

ROCKDALE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 17, 2026 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

The Rockdale Independent School District Board of Trustees met in regular session at 5:00 p.m. on August 17, 2026, in the Rockdale ISD Conference Center. Board members present were Board President Scott Heintze, Vice President Jason Barcak, Secretary Amy Casas, Members Charles Miles, Janice Keen, Karen Laughlin, and Wesley Janak. Others present included Superintendent Dr. Michael Watson, Assistant Superintendent Kathy Pelzel, Assistant Superintendent Tiffany Whitsel, and Business Manager Rebecca King. District Staff in attendance were Matthew LaHue, Kayleigh Whitsel, and Dyan Shelander. Others present were Rita Johnson with Temple College, Laura Cullen, Silvia Luna, Veronica Luna, Melinda Rogers, Keaton Rogers, Tyler Kaatz, Haygen Kaatz, and Henleigh Kaatz.

President Scott Heintze called the meeting to order and a quorum was established. Keaton Rogers, a second grade student at Rockdale Elementary School and Haygen Kaatz, a fourth grade student at Rockdale Intermediate School led the Board of Trustees, administrators, and meeting guests in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. and Texas flags.

There were no meeting guests present to address the Board during the Public Forum portion of the meeting.

Assistant Superintendent Tiffany Whitsel reported the first ROAR recipients for the 2026-2027 school year. ROAR (Rockdale Outstanding Actions Recognized) is a program designed to celebrate those who go above and beyond in Rockdale ISD. This month's outstanding recipients are Erika Rivera, Elementary School PreK Teacher and Karina Reyes de Navarro, Junior High School Custodian. Erika's nomination stated "Mrs. Rivera is everything a family could hope for in a PK teacher and she continues to go above and beyond even after her students leave her classroom." Karina's nomination states "She takes tremendous pride in RJH. Karina sees what needs to be done and takes care of it." Congratulations to Erika and Karina for this well-deserved recognition!

During the Superintendent's Report, Assistant Superintendent Kathy Pelzel reported on the District and Campus Accountability Ratings through Texas Education Agency. Rockdale ISD improved its overall district rating to a 'C' through strong campus-level growth. Both Rockdale High School and Rockdale Intermediate School earned 'B' ratings, improving from previous 'C' ratings. Rockdale Junior High School also made significant improvement earning a 'C' rating from the previous year's 'D' rating. Business Manager Rebecca King presented the District Compensation Plan and supplemental schedules and financial advisor Lewis Wilks provided a district financial presentation. Dr. Watson concluded with an enrollment update from the first days of the new school year.

Motion by Charles Miles, second by Amy Casas for approval of the following consent agenda items:

1. Minutes from the July 20, 2026 Regular Board Meeting and July 29, 2026 Special Board Meeting
2. Hill Country Community Action Association, Inc. Memorandum of Understanding for Head Start and RISD Pre-Kindergarten Collaboration for 2026-2027 school year

Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

Motion by Janice Keen, seconded by Karen Laughlin for approval of adult meal prices for the 2026-2027 school year as presented. The Texas Department of Agriculture and The U.S. Department of Agriculture

released updated guidelines for the upcoming school year. Adult breakfast meal rates increase \$0.25 to \$3.75 and lunch rates remain at \$5.25. Student meal prices will remain at current rates. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

Motion by Janice Keen, seconded by Jason Barcak that the board add, revise, and delete local policies in accordance with the proposed changes resulting from the Policy Review Session conducted on July 21, 2026. All proposed changes were accepted as presented to the following policies:

- AE(LOCAL): EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY
- BBB(LOCAL): BOARD MEMBERS - ELECTIONS
- BED(LOCAL): BOARD MEETINGS - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
- BQA(LOCAL): PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS - DISTRICT-LEVEL
- BQB(LOCAL): PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS - CAMPUS-LEVEL
- DBA(LOCAL): EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS - CREDENTIALS AND RECORDS
- DCA(LOCAL): EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES - PROBATIONARY CONTRACTS
- DCB(LOCAL): EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES - TERM CONTRACTS
- DCE(LOCAL): EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES - OTHER TYPES OF CONTRACTS
- DEA(LOCAL): COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS - COMPENSATION PLAN
- DEAB(LOCAL): COMPENSATION PLAN - WAGE AND HOUR LAWS
- DK(LOCAL): ASSIGNMENT AND SCHEDULES
- DNA(LOCAL): PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL - EVALUATION OF TEACHERS
- EB(LOCAL): SCHOOL YEAR
- EEB(LOCAL): INSTRUCTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS - CLASS SIZE
- EFB(LOCAL): INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES – LIBRARY MATERIALS
- EIE(LOCAL): ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT - RETENTION AND PROMOTION
- FD(LOCAL): ADMISSIONS
- FEE(LOCAL): ATTENDANCE - OPEN/CLOSED CAMPUS
- FFA(LOCAL): STUDENT WELFARE - WELLNESS AND HEALTH SERVICES
- FFAC(LOCAL): WELLNESS AND HEALTH SERVICES - MEDICAL TREATMENT
- FM(LOCAL): STUDENT ACTIVITIES
- FNA(LOCAL): STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES - STUDENT EXPRESSION
- FNAA(LOCAL): STUDENT EXPRESSION - DISTRIBUTION OF NONSCHOOL LITERATURE
- FNAB(LOCAL): STUDENT EXPRESSION - USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES FOR NONSCHOOL PURPOSES
- FNCE(LOCAL): STUDENT CONDUCT - PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES
- FO(LOCAL): STUDENT DISCIPLINE
- GKD(LOCAL): COMMUNITY RELATIONS - NONSCHOOL USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

Motion by Charles Miles, seconded by Wesley Janak to approve the confirmation of compliance on Senate Bill 12 documentation presented. In accordance with Senate Bill 12 and Texas Education Code Section 39.008, school districts are required to periodically certify compliance with specific state operational, reporting, and administrative requirements. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

Motion by Amy Casas, seconded by Charles Miles to approve the purchase of 200 replacement Chromebooks from DHE Computer Systems through the TIPS-USA cooperative contract (#200105) in an amount not to exceed \$67,000, using funds from the 2026-2027 technology budget. The Chromebooks will replace outdated student devices in accordance with the district's Technology Replacement Plan. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

Motion by Karen Laughlin, seconded by Jason Barcak for approval of the July 2026 financial report as presented. Major general operating expenses include City of Rockdale - Monthly Billing, Milam County - Monthly SRO Services, and ParentSquare, Inc. - ParentSquare Annual Renewal. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

Motion by Charles Miles, seconded by Amy Casas to approve the Annual Investment Report for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 as presented and adopt the Resolution acknowledging the annual review of Board Policy CDA (LEGAL) and Board Policy CDA (LOCAL). In accordance with the Texas Public Funds Investment Act (PFIA), Texas Government Code 2256.005(e), and Board Policy CDA (LEGAL/LOCAL), the District Investment Officer must present an annual investment report to the Board of Trustees. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

Motion by Jason Barcak, seconded by Charles Miles to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between City of Rockdale and Rockdale Independent School District for the purpose of establishing a cooperative partnership under which Rockdale ISD will provide maintenance and repair services for designated City-owned police and public works vehicles. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

The Board and administrators reviewed dates of upcoming board meetings and athletic and academic event dates.

Motion by Jason Barcak, seconded by Amy Casas to enter into closed session at 6:55 p.m. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against). The Board of Trustees returned to open session at 8:02 p.m.

Dr. Watson reported the following Non-Certified Personnel Hires:

- Ariuzky Cantillo, Custodian for the 2026-2027 school year
- Anthony Dansby, Teacher, Junior High School for the 2026-2027 school year
- Donna Roberts, Instructional Aide, Junior High School for the 2026-2027 school year
- Blake Stancik, Grounds, Maintenance for the 2026-2027 school year
- Raquel Lares-Rivas, Custodian for the 2026-2027 school year
- Emelia Seda, Bilingual Aide, High School for the 2026-2027 school year

Dr. Watson reported the following Certified Personnel Hires:

- Veronica Green Yanes, Teacher, Elementary School for the 2026-2027 school year
- Dauris (Lisa) Flores, Teacher, Intermediate School for the 2026-2027 school year
- Brent Hasselbach, Teacher, High School for the 2026-2027 school year

Dr. Watson reported the following Non-Certified Personnel Resignations:

- Lanedra Boyd, ACE Coordinator, Junior High School effective 06/30/2026 (end of program)
- Angelica Cortez, Food Services, Elementary School effective 6/30/2026
- Deborah Tullos, Bus Driver effective 08/06/2026
- Maria Requena Mata, Custodian, Junior High School effective 08/11/2026

Dr. Watson reported the following Certified Personnel Resignations:

- Christi Keefer, Teacher, Elementary School, effective 07/31/2026
- Renee Clark, Teacher, High School, effective 06/27/2026

Motion by Janice Keen, seconded by Charles Miles to accept the recommendation from the Superintendent regarding a new Chapter 21 Term Contract and authorize the Board President to execute a Certified Administrator 11 Month Term Contract to Hudson Evans, RIS Assistant Principal for the 2026-2027 school year. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

Motion by Charles Miles, seconded by Wesley Janak to accept the recommendation from the Superintendent regarding a new Chapter 21 Term Contract and authorize the Board President to execute a Certified Administrator 12 Month Term Contract to Michael Young, RJH Principal for the 2026-2027 school year. Motion carried (6 for - Heintze, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against; Jason Barcak abstained from voting).

Motion by Amy Casas, seconded by Jason Barcak to adjourn. Motion carried (7 for - Heintze, Barcak, Casas, Miles, Keen, Laughlin, Janak; 0 against).

The meeting adjourned (8:04 p.m.).