

**WICHITA FALLS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES
WFISD ADMINISTRATION BUILDING – BOARD ROOM
REGULAR MEETING MARCH 20, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING STATEMENT:

The Board of Trustees of the Wichita Falls Independent School District met in a regularly scheduled meeting on the above date. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Ms. Katherine McGregor, board president.

Board members present: Ms. Katherine McGregor, Mr. Dale Harvey, Mr. Mark Lukert, Mr. Jim Johnson, Ms. Susan Grisel, and Ms Sandra Camp. Ms. McGregor noted that a quorum was present and the meeting had been duly called and notice of the meeting had been posted for the time and manner required by law.

Staff members present: Dr. Donny Lee, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Peter Griffiths, Associate Superintendent, Ms. Dayna Hardaway, Director of Human Resources, Ms. Leah Horton, Chief Financial Officer, Ms Deb Dipprey, Executive Director of School Administration, Ms. Kelly Strenski, Director of Fine Arts, Ms. Ashley Thomas, Community Relations Officer, Ms. Vanessa Dishman, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Ms. Natalie Kasperek, Community Relations Secretary, Mr. Scot Hafley, Director of Athletics, Mr. Oyvid Zahl, WFISD Teacher, Ms. Synquis Lewis, Booker T Washington Asst. Principal, and Ms. Alex Martin, Fowler Principal.

Also present: Ms Valerie Rhodes, PIERS, Mr. David Gray, former student and community member, Ms. Marcia Robinson, parent, Mr. Howard McDarris, Howmet Grant Coordinator, Ms. Trish Choat, TRN reporter, KFDX reporter, and a reporter for KAUZ.

INVOCATION:

Ms. Sandy Camp gave the invocation.

PRESENTATIONS:

Wichita Falls High School 4A State Swim Meet Qualifiers

The following student athletes from Wichita Falls High School qualified to attend the 4A State Swim Meet in San Antonio.

State Qualifiers

Conner Higginbotham - WFHS (12th Grade)

- 50 Yard Freestyle (silver medal)
- 100 Yard Freestyle (silver medal)
- 200 Yard Freestyle Relay (4th Place)
- 400 Yard Freestyle Relay (silver medal)

Nic Tant - WFHS (12th Grade)

- 50 Yard Freestyle (7th Place)
- 100 Yard Freestyle (9th Place)
- 200 Yard Freestyle Relay (4th Place)
- 400 Yard Freestyle Relay (silver medal)

Kai Yang - WFHS (10th Grade)

- 200 Yard Individual Medley (9th Place)
- 100 Yard Butterfly (14th Place)
- 200 Yard Freestyle Relay (4th Place)
- 400 Yard Freestyle Relay (silver medal)

Brandon Oechsner - WFHS (12th Grade)

- 200 Yard Freestyle Relay (4th Place)
- 400 Yard Freestyle Relay (silver medal)

Coach: Oyvind Zahl

Texas Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association (TISCA) Academic All-State

The following student athletes are Academic All-State candidates through the Texas Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association (TISCA). To qualify for Academic All-State, students must have lettered in swimming during their junior or senior year and have a GPA

of 3.75 or above.

Rider High School

Ridlee Schmitz

Wichita Falls High School

Conner Higginbotham

Brandon Oechsner

Nic Tant

Coach: Oyvind Zahl

2023 Region 9 Assistant Principal of the Year

Twenty administrators have been named Region Assistant Principals of the Year by the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA). The peer-based award recognizes assistant principals for their commitment to student learning as evidenced by exceptional school leadership.

One of these educators will be selected as the 2023 National Assistant Principal of the Year for Texas. Supported by Horace Mann, the national award recognizes leaders who are committed to excellence through programs designed to meet the academic and social needs of all students; have firmly established community ties with parents and local business organizations; show strong educational leadership by setting high expectations for school staff and students; and exhibit exceptional leadership in a particular school program.

Synquis Lewis, assistant principal of Booker T. Washington Elementary, has been selected as the Region 9 Assistant Principal of the Year. Honorees will be recognized at the TEPSA Awards Celebration on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 in Round Rock.

2023 TEPSAN of the Year

Twenty school leaders were recently named TEPSANs of the Year by the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA). Members from the 20 TEPSA Regions across the state annually honor a colleague for their outstanding service to the association. Award recipients must be committed to advancing the principalship and the association as well as serving as a voice for Texas students.

Alex Martin, principal of Fowler Elementary, has been selected as the Region 9 TEPSAN of the Year. Honorees will be recognized at the TEPSA Awards Celebration on Wednesday, June 7, in Round Rock.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Valerie Rhodes, community member: Would like the community members that are “holding the district hostage” relating to the threat to take the district to court over the names and mascots of the new schools, to stop. She feels they need to be more concerned with the academics and well being of the students in danger of failing and the possible TEA takeover of the Board or Kirby closing.

Ms. Emory Wilson, McNiel Middle School 6th grader: Wants the high school names and mascots to stay the same.

Mr. Kolby Fischer, Fowler Elementary 4th Grader: High School names and mascots are important and he would like to keep the strong tradition so he can follow in his family’s footsteps.

Ms. Carol G Wagner, former student and community member: Would like the subject of mascots/colors to go to a Wichita Falls tax payer vote.

Ms. Dee Womble King, former student and community member: Would like the subject of mascots/colors to go to a Wichita Falls tax payer vote.

Mr. Kevin Hunter, former student and community member: Would like the subject of mascots/colors to go to a Wichita Falls tax payer vote.

Ms Stephanie Willis-Koontz, WFISD paraprofessional: Board of Trustees followed the posted process for choosing school names, mascots and colors. The board of trustees should not change anything and should move forward with the business of the district as a whole.

Mr. David Gray, former student and concerned citizen: Would like the subject of mascots/colors to go to a Wichita Falls tax payer vote.

Ms. Christi Montellano, parent and concerned community member: Would like the subject of mascots/colors to go to a Wichita Falls tax payer vote.

Mr. Maddox Wagoner, McNeil Middle School 7th Grader: Kids care about the traditions as well. Always hoped to play soccer at Rider as father and other family members did.

Ms. Meagan Hoover, parent of WFISD student: Son voted for the names, mascots and colors and was the Barwise representative on the spirit committee. He feels it is disrespectful for those that are against the changes to not take seriously the wishes of the students that are affected. Ms Hoover agrees and would like the board to continue to move forward.

Mr. Alonzo Nelson, former student: Memories of school will always be there. Let it go, stop fighting about this and come together as a group. Put energy into helping the students need help.

Ms. Nancy Burkowski, community member and member of naming committee: The committee followed the guide line as written. It is an insult to be addressing this mascot thing again. Time to move on and look forward to the future. Time create a legacy for all students.

Mr. Danny Breegle, former student, parent, grandparent and community member: Board members to earn back respect

Ms. Jeanette Perry, community member: The request for a vote is unethical and inappropriate. The student's needs are not a priority. The process the board of trustees used for the names, mascots and colors was followed. The student's voices matter.

Mr. Tim Boyd, community member: Legacy important.

Ms. Beverly Schoppa, former student and community member: Would like the subject of mascots/colors to go to a Wichita Falls tax payer vote.

Mr. Danny Breegle, former student, parent, grandparent, great-grandparent and community member: School district should not be teaching that teachers, aides or school district employees are family.

REPORTS OR SPECIAL DISCUSSION ITEMS:

NAMING OF HAYNES PRE-K

Mr. Peter Griffiths presented that Farris Head Start facility is relocating to the Haynes campus and that naming of the campus needed to be considered for branding purposes. Board Policy CW (Local) states that Board approval is required for the naming or renaming of all District facilities through a process. The District has kept names of buildings when programs are moved before, exp. Denver Alternative School at Harrell. Head Start is a program. There are three options:

1. Farris Head Start Program at Haynes Academy: Wordy but keeps all current names associated with the program and building. No need to go to CW Policy
2. Haynes Head Start Heroes: Keep the name of the building as is and keep Farris at the Fannin Elementary building for the time being. No change No need to go to CW Policy
3. Change Haynes to the Farris Early Learning Center or Brook Village Early Childhood Center renamed as the Farris Early Learning Center and Haynes stays the same. CW Policy required

Steps to go through name change per CW(Local) policy:

1. Today, March 20, 2023 is the first step; Public Discussion at board meeting
2. Superintendent chairs and forms a Renaming Committee to start meeting in March through May.
3. Nominations be accepted for two months; no more than 5 names will be selected.
4. The renaming will be on the board agenda for two consecutive regular meetings (March, April, May)
5. Last meeting the Board will vote to choose the new name. No Petitions will be considered per Policy
6. Superintendent will communicate to all employees and the community the Board's decision.

Senior staff recommendation is to keep Haynes name and call the program: "Haynes Head Start Heroes" and to discuss next year possibly changing the name of Brook Village to Farris Early Learning Center since it is named after the neighborhood not a person.

Ms Katherine McGregor asked what the staff would like. Dr. Griffiths replied they like the Haynes Head Start Heroes. Dr Lee said that today was just a discussion and that decisions can be made later.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr Donny Lee reported to the Wichita Falls Independent School District Board of Trustees on the following information:

District enrollment: 13,181 +6 from last month down from 13,286 this time last year. Average daily attendance is up considerably over the last 6 years

Presented the Merge Timeline for the new high schools. Timeline includes hiring new principals, campus administrators and directors as well as teacher placement. Along with UIL realignment and enrollment counts. Kirby Middle School update: Teachers and administrators are doing a fabulous job. Have partnered with Engage2Learn. Partnered with TEA; Amplify kick-off is March 24, 2023. Amplify is a new curriculum for the feeder pattern elementary schools (to KMS). Strong focus on these campuses. District partnered with community leaders, mentors, military, etc. Interim Assessment: Cautiously optimistic, there are verifiable improvements. Staff is working extremely hard. Two months ago the commissioner said if he had to make a decision right then that if Kirby doesn't get out of IR status he would not shut the campus down but would replace the Board of Trustees with a TEA Board of Managers and replace Dr Lee as well. Failure is not an option, we must get Kirby out of IR status.

Vouchers/Educational Savings Accounts: Diverts funds away from public education to subsidize private schools, not parent choice. In other states that allow vouchers, 90% of students that used vouchers already attended private schools. Private school can choose who they enroll. It is bad for students. The poorer and/or underserved students will have less funds in public school if vouchers are allowed. WFISD is against vouchers/Education Savings Accounts. WFISD is requesting our Basic Allotment be raised by \$1000 per students for teacher raises and other needs.

STEAM Bus pictures presented. The bus is almost ready. Driving billboard for WFISD and something for the students to be proud of that the district offers.

Ms. McGregor commented on how impressed she is with the job that Dr Lee has done in regards to Kirby, as well as Ms Dipprey and Dr Griffiths and many others.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Mr. Sandy Camp, seconded by Mr. Jim Johnson, moved that the Wichita Falls Independent School District Board of Trustees approve the consent agenda with the following items: Minutes.

Carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0

HUMAN RESOURCES:

PERSONNEL REPORT

Ms. Dayna Hardaway, Director of Human Resources, reported to the Wichita Falls Independent School District Board of Trustees a review of employee resignations/retirements that have been submitted since the last board meeting. The resignations/retirements have been accepted by Dr. Donny Lee, Superintendent of Schools, in accordance with the requirements of Policy DFE (LOCAL). Ms Sandy Camp requested the Board of Trustees have access to Exit Surveys submitted to Human Resources by employees that have left this district as well as a list of reasons staff are leaving the district.

TEACHER APPLICANT POOL:

Ms Susan Grisel, seconded by Mr. Jim Johnson, moved that the Wichita Falls Independent School District Board of Trustees approve the proposed teacher applicant pool.

Carried unanimously by a vote of 5-0

BOARD MATTERS:

RECESS:

Ms. Katherine McGregor, board president, recessed the work session to go into closed session at 7:19 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION:

1. Personnel Matters Including the Appointment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline, Dismissal and/or Compensation of Individual District Employees (Pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.074)

2. Deliberations Regarding Superintendent's Recommendation Concerning the renewal of One-Year Term or Probationary Contracts of Employment as noted on the list provided by administration for Certified/Non-Certified Administrators, Teachers, and Professionals (Pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.074)
3. Deliberations Regarding Superintendent's Recommendation Concerning the Nonrenewal of Term Contract Employee(s) at the End of the 2022-2023 School Year (Pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.074)
4. Deliberations Regarding Superintendent's Recommendation Concerning the Termination of Probationary Contract Employee(s) at the End of the 2022-2023 School Year (Pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.074)
5. Level Three Employee Grievance Appeal Hearing of Jennifer Bronaugh and Deliberation Regarding Same (Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074)
6. Level Three Employee Grievance Appeal Hearing of Rachel Sewell and Deliberation Regarding Same (Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074)
7. Consultation with District's Legal Counsel Regarding Legal and Procedural Matters Related to Level Three Employee Grievances (Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071)
8. Consultation with the District's Attorney Concerning Legal Issues Related to Bond Issuance and Bond Expenditures (Pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.071)
9. Consultation with the District's Attorney Concerning Legal Issues Related to New High Schools' Mascot and School Colors (Pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.071)
10. Consider and Discuss Applicants for Board Vacancy (Pursuant to Texas Government Code 551.074)

OPEN SESSION:

1. Consideration and Possible Action Concerning the Renewal of One-Year Term or Probationary Contracts of Employment as noted on the list provided by administration for Certified/Non-Certified Administrators, Teachers, and Professionals
2. Consideration and Possible Action Regarding Proposed Nonrenewal of Term Contract Employee(s) at the end of the 2022-2023 School Year
3. Consideration and Possible Action Regarding Termination of Probationary Contract Employee(s) at the End of the 2022-2023 School Year
4. Consideration and Possible Action Regarding Level Three Employee Grievance Appeal of Jennifer Bronaugh
5. Consider and Possible Action Regarding Level Three Employee Grievance Appeal of Rachel Sewell
6. Consider and Take Possible Action Regarding Bond Issuance and Bond Expenditures.
7. Consider and Take Possible Action Regarding New High Schools' Mascots and School Colors.
8. Consider and Take Possible Action Regarding Appointment of Board Member to Fill Vacancy.

RECONVENE:

Ms. Katherine McGregor, board president, reconvened the closed session to go into open session at 10:54 p.m.

CONTRACT RENEWALS

Mr. Dale Harvey, seconded by Mr. Mark Lukert, moved that the Board of Trustees approve the renewal of One-Year Term and Probationary Contracts as noted on the list provided by administration for Certified/Non-Certified Administrators, Teachers and Professionals.

Carried unanimously by a vote of 6 – 0

NON-RENEWAL OF TERM CONTRACT

Mr. Dale Harvey, seconded by Mr. Jim Johnson, that the Board of Trustees propose the non-renewal of the One-Year Term Contract of Jeremiah Taylor and further move to authorize the superintendent to provide written notice to Jeremiah Taylor of this board action as required by law. I further move that the board utilize a board hearing for the non-renewal hearing

Carried unanimously by a vote of 5 – 0

TERMINATION OF PROBATIONARY CONTRACT

Mr. Dale Harvey, seconded by Mr. Jim Johnson, moved that the Board of Trustees terminated the One-Year Probationary Contract of Mel Martinez at the end of the contract term to serve the best interest of the district and further move to authorize the superintendent to provide written notice to Mel Martinez of this board action as required by law.

Carried unanimously by a vote of 6 – 0

LEVEL THREE GRIEVANCE

Mr. Mark Lukert stated that the Board of Trustees denies the Level Three Grievance Appeal of Rachel Sewell with the understanding that we will look at counselor salaries by a TASB study done in November, which will be reported in January of 2024.

AD HOC COMMITTEE

Ms Susan Grisel, seconded by Ms. Sandy Camp, moved that the Board of Trustees establishes an ad hoc committee for the purpose of studying options for configurations of middle schools for WFISD.

Carried unanimously by a vote of 6 – 0

SCHOOL MASCOTS AND COLORS

Mr. Jim Johnson, seconded by Ms. Susan Grisel, moved that the Board of Trustees pass a resolution regarding the new high school mascots and school colors as follows: The board recognizes and deeply respects the opinions of all WFISD constituents. There are constituents with widely different preferences regarding this issue. We have confirmed that the district is not legally permitted to hold a special election for the purposes of determining school mascots. We are concerned with the cost and timing considerations of making a change of mascots. We may disagree about how the process was handled previously and we have regrets about it. However, the board feels strongly that the district needs to put this issue behind it tonight and focus on academic achievement. For these reasons, the mascots will remain Legacy Leopards and Memorial Mavericks.

Carried unanimously by a vote of 6 – 0

BOARD MEMBER INTERVIEWS

Ms Sandy Camp, seconded by Mr. Mark Lukert, moved that the Board of Trustees set the date March 30, 2023 to conduct interviews for the appointment of a board member to fill the vacancy in District 2. This will be at 6:00 pm in the Board Room.

Carried unanimously by a vote of 6 – 0

ADJOURNED:

No further action was taken and Ms Katherine McGregor, board president, adjourned the meeting at 11:00 p.m.

President, Board of Trustees

Secretary, Board of Trustees