Professions Gymnasium project.
 2. Payment application #7 to Holchemont, LTD in the amount of \$127,003.60 for the Edinburg Athletic Fields project.
 3. Payment application #6 to TelePro Communications in the amount of \$142,242.12 for the Medical Professions Audio/Video Intercom project.
 4. Payment application #13 to Gerlach Builders, LLC in the amount of \$205,966.29 for the New Health Professions Gymnasium project.
 5. Payment application #9 to Gerlach Builders in the amount of \$626,690.54 for the Mercedes Athletic Fields project.
 6. Payment application #6 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc., in the amount of \$2,126.21 for the Medical Professions Audio/Video Intercom project.
 7. Payment application #4 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc., in the amount of \$1,080.62 for the Restrooms/Concessions at the Mercedes Athletic Fields project.
 8. Payment application #10 to Gomez Mendez Saenz, Inc., in the amount of \$10,777.96 for the Athletic Fields project.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving payment applications as presented (Items F1 – F8). The motion passed unanimously.

- G. Action: Review and act on the following budget amendment(s):
 1. General Fund (199) #6

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving budget amendment General Fund (199) #6. The motion passed unanimously.

- H. Action: Review and act on the following Request for Proposals:
 1. RFP 26-026 Polygraph Examiner for (Pre-Employment, Criminal, Suitability)
 2. RFP 26-012 Workers' Compensation Insurance Fully Funded
 3. RFP 26-013 Employee Uniforms

4. RFP 26-014 Petroleum Products
5. RFP 26-015 General Merchandise
6. RFP 26-016 General Maintenance, Building, Grounds, Services & Equipment
7. RFP 26-017 Building Materials
8. RFP 26-018 Drug Testing Service
9. RFP 26-020 Instructional Materials & Technology products
10. RFP 26-021 JOC For Maintenance, Repairs, Alterations, Renovations, Remediations, or Minor Construction of a Facility
11. RFP 26-022 Digital, Marketing, Advertising, (Inc. Billboards, Livestream, Ads, Radio, TV, Etc
12. RFP 26-023 Events, Party Supplies, Linens, Equipment Rental, Logistics
13. RFP 26-025 Psychological Evaluation Services
14. RFP 26-027 Miscellaneous Contracted Product & Services
15. RFP 26-028 Assessments, Certifications, Products and Services

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving the Request for Proposals as requested. The motion passed unanimously.

- I. Action: Review and act on approving the 2025-2026 Benefits.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, approving the 2025-2026 Benefits as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

- J. Action: Review and act on approving the revised Memorandum of Understanding for the South Texas Tri-County Special Education Co-Op.

A motion was made by Adrian Garcia, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving the revised Memorandum of Understanding for the South Texas Tri-County Special Education Co-Op. The motion passed unanimously.

- K. Discussion, consideration and possible action regarding Request for Qualifications (RFQ 26-029) Legal Services.

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by David Suarez, extending current counsel Javier Villalobos as Primary Counsel for the Board and to engage O'Hanlon, Demerath & Castillo as Secondary Counsel for the district and for administration to negotiate rates with each firm. The motion passed unanimously.

13. Policy, Planning, Projects & Partnerships Committee - Eduardo Rodriguez and Oscar Salinas, Co-Chairs

Abiel J. Cantú reported on the following items:

- A. Action: Review and act on Policy DEC (LOCAL) - Requirement for Commissioned Officers.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Oscar Salinas, approving Policy DEC (LOCAL) - Requirement for Commissioned Officers. The motion passed unanimously.

14. Community & Governmental Relations Committee - Yolanda Kamel and Ruth Villarreal, Co-Chairs

- 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 - E. Gutierrez

Approved with the consent agenda.

- B. *Action: Review and act on Resolution authorizing the Superintendent to contract for school-related services.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- C. *Action: Review and act on the following out of district student/staff travel:
 - 1. 2025 IB Global Conference, July 15-17, 2025, in New Orleans, LA.
 - 2. 2025 HOSA Washington Leadership Academy, September 19-23, 2025, in Washington, D.C.
 - 3. MasterMinds: A PLTW Master Teacher Conference, November 7-9, 2025, in Indianapolis, IN.

Approved with the consent agenda.

D. District Reports

- 1. Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
 - a. *Report on resignations and retirements of professional staff.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- b. *Report on professional vacancies.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- c. Action: Review and Act on approving the request for New Professional Position(s) for the 2025-2026 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for the following:
 - 1. Professional Positions:
 - 1. Teacher (2)
 - 2. Non-Professional Positions:
 - 1. SHARS Special Education Clerk

A motion was made by Dr. Rick Villarreal, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving the request for New Professional Position(s) for the 2025-2026 school year and the Announcement of Vacancy for Teacher (2) and Non-Professional Position for SHARS Special Education Clerk. The motion passed unanimously.

- 2. Executive Director for Student Support
 - a. *Enrollment and Attendance Report.

Approved with the consent agenda.

- b. Report on Student Support Services.

A report on Student Support Services was provided to the Board.

- 3. Executive Director for Special Programs
 - a. Report on Special Programs.

Dr. Brenda De La Garza, Executive Director for Special Programs, provided a report on Special Programs.

- b. Report on the South Texas Tri-County Special Education Co- Op.

Dr. Brenda De La Garza gave a report on the South Texas Tri-County Special Education Co-Op.

- 4. Chief of Police
 - a. Report on Safety and Security.

Steven Cortez, Chief of Police, provided an update on Safety and Security.

- E. Action: Review and act on the endorsement of Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, to the candidacy to fill a position on the TASB Board of Directors, Region 1 Seat B.

A motion was made by Jaime Solis, seconded by Sasha Crane, endorsing Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza to the candidacy to fill a position on the TASB Board of Directors, Region 1 Seat B. The motion passed unanimously.

1. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Board of Directors met on June 17, 2025 at 8:21 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 Vice-President, Dr. Sylvia Sánchez Garza, 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 2025-2026 school year.
 - a. Assistant Principal
 - b. Captain
 - c. Chief Academic Officer
 - d. Counselor
 - e. Dean of Instruction
 - f. District Student Wellness Specialist
 - g. Educational Diagnostician Co-Op
 - h. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology
 - i. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology Intern (UTRGV Only)
 - j. Police Officer
 - k. Special Education Instructional Specialist Co-Op
 - l. Speech Language Pathologist Assistant Co-Op
 - m. Speech Language Pathologist Co-Op
 - n. Teacher(s)
 - 2. Review recommendations for renewal of employment contracts for Professional staff.
 - a. Renewal of Chapter 21 term employment contracts for Professional staff for the 2025-2026 school year as per the Compromise Settlement Agreements.

The Board ended the Executive Session at 8:36 p.m.

- 2. 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 2025-2026 school year.
 - a. Assistant Principal
 - b. Captain
 - c. Chief Academic Officer
 - d. Counselor
 - e. Dean of Instruction
 - f. District Student Wellness Specialist
 - g. Educational Diagnostician Co-Op
 - h. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology
 - i. Licensed Specialist in School Psychology Intern (UTRGV Only)
 - j. Police Officer
 - k. Special Education Instructional Specialist Co-Op
 - l. Speech Language Pathologist Assistant Co-Op
 - m. Speech Language Pathologist Co-Op
 - n. Teacher(s)

Dr. Tony Lara, Superintendent of Schools, recommended the employment of David Molina as Captain (12 months), Paloma Salinas as School Counselor (11 months), Corina C. Saenz as Dean of Instruction (12 months), Erika Galvan as Dean of Instruction (12 months), Leila Lorena Flores as District Student Wellness Specialist (11 months), Lauren L. Solis as Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (11 months), Carlos Joshua Olivarez as Police Officer (12 months), Jayson A. Rivera as Police Officer (12 months), Michelle Cortez as Police Officer (12 months), Chris Dominic Ramirez as Police Officer (12 months), Juan Flores as Police Officer (12 months), Bjorn N. Jorgensen as Police Officer (12 months), Luis Daniel Garcia as Police Officer (12 months), Carlos M. Del Bosque Jr. as Police Officer (12 months), Christine Michelle Perlino as Special Education Instructional Specialist Co-Op (11 months), Leonidas Espino Monreal as Speech Language Pathologist Assistant Co-Op (11 months), Jessica Michelle Garcia as Speech Language Pathologist Co-Op (11 months), Edgar Rodriguez Tiburcio as Teacher (10 months), Santiago Espinoza as Teacher (10 months), Lydia Marie Brown as Teacher (10 months), Belinda Michelle Maldonado as Teacher (10 months), Marco Antonio Islas Jr. as Assistant Principal (11 months), Adriana Anzaldúa Jaime as Assistant Principal (11 months), Eric Flores as Assistant Principal (11 months), Vanessa Michelle Samano as School Counselor (11 months), Elizabeth Ann Lopez as School Counselor (11 months), Nancy Sarahi Talavera as District Student Wellness Specialist (11 months), Alma Avalos as Educational Diagnostician Co-Op (11 months), Melissa M. Flores as Speech Language Pathologist Co-Op (11 months), Jamie Jane Salazar as Teacher (10 months), Rogelio Garza as Teacher (10 months), Martin Lance Fell Jr. as Teacher (10 months), Patrick Thomas Anderson as Teacher (10 months), Nancy Guerra as Teacher (10 months), and Sadie Hernandez as Teacher (10 months).

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Rudy Ramirez, approving the recommendation of professional staff as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Action: Review and act on renewal of employment contracts for Professional staff.

- a. Action: Review and act on renewal of Chapter 21 term employment contracts for Professional staff for the 2025-2026 school year as per the Compromise Settlement Agreements.

A motion was made by Abiel J. Cantú, seconded by Jaime Solis, approving the Chapter 21 term contracts for Professional staff for the 2025-2026 school year as part of the Compromise Settlement Agreements, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Adjournment.

A motion was made by Dr. Noel garza, seconded by Abiel J. Cantú, adjourning the meeting at 8:41. The motion passed unanimously.