

Tolar Independent School District
Board of Trustees
Minutes of Public Hearing and Regular Meeting
February 23, 2026

The Board of Trustees met in a public hearing followed by a regular meeting on February 23, 2026. The following members were present: Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and Josh Swaim

Absent from the meeting was: Dalton Nix

Meeting with the Board of Trustees were Travis Stilwell, Superintendent; Kristen Carey, Assistant Superintendent; Casey Hamilton, Junior High Principal; Christal Hollinger, Elementary Principal; Michelle Lillibridge, Business Manager

Others attending meeting: Diana Daniels

Public Hearing

1. Invocation led by Jake Valdez
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Quorum was established and the meeting was called to order by Justin Deaver at 6:31 p.m.
4. Kristen Carey presented the 2024-2025 Texas Academic Performance Report
5. Questions and comments from public hearing- Science TEKS, Socioeconomic disadvantage percentage for Title 1
6. Adjourn to regular meeting at 6:42 by Justin Deaver

Regular Board Meeting

7. Comments from visitors: none
8. Mr. Stilwell and Rhonda Knight recognized the Diamondback Rattler recipients, which included Diana Daniels, Jody Fleming, Sue Merkle, Katie Chambliss, and Debbie Riale

9. Individual/Committee Reports

Christal Hollinger gave the Elementary report:

Upcoming Events: Cowtown race, under the stars family night, field day

Additional Updates: Using TEF grants, celebrating growth, UIL celebrations, family time

Casey Hamilton gave the Junior High report:

Upcoming Events: Track meets, Band Concert/sight reading, cheer try-outs

Additional Updates: student growth-MAP

Kristen Carey gave the High School report:

Upcoming Events: STAAR interims, boys basketball playoffs, VASE art competition, band,

Kristen Carey gave the district report: Attendance report, SHAC updates, safety update, TIA update

10. Motion by Josh Swaim, second by Rhonda Knight to approve Minutes from the December 15, 2025 Regular Meeting; January 19, 2026 Board Training; February 11, 2026 Special Called Meeting and the monthly financial statements/reports.

Motion carried

Vote: Pass - Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and Josh Swaim

Oppose - None

11. Kristen Carey gave the formative assessment of the District Improvement Plan
12. Kristen Carey, Casey Hamilton and Christal Hollinger gave the formative assessment of the Campus Improvement Plans

13. Motion by Brad Cooper, second by Rhonda Knight to approve the Tolar Elementary Targeted School Improvement Plan.

Motion carried

Vote: Pass - Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and Josh Swaim

Oppose - None

14. Motion by Brad Cooper, second by David Cook to approve update 126 for *(LOCAL)* policies due to DOI plan for DBA (LOCAL), DGBA (LOCAL), DK (LOCAL), EB (LOCAL), EEP (LOCAL), EFB (LOCAL), FNG (LOCAL), GF (LOCAL)

Motion carried

Vote: Pass - Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and Josh Swaim

Oppose - None

15. Motion by Rhonda Knight, second by Josh Swaim to decline Bill 11 regarding daily prayer time

Motion carried

Vote: Pass - Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and Josh Swaim

Oppose - None

16. Motion by David Cook, second by Rhonda Knight to approve the 2026-2027 district calendar.

Motion carried

Vote: Pass - Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and Josh Swaim

Oppose - None

17. Motion by Rhonda Knight, second by Josh Swaim to approve the district financial audit report for fiscal year ending August 31, 2025

Motion carried

Vote: Pass - Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and

Oppose - None

18. Superintendent's report: None

Executive/Closed Session

19. Board entered into executive session at 7:26 p.m.

Board reconvened to regular session at 8:40 p.m.

Open Session/Action

20. Motion by Rhonda Knight, second by Brad Cooper to approve the extension of administrative contracts for one additional year with a 2% pay raise for Kristen Carey, Clint Gardner, Casey Hamilton, Trisha Bagby, and Blake Mouser.

Motion carried

Vote: Pass - Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and Josh Swaim

Oppose - None

21. Topics for future discussion:

- Superintendent's report to include the number and % of transfers per campus

Future board meetings:

Monday, March 30

Monday, April 27

Monday, May 18

22. Motion by Josh Swaim, second by David Cook to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried

Vote: Pass - Jake Valdez, Justin Deaver, David Cook, Brad Cooper, Rhonda Knight, and Josh Swaim

Oppose - None

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.



Board Officer



Board Officer

