

March 18, 2026

The Board of Trustees of the Willis Independent School District will meet in a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 in the Willis ISD Boardroom located at 612 N. Campbell Street in the Sharon Hill Jennette Administration Building in Willis, Texas, and the business to be conducted is listed below.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Board President, Kyle Hoegemeyer called the Regular Business Meeting to order at 5:30 PM and announced that a quorum was present and that notice of the meeting had been posted for the time and manner required by law.

Board Secretary, Chad Jones called the roll.

Members Present: All Board members were present. Board Member Nikita Lagway arrived at 5:34 PM, following the initial roll call.

Board President, Kyle Hoegemeyer turned the meeting over to Superintendent, Dr. Kimberley James

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Dr. Kim James announced the next steps for the meeting calling Cannan Elementary Principal, Brooke Paulson and students to lead the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PROCLAMATIONS/RESOLUTIONS/RECOGNITIONS

Principal Brooke Paulson of Cannan Elementary presented fourth-grader Manuel Dominguez Campos as the Student of the Month for March. She highlighted that Manuel was selected for embodying the school's "Fierce" character trait of empathy through his daily interactions and kindness. Principal Paulson noted that Manuel is exceptionally observant, often providing friendship and encouragement to peers before even being asked. His teachers nominated him for his consistent willingness to assist both classmates and staff members alike. Ultimately, Principal Paulson praised Manuel as a compassionate leader who perfectly represents the values of the Cannan Elementary community.

Principal Dr. Gerald Schattle of Calfee Middle School presented Diane Ibiyemi-Ajayi as the Secondary Student of the Month, describing her as an exceptional model of a "Calfee Cougar." She was recognized for consistently demonstrating kindness, respect, and integrity in both her academic work and her interactions throughout the school. Beyond her academic success and involvement in co-curricular activities, Diane was praised for going above and beyond to support her teachers and peers. Principal Schattle noted that Diane leads by example, encouraging others to make positive choices while holding herself to a high standard of behavior. The presentation concluded by highlighting Diane as a positive influence across all grade levels who truly represents the best of the school community.

The Montgomery County Food Bank recognized the Willis High School Advanced Floral Design students and their teacher, Ms. Andrea Slott, for their exceptional work at the annual "Fighting Hunger Feeding Hope" gala. Under the guidance of Ms. Slott, students created extraordinary centerpieces centered around a whimsical "Through the Looking Glass" theme. The artistic arrangements featured hand-painted vases filled with colorful florals and playful accessories, including top hats, clocks, and teapots. Guests noted that the craftsmanship and creative execution of the designs rivaled professional work, helping to bring the spirit of the event to life. This successful collaboration was made possible through the instrumental support and facilitation of Chief of Communications Dr. Sarah Blakelock.

Fine Arts Director Ken Labonski celebrated the rigorous Texas All-State audition process, noting that advancing beyond the region level is a prestigious achievement and key scholarship criterion. Four standout Willis High School students were recognized for their success in these high-level competitions, including pre-area choir candidates Sophia Von Koschembahr and Kevin Olafson, and area band candidate Joshua Grush. The presentation culminated in honoring three-time All-State member Drue Walker, who earned the distinction of being the top-ranked piccolo player in the state of Texas for the second consecutive year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Board President Kyle Hoegemeyer opened the floor for public comment, and seeing there were none, proceeded to the consent agenda items.

Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Minutes
- B. Approval of an ESL Certification Resolution
 - Speaker(s): Travis Utecht, Exe. Director HR

- C. Approval of the Sam Houston State University Memorandum of Understanding
 - Speaker(s): Travis Utecht, Exe. Director of HR
- D. Approval Not to Exceed Amounts for Castleschouldt Elementary School Technology Package
 - Speaker(s): Stephen Shannon, Technology
- E. Approval of E-rate Category I and Category II Services
 - Speaker(s): Stephen Shannon, Technology
- F. Approval of the Delivery Method for Meador Elementary Voice EVAC – Fire Alarm Project
 - Speaker(s): Bob Eaton, Chief of Operations & Construction
- G. Approval of the Selection of JOC Contractor for the Multi-Campus Data and Power Project
 - Speaker(s): Bob Eaton, Chief of Operations & Construction
- H. Approve Authorized Representatives for First Public Lone Star Investment Pool
 - Speaker(s): Garrett Matej, CFO
- I. Approval of the Purchase of Library Materials
 - Speaker(s): Courtney Brown, Digital Integration Coordinator
- J. Approval to Purchase an Additional Set of Just Right Readers Decodable Books – Elementary Campuses
 - Speaker(s): Sarah Ballew, Exe. Director of Teaching, Learning, and PD
- K. Approval of the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for the Yates Stadium Scoreboard
 - Speaker(s): Bob Eaton, Chief of Construction and Operations

Board President Kyle Hoegemeyer called for discussion regarding the consent agenda. Board Secretary Chad Jones requested clarification on Item K: Approval of the Guaranteed Maximum Price for the Yates Stadium Scoreboard. Item K was removed from the consent agenda for separate discussion.

Upon a motion and second, the Board voted to approve all remaining consent agenda items as presented.

Motion by Cliff Williams and seconded by Scott Carson to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

PROGRESS MONITORING UPDATES

- A. Strategic Plan Updates
 - Speaker(s): Dr. Susan Clardy, Exec. Director of Accountability, Research, & Eval
- B. District and Campus Improvement Plans
 - Speaker(s): Dr. Susan Clardy, Exe. Director of Accountability, Research, & Eval
- C. Lone Star Governance Progress Monitoring: HB3 Student Growth in Reading
 - Speaker(s): Dr. Susan Clardy, Exe. Director of Accountability, Research, & Eval.

Motion by Paulett Traylor and seconded by Scott Carson to approve the HB3 Student Growth in Reading as presented. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

Board Member & Superintendent Comments

On Strategy & Oversight: "I love seeing the goals. I love seeing the plan. I love seeing us execute the plan... the oversight... its showing up with positive results."

On Campus Independence: "I think allowing the principals to own their campuses with those critical decisions... nobody knows those kids better than the people on that campus. They're getting to make the decisions on what they think is going to push it forward."

On Growth Evidence (Dr. James): "What does this mean? It means improvement. It means more students meeting grade level... eventually going to graduate with choice to do whatever it is that they want to do."

On Kindergarten/First Grade Progress: "Our kindergarten students are doing well... middle of the year, not the end of the year. For growth, we were at 53% in 24/25 and we are currently at the 60% level. Our goal was 47%."

On Master Level Gains: "That's almost 14 percentage points that were higher in masters in the middle of the year star projected proficiency compared to STAR last year in spring. So there's a significant amount of growth there."

On District Consistency: "When it stays consistency, that's what drives this whole bus... you can't change something one year and expect a result next year. I commend Dr. James and all the people working with our curriculum."

On Student Readiness: "One of our biggest obstacles that we had is we were sending kids to junior high that weren't prepared. When these core basics are strong... it's going to show up there too."

On Leadership & Ownership: "People are taking ownership and loving what they're doing and I say thank you to all you all because I think that's what's driving these numbers as much as anything."

Questions & Answers

Q: (Board Member): "What would you attribute to the success we're seeing right now? Let me rephrase that. The new curriculum, is that one of the biggest contributing factors, do you think?"

- **Answer (Dr. James):** "I absolutely think the new curriculum certainly puts to task our teachers teaching at a higher level, but I also think it's attributed to our teachers and our administrators who are actively going in and making sure that that curriculum is being implemented with fidelity... It's a truly collaborative process that is coming to fruition."

Q: (Board Member): "Is there any elementary teacher that would like to speak to the curriculum as to the impact that it's having on the rigor and the scores?"

- **A: (Elementary Teacher):** "I think for third, fourth and fifth grade... the focus was rigor. The higher level of questions... they kind of progress through the week. When they get to day five... they write and respond to it. It's always at a higher level of expectation for them to read, write and think."

Q: (Dr. James): "Any questions on either of those two slides [regarding projected proficiency]?"

- **A: (Board Member):** "This is proof that our standard of expectations is being up [held]. That's awesome."

Q: (Dr. James): "Are there any questions on our House Bill 3 goals?"

- **A: (Board Member):** "I think it's important everybody's speaking the same language... I think it's just a great job and it's—we know we keep pounding about it because we've been waiting for it and its here now."

D. TIPS for Parmley and Turner Elementary

- Speaker(s): Dr. Ivan Velasco, Exe. Director of Elementary Education

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Financial Reports

- Speaker(s): Garrett Matej, CFO

B. Delinquent Tax Collection Report

- Speaker(s): Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins, & Mott LLP

C. Long-Range Planning Update

- Speaker(s): Dr. Sarah Blakelock, Chief Communications Officer

D. WHS 9th Grade Center Second Gymnasium Concept Presentation

- Speaker(s): Bob Eaton, Chief of Construction and Operations

CLOSED SESSION*: Consideration of matters for which closed sessions are authorized by Title 5, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code Sections (.071-.084)

- A. Personnel Matters Texas Gov't Code §551.074
 - Teacher Resignations and Appointments
- B. Real Estate: Pursuant to Texas Gov't Code §551.072
 - Land Updates
- C. Consultation with Attorney: Pursuant to Texas Gov't Code §551.071

The Board convened into Closed Session at 6:53 PM

RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The Board reconvened into Open Session at 8:55 PM. President Hoegemeyer asked if there are any motions from closed session.

Motion by Cliff Williams and seconded by Paulett Traylor to approve the personnel as listed. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

- A. Discuss and Consider Approval of General Fund Budget Amendments for 2025 – 2026 Budget Year
 - Speaker(s): Garrett Matej, CFO

Motion by Scott Carson and seconded by Nikita Lagway to approve the Superintendent's recommendation and amend the 2025 -2026 General Fund Budget as presented. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

The Board President introduced Item K, which was moved from the consent agenda to the regular agenda. The item concerns the approval of Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) #1 for the Yates Stadium scoreboard.

- B. Discuss and Consider Approval of the Guarantee Maximum Price (GMP) for Yates Stadium Score Board
 - Speaker(s): Bob Eaton, Chief of Construction and Operations

Q: Does this give us a brand-new, functioning scoreboard for this price?

- **A:** Yes, this package covers the purchase, construction, and installation of the new scoreboard to provide basic functionality.

Q: We are approving up to \$747,469 tonight. What do we anticipate GMP #2 (the sound and video control) will cost?

- **A:** The goal is to keep GMP #2 under **\$200,000**. The design team is meeting to rework the layout of phase two because the initial overall project was over budget.

Q: Do we have to do GMP #2?

- **A:** It will be up to the board. The district is negotiating and reworking the sound system and video side to bring the price down, but the move on the scoreboard (GMP #1) had to be made now to meet the timeline.

Q: What are we doing with the old scoreboard/why are we replacing it?

- **A:** The current board is about 10 years old. It has hardware issues (such as a blown transformer), and the district is struggling to find replacement parts and get service technicians to the site in a timely manner.

Q: If we ever want to move the scoreboard again in the future, can we?

- **A:** Yes. There would be a cost associated with moving it, but it is possible to relocate it again if necessary.

Q: Are these funds coming from the 2015 bonds?

- **A: Yes.** This project will be paid for out of the **2015 bond** funds.

Motion by Chad Jones and seconded by Cliff Williams to approve the Superintendent’s recommendation of the Guaranteed Maximum Price #1 (GMP#1) not to exceed \$747,469.00 for the Yates Stadium Scoreboard base bid as presented by Performance Services and delegate the authority to Dr. James to negotiate, finalize and execute the final GMP#1 Amendment Document.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

The Board President praised the exceptional performance of students and staff over spring break, specifically highlighting the successes of the culinary, floral design, choir, and FFA programs. He emphasized that the district is providing phenomenal extracurricular opportunities and thanked everyone involved for their dedication.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

The Superintendent concluded the comments by fully echoing these sentiments and expressing her appreciation.

FUTURE BUSINESS/MEETINGS

April 22, 2026

Lone Star Governance Workshop 2:30PM

Budget Workshop 4:30PM

Regular Board Meeting 5:30PM

April 28, 2026

LSG – Board of Trustee Town hall Meeting 5:30PM

ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING

Motion by Cliff Williams and seconded by Chad Jones to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 PM