

Minutes of Regular Meeting The Board of Trustees Duncanville ISD

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Duncanville ISD was held Monday, September 21, 2026, at 6:30 PM in the Duncanville ISD Education Plaza, 710 S. Cedar Ridge Drive, Duncanville, TX 75137.

1. CALL TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM

President Janet Veracruz called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. This meeting was called under the Texas Government Code 551.045.

Let the record show a quorum of Board of Trustees is present, that the meeting has been duly called and that the notice of this meeting has been posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

The following trustees were in attendance: Jacqueline Culton, Carla Fahey, Phil McNeely, Renee McNeely, DeRon Pelton, Hector Sanchez, and Janet Veracruz.

2. OPENING CEREMONIES

A. INVOCATION

President Janet Veracruz

B. PLEDGE TO US FLAG AND TEXAS FLAG

Central Fine Arts Academy Students

C. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. T. Lamar Goree

1. UPDATE OF CURRENT DISTRICT EVENTS, INFORMATION, OPERATIONS, AND PROGRAMS

Dr. T. Lamar Goree

Dr. Goree presented the Superintendent's Report. Thank you very much Madam President and other trustees. At this time, it is my absolute pleasure to present our superintendent's report for this 21st day of September.

Hispanic Heritage Month. September 15th through October 15th is Hispanic Heritage Month and our campuses are celebrating throughout the month. Be sure to follow our social media platforms to see how our students and staff are honoring Hispanic heritage and culture through special events and activity throughout this wonderful month.

Attendance Awareness Month. September is Attendance Awareness Month, and we're reminded of our Duncanville ISD family of the importance of showing up every day and how important it is to our

students' success. When students are present, they have more opportunities to learn, connections to grow and thrive. Champions attend and champions win.

We'd also like to bring back a very fun award that we began last year, and this is in the area of our August attendance winners. Congratulations to our August attendance winners. Elementary, we had Central Fine Arts Academy that came in at 97.83%. And for secondary schools, we honor Kennemer Middle School who came in at 96%. Let's give these schools a round of applause. Congratulations to both campuses for starting this school year strong and making attendance a priority.

A Day of Hope. On September 15th, we welcomed Dallas Cowboy Dak Prescott and Cooper Beebe to Duncanville High School for a special Day of Hope in partnership with the Faith. Fight. Finish Foundation, Hayden's Corner and AT&T. Our students started their morning with a powerful message about hope, perseverance, and believing in their futures. We are grateful to our community partners for creating this meaningful experience for our Panthers.

Leadership Southwest Day. On September 16th, we welcome the Leadership Southwest class of 2026 to Duncanville ISD. I had an opportunity to share our state of the district before the group toured our new Duncanville High School CTE edition, including of course our cosmetology and culinary arts program. It was a great opportunity to showcase the hands-on learning experiences available to our students.

Attention all Duncanville ISD employees. We are beginning a new cohort of participation in ILA, which is Inspiring Leadership Academy, as well as our ACE, which is Aspiring Counselors Excellence applications. These applications are now available. Are you ready to take the next step in your career? ILA develops future district level leaders through mentorship and leadership training while our ACE program develops and prepares aspiring school counselors to support the whole child. Invest in your future and apply today. Madam President, that does conclude our superintendent's report.

President Veracruz commented. That was a lot of good information, and I thank you for your report. A lot of smiling faces, of course, when Dak Prescott came on board, I believe that's correct. A lot of smiling faces for that. But overall, our campuses are shining and we're so proud of every campus.

D. RECOGNITIONS/COMMENDATIONS

Ana Avila

1. DONATIONS

Ana Avila

Ms. Ana Avila presented Donations. Good evening once again, Madam President, Trustees and Dr. Goree. Thank you for the opportunity to present the donations received in September 2026. Each month we are proud to share the incredible generosity of our community and the ongoing support that they show Duncanville ISD. Please look at the screens as I read the donations for this month.

For Kennemer Middle School, from Anthony Black, we have \$1,968.80. Also, for Kennemer Middle School, from Lee's Slow Smoke Catering, we have \$300. For Panther Pantry, from Chris Connealy, we have \$93.26.

The remaining donations are for Duncanville ISD. From Home Depot Dallas, we have \$475. From Home Depot Cedar Hill, we have \$240. From Lowe's Dallas, we have \$299. From Scooter's Coffee, we have

\$340. From Costco, we have \$1,528. From Girlfriends Ignite, we have \$250. From Raising Cane's, we have \$116.51. From LAN, we have \$2,407.14. From Medical History Dallas, we have \$2,500. And finally for Duncanville ISD, from Power Vidya, we have \$160. The total monthly donations for September is \$10,677.73. The total year to date for the '26-'27 school year is \$20,973.89. Thank you once again for allowing me to read the donations each month, and of course to our ongoing support from the community. Thank you. We appreciate you. That concludes the donations for this evening.

President Veracruz commented. Wow. Mind-blowing. Thank you so much.

2. PERSONNEL INTRODUCTIONS

Pamela Brown

There were no personnel introductions.

3. BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Board Member

There were no board member announcements or acknowledgments.

3. PUBLIC HEARING

A. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2026-2027 TAX RATE

Shonna Pumphrey

Ms. Shonna Pumphrey presented Public Hearing on the 2026-2027 Tax Rate. Good evening, Madam President, Trustees, Superintendent Goree. Tonight, I am here to have the public hearing for the 26-27 tax rate as required by the Texas Education Code. The purpose of this public hearing is to provide the community and Board of Trustees with information to assist in consideration and adoption of the 2026 tax rate. The statute requires the board to adopt the current year tax rate before September 29th. So, we're here today on the 21st to hopefully take care of that.

Here is just a little overview of the timeline we've been going through this school year. We had a public meeting to discuss and adopt the budget in the proposed tax rate on June the 15th, 2026. At that meeting, we adopted the budget. On July 25th, we received the certified values from the Dallas Central Appraisal District. On August the 1st, we submitted our local property value survey to the Texas Education Agency, and that information is used to help establish our maximum compressed tax rate, which was then determined by TEA on August the 5th. And then once again, September the 29th, we must have our tax rate adopted to get that information over to the Dallas County tax assessor so that they can prepare the bills that go out to the public in October.

Here is a little information on the certified property appraisal values that we received from the Dallas Central Appraisal District. You'll see here that the certified market value of the property in Duncanville ISD in the center column was \$11,066,352,470. That was a 2.62% increase from the certified market value of last year. As far as the taxable value, which is how we generate our funds, that was \$7,211,600,255. And that was a change of 5.12% from the prior year. You can see we've had a decrease in new construction values in the city, and then the bottom two rows are the current values that are under protest. That means citizens have appealed their values and they'll be working through the

review board to resolve those items.

Here are the tax rate trends we've experienced in the district over the last six years. You'll see last year our tax rate was 1.1057, and that was a debt rate of 0.3605 and an M&O rate of 0.7452, and that has been flat for the last two years. Prior to that, we were 1.0828, and you can kind of see on the charts here. So, for the last two years, we've been at \$1.10 and some change.

The tax rate we're proposing for 26-27 is a slight decrease at 1.0903, and the maintenance and operations portion of that is 0.7298 cents. Once again, the maintenance and operations funds are what we use to fund the day-to-day operations of the school district that pays our teachers and all our materials. On the interest and sinking side, which is our debt service, it is 0.3605, and all those funds are used to pay down our debt, and it cannot be used for anything else.

So, what does this mean for taxpayers? As I mentioned on the M&O side, we were previously at a rate of 0.7452, that is being decreased to 0.7298. So, the net impact on the M&O side would be a reduction of \$15.41 just based on the tax rate alone. What that means overall to a home buyer in Duncanville ISD at the median home price here would be a tax bill of \$1,809.85. So just to see that here. The tax rate that we're proposing would generate revenues of \$52,630,259 on the maintenance and operation side. You can see that kind of broken down here, that year-over-year change. Once again, that is a rate decrease from the 0.7452 that we've had the last two years. On the interest and sinking side, the levy proposed would generate revenues of \$25,997,819, and this would go towards all our debt. And once again, that rate is the same it has been for the last two years.

This next slide is for full disclosure to the community and to the board members. I just want to go over the No-New-Revenue rate, and this is something that we're required to disclose and it's part of our calculation. And what this basically is designed to do is to give the public and the board an idea of what our tax rate would be if we wanted to generate the exact same amount of revenue as we did the previous year. And so that tends to cause confusion because once again, we're decreasing our tax rate, but the appraisal board appraises your home. So even though we're decreasing our rate, your overall bill may go up, or it may not change just because the value of your home may have increased.

So, what this rate here is designed to do to just let you know if everything remained the same for the district and we wanted to generate the exact same amount of revenue, what that tax rate would be. And so once again, just consider you have inflation, prices are going up, so if we got the same amount of money, our purchasing power obviously would be less.

So here you'll see that No-New-Revenue tax rate is the 1.03658. And just so you can see that here on the chart, that No-New-Revenue rate that I talked about at the 1.036581, we're proposing a tax rate of 1.0903. So, there's a variance there of the 0.053. That tends to cause the confusion because we're decreasing our tax rate, but the effective tax rate goes up because we're generating additional revenues compared to the prior year because of your appraised value of your home, not because we're increasing our tax rate.

Here I wanted to further kind of explain to the community and to the board about the tax rate and the components of the tax rate so that everyone is clear where these numbers come from, that we're not making them up. They're pretty much state mandated, and so I wanted to go over some of that for you here.

The voter approval tax rate, that is the ceiling. That is the highest tax rate that you are allowed to go forth with without having an election. You'll see here you must seek voter approval if you decide to exceed that rate.

In the three components are the maximum compressed tax rate. The second one is the enrichment tax rate, and the third one is the debt rate. So those are the three pillars of the proposed tax rate that we are proposing. As I outlined before, the maximum compressed tax rate, what is that? That is the rate per \$100 evaluation at which the district must levy in maintenance and operations tax to receive the full amount of our state aid. So that amount is determined by the state. We submit that survey information as outlined in the timeline and based on the overall property value growth in the state of Texas, they come back and tell you what your maximum compressed tax rate will be. So, for this tax year 2026 rather, the 0.6169 was our rate last year. And so that is decreased to 0.6015, which pretty much is what drove the decrease to the 0.7298 was this change here in our maximum compressed tax rate, which was dictated to us by the state.

The second component is the enrichment tax rate. You always hear about the golden pennies and whatnot on the tax rate. Basically, what that is there's a maximum of 17 cents that a district can generate revenue on, and Duncanville right now is at 0.1283. So, we currently receive all eight of our golden pennies, but only four in some change of the copper pennies. So, to ever maximize that 17 cents, we would have to go to the voters to exceed that amount. This once again is the amount that we're limited by the state.

The third component is the debt rate, which is the amount that we need to generate to pay our debt. So those are the three components of the 1.0903 that we're proposing, the maximum compressed tax rate, the enrichment rate and the debt rate.

When you add all those together, you get to 1.0903. So, that is how our tax rate has been comprised. And so just to make sure everyone is clear and it's transparent what goes into those numbers.

The next steps would be for the board to adopt the tax rate resolution that will be brought forth later in the agenda and I will take any questions, but this here is the resolution, basically what you'll be reading. We're proposing once again, the 1.09 tax rate, 0.7298 on the M&O side, 0.3605 on the debt rate side, and there's specific language that must go into that motion as well as in the resolution. And so once again, that'll be brought forth to the board later this evening. And I'll take any questions.

President Veracruz commented. Thank you so much, Ms. Pumphrey. The details and the data, I thank you for all of that, the explanations that you give behind the information so much and breaking that down.

Are there any public comments on the 2026-2027 tax rate? Seeing that we do not have any public comments, the hearing has ended. The hearing is now closed.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

President Veracruz stated. We have received one card. Before you make your way to the front, please allow me to read the following. State law prohibits board members from responding to speakers in

public forum unless the topic regards a matter specifically posted on tonight's agenda. The board will carefully consider any concerns expressed and an administrator will investigate the matter. At your request, the administrator will contact you regarding your concern. Speakers will limit their comments to three minutes. If more than five speakers are present, speakers must limit their comments to two minutes. Any discussion concerning specific personnel is prohibited in open session. If you wish to address the board regarding a personnel matter, please contact the superintendent's office to schedule the matter for a future closed session meeting.

Having stated that, when I call your name, please come forward, state your name and your address, and you may begin. I'd like to call up Robin Blackman and Sandra Gates, Vice President of the DHS PTSA.

Ms. Robin Blackman addressed the board. Good evening, everyone. My name is Robin Blackman and I'm the Duncanville High School Parent Teacher Student Association President. It's been told to us that we have seven PTAs here in the district, but Duncanville High School is the only one that's been active. So, to the principals and the assistant principals that are here, we'd like to let you know that Duncanville High School is here to help. We have the correct person that you need to contact to get you up and running, and we look forward to working with you. We are so excited about the school year. This is our biggest executive board that we have. We have 10 executive board members. We are very excited about this. We can accomplish more this year.

But my purpose, I just wanted to give a brief outline of what our goals were and what we're really working on this school year. We would like to improve family school partnerships. We want to fund academic programs for our teachers and students. We would like to welcome more diverse families to be a part of the PTSA, and we would like to improve communication between the school administration and families through the PTSA communications, newsletters, social media, and regular membership meetings. We'd also like to build community partnerships and most importantly, advocate for policies that may concern our parents, teachers, and students. So, we're asking for your full support as we accomplish these goals we have this year. Thank you for your time. We're really excited. Thank you so much.

President Veracruz commented. Thank you for coming to the meeting and sharing.

Ms. Sandra Gates addressed the board. Hello. I'm Sandra Gates. For those who might not know who I am, I'm a long-time grandmother volunteer in the Duncanville ISD. I am here to make sure that each and every one of you join the PTSA tonight. I have my folder, plenty of paper for everyone. Get your pen ready, get your pencil ready, get your phone ready and take down this information. Those who can hear my voice here and at home, if you want to sign up online, [www.join, J-O-I-N-P-T-A.O-R-G, .org](http://www.join-J-O-I-N-P-T-A.O-R-G.org). Again, [www.join, J-O-I-N-P-T-A.org](http://www.join-J-O-I-N-P-T-A.org). You can also reach us through our email, write out Duncanville, HSPTSA, the number one@gmail.com. We're just here for you all to become a part. I want to thank you all for all that you do, superintendent, the board, the leadership. Principal Colbert, we appreciate you all for letting us be a guest coming in, but we really need your support. We want to get the Golden Apple Award this year. That means we need a member for every teacher. I think we've requested information about how many teachers we have, and we need that by December. So, thank you all.

President Veracruz commented. Thank you. Thank you for coming to the meeting and sharing.

5. CLOSED SESSION as authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

The board went into closed session at 6:58 p.m.

A. CONSULTATION WITH THE BOARD ATTORNEY (§551.071)

Private Consultation with the Boards' attorney with respect to pending or contemplated litigation, settlement offers, and matters where the attorney's duty to the Board, pursuant to the code of professional responsibility of the State Bar of Texas, clearly conflicts with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act.

B. PURCHASE, EXCHANGE, LEASE, OR VALUE OF REAL PROPERTY (§551.072)

C. PERSONNEL (§551.074)

Appointments, Discipline, Dismissals, Duties, Employment, Evaluations, Extensions, Leaves of Absences, Non-Renewals and Proposals for Non-Renewals, Renewals, Reassignments, Retirements, and Settlements

6. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION AT 7:36 PM

7. TAKE ACTION ON ITEMS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

There was no action needed on items discussed in closed session.

8. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (ALL ITEMS MAY BE ACTED UPON AT THE SAME TIME BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES)

Trustee Fahey made a motion to approve the consent agenda; Trustee P. McNeely seconded the motion. Motion passes 7-0.

Board Member Vote	Yea	Nay	Abstain
Jacqueline Culton	X		
Carla Fahey	X		
Phil McNeely	X		
Renee McNeely	X		
DeRon Pelton	X		
Hector Sanchez	X		
Janet Veracruz	X		

A. AUGUST 17, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

Jody Lofton

B. TEAM OF EIGHT MEETING MINUTES

Jody Lofton

C. FINANCIAL REPORT

Shonna Pumphrey

D. APPROVAL OF PURCHASES OVER \$100,000

Shonna Pumphrey

E. APPROVAL OF COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN DUNCANVILLE ISD AND HEAD START OF GREATER DALLAS INC.

Dr. Sam Nix

F. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF DUNCANVILLE HS BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CHICAGO ELITE SHOWCASE IN CHICAGO, IL (DECEMBER 3–6, 2026)

William Mitchell

G. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF DUNCANVILLE HS BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE HOLIDAY HOOPFEST IN LEHI/SALT LAKE CITY, UT (DECEMBER 10-13, 2026)

William Mitchell

H. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF DUNCANVILLE HS PANTHERETTES GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CANYON CLASSIC (SHE GOT GAME CLASSIC) IN GOODYEAR, ARIZONA (NOVEMBER 19-22, 2026)

William Mitchell

I. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD REGARDING WAGE PAYMENTS DURING EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS (NO PREMIUM PAYMENT) FOR EMPLOYEES ASSIGNED TO WORK AT DUNCANVILLE HIGH SCHOOL AND THE NATATORIUM

Pamela Brown

9. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF ACTION AGENDA ITEMS

A. CONSIDER ADOPTION OF THE 2026 TAX RATE RESOLUTION

Shonna Pumphrey

Ms. Shonna Pumphrey presented Consider Adoption of the 2026 Tax Rate Resolution. Good evening, Madam President and Superintendent Goree, distinguished trustees. Tonight, I bring forth to the board the adoption of the 2026 tax rate resolution. As mentioned in the public hearing, we're proposing for the tax year 2026, a tax rate of 1.0903 comprised of maintenance and operations at 0.7298 and interest in sinking at 0.3605. The resolution, once again, is to set the tax rate at 1.093. In the bottom pink section here is some of the specific language on the resolution. If you have that in front of you, you'll see it. It's required by statute to make sure that information is disclosed. There's also a specific motion that must be read to adopt the tax rate. And so, it is listed here. It must be read just like this. I will take any questions at this time. And I'm asking the board to adopt the tax rate as presented at the public hearing.

Trustee Pelton made a motion that the property tax be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of 1.0903, which is effectively a 5.18% increase in the tax rate; Trustee Culton seconded the motion. Motion passes 7-0.

Board Member Vote	Yea	Nay	Abstain
Jacqueline Culton	X		
Carla Fahey	X		
Phil McNeely	X		
Renee McNeely	X		
DeRon Pelton	X		
Hector Sanchez	X		
Janet Veracruz	X		

B. DALLAS CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT'S CERTIFIED ROLLS FOR 2026

Shonna Pumphrey

Ms. Shonna Pumphrey presented Dallas Central Appraisal District Certified Rolls for 2026. Good evening, Madam President, distinguished trustees, Superintendent Goree. Tonight I bring forth the Dallas Central Appraisal District certified property tax rolls. This is basically the information at the detailed parcel level of all the properties that were appraised in the district. As we mentioned before, the \$11 billion market value and then the taxable value of seven billion. And so, by adopting and approving the certified rolls, I'll be able to send this information onto the Dallas County tax assessor to prepare the bills for all the businesses and residents in Duncanville ISD. And I'll take any questions at this time.

Trustee P. McNeely made a motion that the board moves to certify the appraisal role for the district from Dallas Central Appraisal District as submitted by Shonna Pumphrey, Chief Financial Officer and as recommended by Dr. T. Lamar Goree, Superintendent of Schools; Trustee Sanchez seconded the motion. Motion passes 7-0.

Board Member Vote	Yea	Nay	Abstain
Jacqueline Culton	X		
Carla Fahey	X		
Phil McNeely	X		
Renee McNeely	X		
DeRon Pelton	X		
Hector Sanchez	X		
Janet Veracruz	X		

C. APPROVAL OF THE 2026-2027 DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLAN (DIP)

Dr. Tellauance Graham

Dr. Tellauance Graham presented Approval of the 2026-2027 District Improvement Plan (DIP). Good evening, Madam President and to all trustees and to Dr. Goree. Tonight I'm presenting a 2026-2027 District Improvement Plan for your consideration and approval. This plan gives us a clear path in our work ahead. It connects the goals this board has already approved to the actions that we'll take this school year.

There are two simple ideas in this plan. That's every student and every dollar. Every student should be

known, challenged, supported and growing. Every graduate should leave us ready for college, career and military. Every dollar should support the work that helps students learn. We're not funding programs just because we've always had them. We're funding the work that produces results for students.

This slide shows all the work and how it connects in our district. In 2025, the board adopted our strategic plan and established where Duncanville should be by 2028. The strategic plan is our destination. The District Improvement Plan is the work we must complete this year to move toward that destination. Each campus improvement plan then connects to the district plan, and the work finally reaches the classroom desk. So, we do not have a board plan, a district plan and campus plan moving in different directions. We have one direction. The board and the superintendent set the direction and expectation. Our job as administration is to carry out that direction, monitor the work and report the results back to you.

Our board goals, strategic plan goals and District Improvement Plan goals are aligned. We're not creating a new scoreboard every year. Texas requires boards establish goals in early reading, early math, and College and Career Military Readiness. Those same measures are built into this plan. That allows the board and administration to look at the same numbers and answer the same question, are our students getting better? Tonight we establish those expectations and monitor the progress. Our responsibility is to build those strategies and support our schools and use the resources wisely and produce those results.

The plan is built around four priorities, student academic success, student family and community, personnel and professional development, fiscal steward and operational excellence. I think about them in four simple words, students, connection, people and money.

This slide shows six numbers we will watch closely this year. Third grade reading moves from 34% to 40% goal at meets grade level. Third grade math moves from 34% to 35%. Our school progress score or domain two moves from 72% to 75%. Our CCMR, which is College and Career Military Readiness, moves from 81% to 92%. Attendance moves from 91.08% to 92.5%. And our TSI, which is our Texas Success Initiative, college readiness measure moves from about 15% to 19%.

We also want to recognize that progress is already happening. District-wide STAAR performance at approaches or above increased from 60% to 64%. Math increased from 52 to 59%, and academic growth increased from 61 to 68%. This message is simple. The work is producing progress, but we're not done.

Next, student results do not happen without strong adult and responsible use of our resources. We want the teacher incentive allotment designations to grow from 32 to 60 teachers. We want teacher certifications to move from 85% to 90%, and we want certified teacher retention to move from 79% to 82%. On the financial side, we want our instructional spending, how much are we spending on instruction, to move from 55% to 57%? We also want payroll costs to move from 84% to 82% as we better align staffing to enrollment. We also want to maintain that superior achievement first rating and improve the score. This is what we mean by every dollar. We're asking whether our people, programs, and dollars are producing the results students need.

On our next slide, this plan was not just developed by one person or one department. On September

9th, our district educational improvement committee reviewed the plan. The committee includes parents, teachers, campus employees, business representatives, and community members. They worked through the goals, strategies, and data before this plan came to the board.

Approving the plan is not the end of this process. It's really the beginning. We will formally check the progress in November, January, April, and June. The board will see the same measures that administration is watching. We will not wait until June to find out if something didn't work. If a strategy is working, we will continue it. If it needs improvement, we'll adjust it. If it's not producing the results, we must be willing to stop it and use those resources differently.

Tonight, the administration recommends approval of the 2026-2027 District Improvement Plan. This plan gives us those measurable goals, responsible leaders, strategies, and regular checkpoints. At this time, we'll accept any questions.

Trustee P. McNeely made a motion that the board of trustees approve the 2026-2027 District Improvement Plan as required by the Texas Education Code 11.252; Trustee Sanchez seconded the motion. Motion passes 7-0.

Board Member Vote	Yea	Nay	Abstain
Jacqueline Culton	X		
Carla Fahey	X		
Phil McNeely	X		
Renee McNeely	X		
DeRon Pelton	X		
Hector Sanchez	X		
Janet Veracruz	X		

10. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION AGENDA

A. 2026 STAAR DATA, CAMPUS RATINGS

Dr. Sam Nix

Dr. Sam Nix presented 2026 STAAR Data, Campus Ratings. Good evening, Madam President, members of the board and Dr. Goree. The 2026 STAAR data was released in late August, released just too quick for us to have that board meeting. And so today is designed to give you a high level overview of our accountability based on STAAR. And what I'd like to share with you today is that this presentation is going to be presented by three individuals. First, I'm going to bring up Ms. Lucretia Newton. She is our director of data and assessment. She's going to go over the factual data. I will then return to the podium to go over our key findings, our next steps at a high level. And then finally you'll hear from Ms. Kristi Mullins, who will talk to you about our foundation, our early literacy plan and our data and how we're building a foundation for continued success. So next I'd like to introduce Ms. Lucretia Newton, our director of assessment and accountability.

Ms. Lucretia Newton added to the presentation. Thank you, Dr. Nix. Madam President, members of the board, Dr. Goree, I'm honored to be here tonight to present to you a high level of our STAAR data from the 25-26 school year. We'll align ourselves with making sure we have an understanding of the accountability framework for the state of Texas. Then we're going to talk about what, again, a very high

level of our district and campus results where we ended up in our scores. As Dr. Nix mentioned, he will come back to present our key findings and implications as well as our priorities moving forward. And then again, as he said, Kristi Mullins will follow up with our early literacy update. While our youngest Panthers do not take a STAAR assessment, we know that that foundation starts early and for them to be able to perform in middle school, high school, upper elementary, they must have that foundation. So, it's important for us to keep track of those students as well.

First, our STAAR and accountability. There's a little bit of difference. The STAAR is a puzzle piece to the whole big puzzle of our state accountability system. STAAR performance, it tells us how our students did on each state assessment. We get reports by subject, by grade level and performance level, and those performance levels include did not meet, approaches grade level, meet grade level and master's grade level. Those are the four performance levels that students receive their grades in. And it is again, one piece of the puzzle to the whole accountability overall. So, looking at accountability ratings, that tells us our overall performance. It tells us how we performed across multiple state measures, including STAAR, but also TELPAS, College and Career Military Readiness, graduation rate, all those things are taken into consideration. We get an overall rating and domain scores, and we're going to talk about those domains in detail in a moment. Campuses and districts are rated A, B, C, D, and F by the state of Texas. And again, this is a broader evaluation, not just based on STAAR scores, but some of those other outcomes as well.

We have three areas that rate our campuses and districts. They are divided into domains. Domain one is student achievement. Student achievement is basically how our students perform on the STAAR test at the elementary and middle school levels. In high school, we bring in some other factors. In domain two, which is our school progress, that is how students do overtime. Do they grow from one year to the next? And then domain three is closing the gaps. This is how well we're doing at ensuring all student groups are being successful. So, we break down and look at our individual student groups, like our economically disadvantaged students, our African American students, Hispanic students, each group overall and how they're performing.

To calculate a campus rating, the state looks at, again, that domain one student achievement. Again, for elementary and middle school, it is all based on their STAAR scores. For high school, we add in College Career and Military Readiness and graduation rate to those STAAR scores.

Domain two is broken down into two parts. There's part A and a part B. Part A, again, is that growth. Did a student grow from third grade reading to fourth grade reading? Did they improve their score?

Part B is called relative performance. This one is a little more complicated. The state has a formula where we are judged based on how well our scores are compared to other districts or campuses that have similar percentages of economically disadvantaged. So, for example, to get an A, our percent is less than a district that has less than 10 or 15% of economically disadvantaged students.

The state takes the higher score of part A or part B, and then they compare that to the higher of domain one and domain two, and that score becomes 70% of our grade. So, the biggest percentage of our grade is based on domain one or two, whichever is higher. Then 30% is based on that domain three, which again is looking at each of those subgroups and we look at those subgroups for academic achievement, academic growth, graduation rates, our English language proficiency from our TELPAS scores, student success, and College and Career Military Readiness. All of those together, 70% plus 30%, give us our

overall grade.

Our district received an overall rating of 72. As you can see from the bottom, we were pretty flat along that rating. We've been a 72 in 2023, 73 in 2024, and then 72 and 2025 and 2026. Those are across the bottom of that slide. In the chart, it shows our domain one score, our student achievement was 69. Our domain 2A was 68. Domain 2B was 73. The 73 is in red because that is the highest score of 2A or 2B, and then the highest of domain one or domain two. So, our 70% is based on that relative performance score of 73. Our domain three score was 71. So, when you add those together, 70% times 73 and 30% was 71, we get our overall rating of a 72.

Here is a list of all our campus ratings from 2025 to 2026. I'll give you a moment to read through these. As you can see as you're reading, we have many campuses who improved a letter grade or more. We have campuses who remained the same and we have a few campuses who declined a letter grade. At this time, I'm going to have Dr. Nix return to the podium to talk about our key findings.

Dr. Nix added to the presentation. I want to take just a second, we all know that the measure of a student is much more than a STAAR score. The work that our principals do, the work that our campus does, we know that it can't be just encapsulated in a STAAR score, but that's what we're held accountable for, and that's what we're held accountable for moving. So, we also know that according to the research, the James Coleman report, James Hattie Meta-Analysis, the Rand Corporation research done in 2024 and 2025, that the number one impact on student achievement is the quality of teacher in front of that student, period. And there's only one way, or there's really two ways to get that. Number one is you hire ready-made quality teachers, or number two, you develop them and you grow them and you invest in them. It's not the programs, it's not the bell schedules, it's not the curriculum. Those things contribute, but the number one thing is the quality of the teacher in front of that student.

And so, in Duncanville, a quarter of our teachers are zero to three years in teaching. A quarter of our teachers are zero to three. So, what I'm about to read is so important because the work of these leaders, the work of these principals, the work of these teachers, it's phenomenal to see what they've done in a very short time. The first area of celebration is you see there are 46% of our campuses improved by at least one letter grade. In the state of Texas, that percentage is 31, 31% of schools in the state of Texas, schools improved by one letter grade. 46% of our campuses did that. In the state of Texas, only 7% of campuses improved by two letter grades. In Duncanville, we had 31% of our campuses improve to two letter grades in one year. It's not where we want to be, but it is definitely the work that we want to build on.

Number two, we reduced the number of F campuses from seven to one. Once again, not where we want to be, but definitely on trajectory to where we want to go and where we're building on. A lot of hard work from the individuals behind me, a lot of hard work investing in building capacity and developing those teachers, and we continue with that work.

Number three, elementary campuses went from earning zero distinctions to earning 10 distinctions. I want to pause here to make sure that I elaborate on what a distinction is. Each campus in the state of Texas has what's called a comparison group. Each campus has 39 campuses that they are compared to, so it's a total of 40 campuses in your comparison group. To get a distinction, you must perform in the top 25% of your comparable group.

So, to have zero distinctions means not only were we not performing well, but we weren't even performing in the top 25% of our comparable schools. To get 10 distinctions means not only are we performing well, but we're performing so well in campuses that are compared to us that we are in the top 25 of those comparable groups. It's really a remarkable feat. And I just want to stamp, we had one campus that got almost perfect, six out of seven possible distinctions, and that was Hastings Elementary with Ms. Robinson.

Number four, Duncanville High School Collegiate Academy rose from 12 last year to 14 out of 16 early college high school distinctions. And I want to stop here just to make sure that we're clear. These early college high school distinctions are different than the regular accountability distinctions. Early college high school distinctions have a very rigorous palette that they must meet in order to get distinctions. We have an early college high school, which differs from most schools that have magnet high schools. When you have a magnet school, you get to select the cream of the crop. You get to select any student that you want to be a part of the program. When you have an early college high school, you have something called an OBM, that's called an outcome-based measure. We must select a certain percentage of special education students or students labeled special education. There's a requirement that you identify certain EB students, certain at-risk students. You can't just pick and choose the "cream of the crop" students. You must take all students, economically disadvantaged, so forth and so on.

Because of that, you're at what some would call a disadvantage because you're having to work with all students, not just the ones you get to pick. And then the distinctions for that are much more rigorous for the early college. For example, they must earn an associate's degree of a certain percentage. They must score at a certain percentage on their STAAR test. They must get certain college credits, things of that nature. So, to earn 14 out of 16 is remarkable.

Before I move on, I just want to stamp this, we're not going to ever earn 16 out of 16 for collegiate, and let me tell you why. The two that we're missing, one is EB students, that is your emergent bilingual students. Our campus does such a great job educating those students that by the time they graduate, they've exited out of the program. And in order to get a distinction, you must keep a certain percentage in. We meet the criteria for getting them in, but we exit them before they get out, and that's what we want to do. So, we would not earn that distinction, right, Dr. Staatz?

The second is progression, and that means that the students that start with your program end with your program. Our mobility rate is just high, and so because our mobility rate is so high, it's just hard to keep the same students in the program the entire time. Those are the two that we don't get. So, I just wanted to pause there just to share the difference between the ECHS distinctions and STAAR distinctions.

And then lastly, Duncanville High School achieved double-digit STAAR gains in algebra one and biology. Mr. Colbert and his team have done a remarkable job to get double. A smart goal is say, 4 to 5%, doubling scores is remarkable and they did a great job. And so those are just a few of our key areas and celebrations.

Implications here and findings. We have our work cutouts in just making sure that we continue to strengthen the quality of first-time instruction. That's what tier one instruction means. It means first-time instruction. It means when those kids are in that classroom, the instruction that they're getting the very first time is quality. And so, we must continue to strengthen that first time instruction.

Key findings and implications, second, middle school data highlights a clear opportunity for focused support. The reality is our middle schools are going to require our focus. As I was thinking and preparing, the reality is at one of our middle schools... Well, first of all, last year was our first inaugural year of bringing sixth grade up to middle school. There's some adjustment there. The second reality is at one of our middle schools; we've had four principals in five years. At another middle school, we've had three principals in four years. That's not an excuse. The reality is when you have that type of disruption, it takes a moment just to get the continuity and the foundation and things moving. And so, we are very aware of what that's going to take to move it. We're up to the task and we are going to move that and we're on track for that, but that's just the reality of what we're finding is that middle school is going to take our targeted support.

Number three, accelerated school improvement campuses through targeted differentiated support. That's exactly what it means. Our school improvement campuses targeted, meaning all our campuses, not just school improvement, but specifically them. We have to know where every one of our students are, our teachers have to track, our administrators have to track, our principals have to track, our deputies have to track, I have to track, and we are doing that to make sure we know where every student is, where every student is, what they need, and make sure that we're getting it. It's a lot of work on our principals, but that's the work that we must engage in to make sure that we're moving appropriately.

That word differentiated there. Our school improvement campuses are working with a third party, SustainED, who we've all heard and are familiar with. Our principals should be nodding behind me because they have provided such support and they're so much in the work of working with those teachers and administrators.

And then number four, provide consistent research-based interventions and enrichment opportunities. We've shifted some of our schedules and some of our master schedules and bell schedules to make sure that we can do that more specifically.

Lastly, high level next steps. I'll talk about this next slide, but we have a board work session where we'll go into more depth as to specifically what this support looks like by campus, more intentional so we can share with you what the plan is. But number one, adjusting our high touch presence in schools and classrooms to observe and refine instructional quality. And basically, what that means is high touch means that we're being very intense about where we're going, where we're spending our time and who we're working with and how we're monitoring that work.

Number two, with so many new teachers in our district, with so many novice teachers that are coming in, we don't have time for them to figure it out. We've got to make sure that we give them the roadmap so they can hit the ground running. So that means making adjustments to our curriculum, that means understanding what adjustments need to be made so that they can get in those classrooms, unpack that curriculum, and we can spend our time training them to internalize and unpack so they can get that classroom and do what they need to do.

Number three, restructured intervention services, differentiated support for individual student needs. And that basically simply means looking at our tiered support, our tier two, our tier three, our interventions, the quality of those interventions and making sure that we have a system, not an action, but a system in place to monitor the effectiveness of that. And lastly, and I'll just say really there's no

time for inaction.

Board, I'm just going to sit here in front of you and tell you now, it is my expectation that the deputies, that the principals that sustain it, all of us, we do not wait when we see a problem. When data is not trending the way we want it to, it is my expectation that the coordinator say something to me, the principals say, the deputies say something to me. We cannot sit by and let students not learn and go weeks at a time and not address it. It's unacceptable. It's unacceptable for me. It's unacceptable for them. I know people feel a certain kind of way when you start addressing things and holding people accountable, but that's just where we are. And that's my expectation for the deputies, that's my expectation for the principals, that's my expectation for SustainED. And it can ruffle some feathers. But at the end of the day, it's not ruffling feathers to make anyone upset, it's ruffling feathers to make sure that we're taking the right steps, the urgent steps to make sure students have what they need. And that's just what the expectation is.

Just a reminder that we have a workshop in October where we will provide a greater detail of what we've shared today so that if you have any questions about exactly what we're doing or getting into the weeds or what that looks like, we can have that conversation and unpack that for you. That presentation is going to include a review of our adjusted structure. At that presentation, we'll be able to share with you our beginning-of-the-year data so we can see are we on track? Are we not or what are we doing about it? Our systems in place for support, monitoring and accountability, and then key changes implemented this year, how we're going to shift to make sure that we continue to build on the growth that we're seeing.

It's not here, but I just want to share, we have a visit coming October the 29th because TEA has said, "Duncanville, you have grown so much in one year, so much in one year. We want to come see what you're doing." And so, we're excited to welcome them. We're excited to have them come out, see what we're doing. And once again, board, we're not where we want to be, but we are definitely making growth.

Next to the podium, it's going to be my pleasure to bring Ms. Kristi Mullins because board, everything that we're sharing with you, everything starts with the foundation. And so, we want to talk about our foundation. Where are we? I'm not interested in quick fix work. There's room for quick fix work, but what we're building is sustainable systems. And to do that, you must start with a solid foundation. So, Ms. Kristi Mullins.

Ms. Kristi Mullins added to the presentation. Good evening, Madam President, members of the board and Dr. Goree. I am so excited to share with you tonight some of our early literacy updates and data as it relates to our youngest Panthers in our pre-K through second grade classrooms.

In year one of our early literacy handbook implementation, we sought to create a baseline of data through classroom observation, tiering of foundational skills instruction and alignment between tier one instruction and student reading outcomes. Additionally, we trained teachers quarterly on instructional practices specific to foundational reading skills. We also implemented the use of Heggerty, which is a phonemic awareness resource that is supplemental to our curricular materials specific to phonological and phonemic awareness.

We intend in year two to continue this good work and to add additional training for our instructional

coaches by way of foundational reading skills. And we aim to have a closer dialogical relationship with our campus administrators to strengthen early literacy practices on each of our campuses.

What you're going to see here is in keeping with the district goal of 85% of students approaching at the STAAR level, 45% of students meeting grade level on STAAR and 35% of students mastering STAAR, we have aligned our K through second grade iReady data with these expectations. Now, it's not a perfect comparison because our students don't take STAAR, but it is a close representation of that approaches meets and master's level.

So, if you'll look with me at kindergarten in the red box, we had 99% of students approaching grade level, 84% of students leaving kindergarten at end of year on grade level, meeting grade level standards, and 52% of those same students exceeding the grade level of showing at or above grade level as a master's level student. In first grade, 97% of students left at the end of the year at approaches grade level. 61% of those students met the grade level standard and 38% of students exceeded the grade level standard as a master's student. And in second grade, 77% of students were at the approaches grade level, 50% of students at the meet grade level, and 24% of students were above grade level at the master's level as shown on end of year iReady assessment.

As we rated the tier one foundational skills instruction, and that tier one as Dr. Nix mentioned is that first pass of instruction, the first time that students get that, our goal was that we would have a distinct and dual purpose. We wanted to determine if the instructional level that students were receiving truly affected their outcomes and if our early literacy team was accurate in our assessment of quality instruction within the classroom. What you see in front of you is the rating between how we scored teachers instruction and how that aligned to their data. So, what you'll see is at middle of year in kindergarten, there was a 79% alignment between how our early literacy team rated the instruction that we saw in classrooms and the student outcomes that were a result of that instruction. So, if we went in and said, "This teacher is doing a phenomenal job," then their data also showed that 79% of the time.

Also, at middle of year in first grade, 68% of the time our instructional tiering and data aligned and with second grade, 75% of the time our instructional tiering and student data aligned. We certainly wanted those percentages to rise, and we wanted to be more accurate with our tiering and alignment. And so, we met as a team, put a couple of processes and protocols in place, calibrated. And at the end of the year in kindergarten, 93% of the time, the teacher's instructional tier matched their students' reading outcomes. In first grade, 77% of the time their instructional tier matched their reading outcomes. And in second grade, 85% of the time, the way that our team tiered the teacher was reflective in the student's reading outcomes.

I'm very excited to share with you three, what I consider just incredible success stories of our educators. The first educator from Hyman Elementary began our 25-26 school year with observation data that showed a significant room for improvement, specifically in reading instruction. After coaching specific training, the teacher ended the year at one of our highest levels of instructional efficacy. Her student data at middle of year terrified me. 39% of students were on track to make growth. And my thought is, "Well, we're doomed here." But after she put in a lot of work, after we worked with her consistently, her campus administrators worked with her consistently. At the end of year, 90% of students in her classroom ended on grade level or even above the grade level specifics. That specific data is 55% of

students on grade level and 35% at master's or above grade level.

Likewise at Hastings, we had a wonderful educator there who had just the best attitude, the type of teacher anybody wants their child to have, a willingness to learn and be coached. In the first three nine weeks of instruction, she was observed with opportunities for improvement in direct reading instruction, wonderful attitude, wonderful relationships, just missing the mark where instruction was concerned. She received support and attended every training that we offered without fail, with the best attitude. She ended the year with student data that exceeded the district goal of 85% approaches with 100% approaches and at 45% meets, she exceeded with 50% of her students meeting the grade level for this school year.

And at Acton, we had an educator that was consistently observed at our highest tier of instruction, not just a wonderful educator with a great attitude, but consistently. Every time we go in, we think if we could clone her just over and over, it would be wonderful. Not only was she tiered high every time, every single time her student data came out, it was amongst the highest in the district. She ended the school year last year with 100% of students on or above grade level, and we were just so proud of her work.

So, in keeping with that same mentality, the 85-45-35 goal that has been set forth for us by the district, the early literacy iReady end of year assessment results are in blue for the end of the 25-26 school year. You'll see, as I mentioned earlier, 84% of kindergarten students left at the meets level, 61% of students left first grade at the meets level, and 50% of second-graders left at the meets or on grade level.

For the coming school year, 26-27, we are aiming to keep that same high percentage of students at the kindergarten level at 85%. We are hoping that those first-grade students will continue to grow from their kindergarten year and will remain at 85% meets and that our second-grade students will continue their growth pattern at 71% meets by the end of the school year.

In keeping with those projected outcomes, we have three district level commitments that our early literacy and content level teams are committed to. One, continued observation and coaching, ensuring that all pre-K through second grade teachers are given observations with targeted feedback every nine-week period, and then follow up visits for those teachers to ensure that that good work is not just happening when we're there, but is consistent.

Secondly, we're going to continue and deepen our foundational skills training, providing that quarterly training to teachers, providing science of teaching reading updates to share with teachers as they're given to us from TEA, and continued resource training specific to Heggerty, Bluebonnet and oral reading fluency, which will allow every child to read aloud to their teacher for specific reading gains that they need to meet.

Thirdly, continued campus support for Destination 2030, which is part of our early literacy handbook, principal, assistant principal and instructional coach support for specific RLA needs.

We hope that they know that if they need us, they can call on us and we will come. Consistent scheduled PLC visits for RLA support, not just that they have to call on us, but that we show up to help whenever we can do so. And then modeling and co-teaching as is needed or requested based on teacher need or specific data points. I'm happy to take any questions that you may have specific to early

Dr. Goree commented. And trustees as Dr. Nix and the team come back to answer any questions. I do want to pause just to recognize our principals in attendance tonight. If you guys would just stand so we can give you a round of applause.

And thank you. And thank you so much for your commitment.

Trustee P. McNeely asked. [inaudible 01:13:14] tell us who [inaudible 01:13:14].

Ms. Mullins replied. Yes, there is. I do have their names. They agreed to be shared, but in the event that perhaps it could have been looked upon as a negative to start the year and only positive at the end, we refrained from using names.

Trustee P. McNeely commented. Well, I forget their names [inaudible 01:13:29].

Ms. Mullins replied. I'll share them with you privately, no, I'm joking.

President Veracruz commented. I would like to say to the principals that are in the audience with us tonight, I look to you and you have been charged with such a mission to go back to your campus day in and day out and working those hours. My prayers are with you, and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for continuing to have that strength and that wisdom to carry on to your staff because it's them that will have them take charge when you're doing other things on your campuses. So, thank you for all that you do.

And for Dr. Nix and your team, the task that you have at hand for showing and sharing the data, the words that I have written on my paper in hearing the reports come, I have written down intentional. I have seen the word support pop up, data, high quality.

The TEA visiting, what an honor for them to come to our campuses, our district and to want to hear and see to what we're doing. To the one campus I say to you, you have been chosen for your task at hand and I trust that your comrades around you will surround you and come and share what they're doing at their campuses and conversations will be had at tables for you to be encouraged. Thank you.

11. ADJOURNMENT AT 8:23 PM

Trustee P. McNeely made a motion to adjourn; Trustee Sanchez seconded the motion.

Dr. T. Lamar Goree
Superintendent of Schools

Board President

Board Secretary