July 8, 2026

The Board of Trustees of the Willis Independent School District will meet in a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, July 8, 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 5:50PM 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: Charles Perry, Scott Carson, Kyle Hoegemeyer, Paulett Traylor, and Chad Jones
Members Absent: Cliff Williams and Nikita Lagway
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 Travis Utecht, Exe. Director HR to lead the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.
RECOGNITIONS
We are proud to announce Paula Snow, a 17-year education veteran and current assistant principal, as the new principal of A.R. Turner Elementary School. A lifelong Willis resident, Willis High School graduate, and holder of a master's in educational leadership, she brings deep generational roots and a passion for student success to the role. Mrs. Snow expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the board of trustees and district leadership for the opportunity to lead in her hometown. She shared her excitement to partner with staff and families to build on the school's strong foundation so every child can thrive.

We are thrilled to introduce Adriana Velasco as the new District Coordinator of 504 and Dyslexia. With 25 years in public education—including 13 years proudly serving Willis ISD as a campus administrator—she brings a wealth of instructional and leadership experience to the role. Her leadership philosophy centers on strong school-family partnerships to ensure every student is valued, challenged, and supported to reach their full potential. Mrs. Velasco warmly expressed her gratitude to district leadership for the new role. She shared her excitement to expand her reach from a single campus to supporting students across the entire district. She closed by highlighting her belief in the students' amazing potential and her dedication to helping them achieve it.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No members of the public requested to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Board President Kyle Hoegemeyer introduced the public comment session and noted that there were no speakers.
Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes
B. Approval of Continued Contracted Services with Bayes Achievement Center
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Randi Gay, Director of Special Education*
C. Approval of Additional Contracted Services with Bayes Achievement Center
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Randi Gay, Director of Special Education*
D. Approval of the Renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding between Daybreak Medical and Willis ISD
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Kelly Locke, Director of Guidance and Counseling*
E. Approval of Methodist Hospital Athletic Trainer Contract 2026-2027
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Ginger Deck, Director of Procurement*
F. Approve ThoughtExchange Renewal Agreement for 2026-2029
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Dr. Sarah Blakelock, Chief Communication Officer*
G. Approve Frontline Contract Renewal for the 2026-2027 School Year
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Garrett Matej, CFO*
H. Approval of the 2026-2027 Campus Safety Drill Procedure
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Meghan Ballard, Director of Federal Prog./Compliance, & Grants*
I. Approval of the 2026-2027 Door Check Procedure
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Meghan Ballard, Director of Federal Prog./Compliance, & Grants*

J. Approve purchase for Elementary Classroom iPads
- ***Speaker(s):*** *Garrett Matej, CFO*

K. Approve the Purchase of Two (2) 2025 DH400 14-Passenger Activity Buses
- ***Speaker(s):*** *Garrett Matej, CFO*

L. Approval of WISD 2026-27 Student Code of Conduct
- ***Speaker(s):*** *Noah Hollander, Exe. Director of Secondary Ed.*

M. Approval to adopt an Order Authorizing the Defeasance and Redemption of Certain Outstanding Obligations of the District; and Containing Other Related Provisions
- ***Speaker(s):*** *Garrett Matej, CFO*

N. Approval of Action to adopt an Order Authorizing the Issuance of Willis Independent School District Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds for the purpose of achieving debt service savings, which Bonds may be issued in one or more series and in an amount not to exceed $57,955,000
- ***Speaker(s):*** Garrett Matej, CFO

O. Approval of the Update to Willis ISD Hazardous Route Resolution
- ***Speaker(s):*** *Michael Haggerty, Director of Transportation*

P. Approval of the Teacher Externship MOU With Workforce Solutions
- ***Speaker(s):*** *Noah Hollander, Exe*1*. Director of Secondary Ed.*

The Board moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented removing Items B, C, & P for further discussion per Paulett Traylor's request.
Motion by Scott Carson and seconded by Paulett Traylor to approve the Consent Agenda items removing Items B, C, & P for further discussion. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

In response to Trustee Paulette Traylor's inquiry, Director of Special Education Randi Gay clarified the proposed out-of-district placement contracts for consent items B and C. She explained that Item B is a full-year contract renewal for students attending Bays Achievement Center in Huntsville, while Item C proposes transitioning additional students from ABS West in Houston to Bays for the 2026–2027 school year. Moving these placements to Huntsville drastically reduces student travel times from ninety minutes to roughly thirty minutes each way. Additionally, the closer proximity allows Willis ISD staff to visit more frequently, collaborate with facility personnel, and better support the goal of transitioning students back into district schools. While tuition remains similar, the district expects to realize cost savings through reduced transportation expenses. Finally, Gay noted that Extended School Year funding was excluded from the proposal, as those decisions must be made individually by each student's ARD committee.

Executive Director of Secondary Education Noah Hollander explained that consent item P establishes a teacher externship program through a partnership with Workforce Solutions. Designed specifically for Career and Technical Education (CTE) educators, the initiative places teachers directly into local workforce settings to give them hands-on exposure to evolving industry practices. These placements align directly with Willis ISD's high-demand programs of study, ensuring instruction remains current and relevant for students. Participating teachers will be compensated for their time through a schedule that may include after-school hours, summer terms, or school days supported by substitute coverage. District leadership highlighted that while individual teachers have completed similar arrangements in the past, this agreement significantly expands the program district-wide with Workforce Solutions as the facilitating party. Ultimately, the program allows educators to take updated industry knowledge back to the classroom to better prepare students for the workforce.

The board member shared that teacher externships were highly successful in their former region, particularly during the summer, as a way for CTE educators like HVAC and auto mechanics teachers to update skills that quickly evolve past classroom knowledge. They noted that individual local teachers had previously completed similar after-school externships with businesses like banks to meet course requirements. Ultimately, the trustee recognized that this proposal simply builds upon that concept by expanding it district-wide through a dedicated facilitating partner.

Motion by Paulett Traylor and seconded by Chad Jones to approve the Consent Agenda Items B, C, & P after further discussion. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

PROGRESS MONITORING UPDATES

A. Lone Star Governance Update on HB3 Goals
   - Speaker(s): Dr. Susan Clardy, Exec. Director of Accountability, Research, & Eval.

Board Member Question:

- *Question:* Do we have data on where our 3rd graders ended the year regarding their math scores?
- *Presenter/Leadership Response:* Clarified that official STAAR scores are not final yet. However, 3rd-grade math showed positive results and met expected growth targets, even though an intermediate target wasn't explicitly set for it.

Board Member Question:

- *Question:* Since student groups change every year, couldn't our overall numbers potentially go down depending on the cohort?
- *Presenter/Leadership Response:* Confirmed that cohort performance varies. However, because the initiative started implementation this year, the real test of these interventions will come next year when the current 2nd graders complete 3rd grade and take the STAAR reading assessment.

Superintendent Comment:

- *Comment:* Building on Paulette's point, Dr. James reminded the board about Lone Star Governance guidelines regarding target goals. While targets shouldn't be adjusted mid-year, she has asked Dr. Clardy to sit down with her to review areas where targets were already met so they can "up the ante" and adjust end-of-year goals upward as appropriate. She noted that state requirements dictate when formal adjustments happen and reaffirmed that this overall progress evaluation centers on STAAR reading metrics.

Motion by Paulett Traylor and seconded by Scott Carson to approve the HB3 and Superintendent's Guardrails. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

B. Federal Grant Open Comment Period Notification
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Meghan Ballard, Director of Federal Prog./Compliance & Grants*

1. Superintendent Comments:

- **Comment:** Expressed immense pride in the Gear Up program, linking it directly to discussions from the districts strategic and long-range planning regarding college/career readiness.
- **Interaction with Students:** Asked the student panel (Grayson, Aaron, Diane, and Eli) if they would participate again next summer and encourage their friends to join.
- **Praise:** Stated that the program creates a spark and builds confidence in students. Thanked Megan, Amy, and the coordinating teams for writing and executing the grant.

2. Board Member Question #1:

- **Question:** Do you keep the same student cohort every year, or do you track these children all the way from 7th grade through high school?
- **Megan's Response:** The priority cohort (7th going into 8th grade) is tracked through their second year post-graduation. However, once the cohort enters high school, all 10th, 11th, and 12th graders also qualify to participate in Gear Up programs and become eligible for at least $1,000 in scholarship opportunities.
- **Dr. James's Added Response:** Highlighted that a major benefit of the grant is providing college campus trips (e.g., Texas A&M, U of H) at no cost to families who might otherwise not have the opportunity.

3. Board Member Question #2:

- **Question:** Was the summer Gear Up program open to any student who wanted to sign up?
- **Megan's Response:** Yes, programs like Discovery Days were open to any middle school student. The Algebra 1 math camp specifically targeted students whose scores indicated they would be successful, as the grant benchmark required completing 8th-grade Algebra 1.

4. Board Member Question #3:

- **Question:** Without giving away the "secret sauce," walk us through how you choose which grants to apply for. How does that process work?
- **Megan's Response:** It relies heavily on staying active in district meetings to understand real needs, then matching those needs to TEA grant announcements and strategic goals. She noted that the Gear Up grant specifically came through a contact at TEA (a former Willis ISD employee) who reached out to Travis Utecht, who then connected them to the grant department.
- **Board Member Follow-Up:** Commended the networking strategy, noting it is impressive that district grant funding has doubled in the two years Megan has been in the role.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Financial Reports
   - Speaker(s): Garrett Matej, CFO
B. Investment Report FY 26 Third Quarter
   - Speaker(s): Garrett Matej, CFO
C. Health Insurance Plan Review
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Walker & Associates*
D. Student Handbook 2026-2027
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Noah Hollander, Exe. Director of Secondary Ed.*

Q: Are parents really going to go online, search through the student handbook, and find that opt-out form for health-related services? Won't it just get hidden in the document?

- **A:** The opt-out documentation is built directly into the online pre-registration process. When parents go online to pre-register their children, the form will be presented to them directly so they can make their selection.

Q: Is online pre-registration required for every student in the entire district?

- **A:** Yes, completing online pre-registration is required for all students across the district.

Q: When parents complete online pre-registration, are we actually checking proof of residency and verifying their addresses to ensure students are in the right schools?

- **A:** Yes. Addresses are cross-checked when generating student schedules and arranging transportation. New students are required to come in and present proof of residency in person. For returning students, if any district mail is returned as undeliverable, staff reach out to the family to request updated residency documentation.

Q: But what if a returning family simply types in a false or unverified address during the online re-registration process?

- **A:** If a family enters an address during re-registration that differs from the existing system record, the system flags it and requires them to turn in new proof of residency before the process can be completed.

Q: Under the cell phone policy, does a parent have to come up to the school to pick up a confiscated device even on the first offense?

- **A:** Yes, absolutely. Parents must come to the campus to retrieve the device starting on the very first offense.

Q: Does the new ban on blankets and pillows mean elementary students can no longer bring them for special events, like reading days?

- **A:** Special occasions are the exception—blankets and pillows are permitted for those specific events. The ban applies to bringing them to campus as part of normal, everyday attire.

Q: In the past, dress code enforcement has been inconsistent and tends to fizzle out after the first six weeks. What is being done to fix this, and can campus leaders take bolder steps to ensure full compliance?

- **A:** District administration met with campus leaders to establish clear, standardized language so expectations are identical across every classroom and school. Every adult on campus—from teachers and paraprofessionals to administrators—is expected to enforce the standard consistently so it doesn't fall on just a few staff members.

Board Consensus / Directive: Board members confirmed that campus administrators have the school board's full backing to strictly enforce the dress code from day one—including calling parents or sending students home to change—in order to create a consistent, distraction-free environment for learning.

E. Capital Projects Update
    - Speaker(s): Bob Eaton, Chief of Construction and Operations

Q: Did our maintenance department build the new control room at the fieldhouse?

A: Yes, our maintenance department built that room.

Q: Who is installing the school zone signs on the street for Castro Schultz Elementary, and will they be ready before school starts?

A: We install them, and the City of Conroe maintains them because the street is within city limits. They will be installed and fully operational before school begins.

Q: How is the implementation of the road coming along?

A: Construction is currently underway, and the contractors guaranteed completion by August 3rd.

Q: Based on the timeline changes, is there a specific date the contractor is contractually required to be done by?

A: It is unknown if there is a contract penalty or binding requirement, but there is written confirmation via email from Howard Hughes stating work will be finished by August 30th.

Q: How are the contractors coming along on the parking lot lights?

A: We are currently short by two lights, but a plan is in place and the contractor promised they will be installed before school starts.

Q: Are you going to give us an update as these remaining facility assessment items are completed?

A: Yes, updates will be provided as those items are completed.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

A. Discuss and Consider Approval of TASB Board Policy EIC Local
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Dr. Susan Clardy, Exe. Director of Accountability, Research, & Eval*

Q: Does the proposed Policy EIC Local update apply only to the incoming freshman class (Class of 2030)?

A: No. Primary updates regarding weighted GPA, inclusion of all high school credit courses, and the elimination of the "D" grade classification (making 70–79 a "C" worth 2 quality points) take effect with the Class of 2026. While these policies also apply to the Class of 2030, additional policy updates specifically for future cohorts are currently waiting on upcoming guidance from the Texas Commissioner of Education.

Q: Is Dual Credit (DC) currently classified as a level-credit course?

A: Yes. For the classes of 2027, 2028, and 2029, Dual Credit courses receive Level (Tier 2) credit rather than AP/Tier 1 credit. However, a proposed addendum for the Class of 2030 onward may place AP and regular Dual Credit on Tier 1, with CTE Dual Credit and Honors on Tier 2.

Q: Why is the district changing the quality point scale for modified courses from decimals (e.g., 1.9, 1.8) to whole numbers?

A: Because the district previously eliminated "D" grades, the scale was updated to a whole 2.0 quality point system for grades 70–79 to align directly with district grading practices.

Q: What are the eligibility criteria and rules for Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Graduation Honors?

A:

- Graduation honors remain based on weighted GPA, calculated during the 6th week of the final grading period using 3rd and 4th 9-week grades.
- To qualify for Valedictorian or Salutatorian, a student must be continuously enrolled in Willis ISD for the two years immediately preceding graduation. 3-year graduates and transfer students arriving after the start of junior year are ineligible.
- Ties are broken first by the total number of Tier 1 courses completed, and second by calculating GPA beyond the fourth decimal place.
- Beginning with the Class of 2027, the Valedictorian will automatically be designated as the district's Highest Ranking Graduate (eligible for state tuition scholarships).

Motion by Paulett Traylor and seconded by Charles Perry to approve the Superintendent's recommendation of the proposed revisions to Board Policy EIC (LOCAL), Academic Achievement: Class Ranking, as presented, to clarify and update the District's procedures for calculating grade point averages and class rank, ensure alignment with current instructional practices, Board priorities, and authorize administration to implement the revised policy effective with the applicable graduating cohorts. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

B. Discuss and Consider Approval of the Deductive Change Order and Final Payment from Durotech from the Cost Savings for the Calfee Middle School Project
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Bob Eaton, Chief of Construction and Operations*

Q: What are the financial terms of the final closeout change order with contractor Duratech?

A: The project audit yielded a cost savings of $2,645,439.78, reducing the total contract from $64,760,000 to $62,114,560.22 and authorizing a final payment to the contractor of $418,792.10.

Q: How long is the warranty period for Calfee Middle School?

A: The standard warranty runs for 12 months from the date of substantial completion (August 1st). The contractor is actively resolving lingering 1-year warranty items.

Motion by Scott Carson and seconded by Chad Jones to approve the Superintendent's recommendation of the deductive change order to release funds back to the District for the Calfee Middle School Project in the amount of $2,645,439.78 and approve the final payment in the amount of $418,792.2. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

C. Discuss and Consider Approval of 2026-2027 Health Insurance Program
   - ***Speaker(s):*** *Garrett Matej. CFO*

Q: What health insurance provider was recommended for renewal, and what was the main driver of plan changes?

A: Blue Cross Blue Shield was recommended and approved for renewal for the 2026–2027 plan year. Rising medical claims were the primary factor impacting renewal rates and plan evaluations.

Motion by Chad Jones and seconded by Paulett Traylor to approve the Superintendent's recommendation of Blue Cross Blue Shield as the Districts health insurance carrier and to approve the monthly funding levels as proposed in the Funding Level exhibit for the 2026-2027 plan year. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

D. Discuss and Consider Approval of a Delegate and Alternative to the 2026 Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Delegate Assembly

Motion by Chad Jones and seconded by Scott Carson to approve Paulett Traylor as the Delegate and Chad Jones as the Alternative to the 2026 Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Delegate Assembly.

E. Discussion of the Long Range Plan

Q: Does the district need to submit a 10-year projection plan or stick to the state-mandated 5-year plan?

A: While the Texas Education Agency (TEA) specifically requires a 5-year capital project and facility plan, board members suggested internal 10-year projections to account for longer-term projects like a new high school.

Q: How frequently can or should the Long-Range Planning Committee meet?

A: The committee can convene 1–2 times per school year to review projections and perform temperature checks. If project changes or timeline shifts occur, an updated document must be formally voted on by the board and re-filed with the TEA.

Q: What is the official deadline to submit the Long-Range Plan to the TEA?

A: There is no fixed state deadline date, but the plan must be formally approved and filed with the TEA before the district initiates its next bond committee process.

No vote was taken on this information item.

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
   1. Discuss Teacher Resignations and Consider Approval of Teacher Appointments. Tex. Gov't Code 551.074.
   2. Superintendent's Evaluation Texas Gov't Code §551.071

B. Consultation with Attorney: Pursuant to Texas Gov't Code §551.071

The Board convened into Closed Session at 7:44PM

RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The Board reconvened into Open Session at 11:10PM. President Hoegemeyer asked if there are any motions from closed session.

Motion by Scott Carson and seconded by Paulett Traylor to approve the personnel as listed. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

Motion by Scott Carson and seconded by Chad Jones to approve the annual performance evaluation of the Superintendent, and further move to extend the Superintendent's employment contract, authorizing the Board President to execute the contract amendment on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no comments from the Board.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

The superintendent expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve for another three years and announced the schedule for the next board meetings

FUTURE BUSINESS/MEETINGS

Public Meeting – August 19, 2026 at 5:00PM

The regular board meeting will convene following the adjournment of the Public Meeting

ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING

Motion by Paulett Traylor and seconded by Chad Jones to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously, 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 11:11PM