

AT A REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING ON FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF ECTOR COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT HELD AT THE ADMINISTRATION BOARD ROOM, 802 NORTH SAM HOUSTON, ODESSA, ECTOR COUNTY, TEXAS, AT 6:00 P.M., OCTOBER 15, 2024, WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

Present:

Delma Abalos
Dr. Steve Brown
Tammy Hawkins
Dawn Miller
Christopher Stanley
Robert Thayer
Wayne Woodall

School Officials: Dr. Keeley Boyer, Mike Adkins, Deborah Ottmers, Dr. Anthony Sorola, Alicia Syverson, Dr. Kellie Wilks

Others: Tatiana Dennis, Jackie Florez, Grayson Carter, Lauren & Yvette Abila, Yolanda Gordan, Eric Smith, Aaron Hawley, Melissa & Pat Sisneros, Frida Contreras, Alan Boites, Aaron Cox, Elvis Delgado, Alberto Ocanas, Elijah Renteria, Erik Garcia, Lauren Jackson, Ailyn Martos, Yaretzi Barrera, Laree Morris, Audrey Matta, Miriam Garcia, Misty Hiner, Michael Williamson, Elijah Sandate, Candice Dominguez, Diego Ramirez, Daniel Oyebanji, Naomi Fuentes, Javier Ruiz, Darianna Pando, Charlyee Castillo, Valerie Cervantes, Arely Salas Rodriguez, Nat Armendarez, Joseph Oyebanji, Maggie Aguilar, Abel Avila, Betanya Hailu, Daniel Hernandez, Albessa Chavez, Jennifer Moran, Armand Nunez, Isabella Garcia, Ruth Campbell, Sandra Talavera, Rita Lopez, Mary Franco

26898 **Meeting Called to Order:** Christopher Stanley, Board President, called the Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

26899 **Verification of Compliance with Open Meeting Law:** Christopher Stanley, Board President, verified that the provisions of Section 551.001 of the Texas Government Code have been met in connection with public notice of this meeting.

26900 **Pledge Allegiance to United States and Texas Flags:** The United States and Texas flag pledges were led by Zavala Elementary School Students Grayson Carter and Isabella Garcia.

26901 **Invocation:** The Invocation was led by Pastor Jackie Florez, Casa De Mi Padre Odessa Church.

26902 **Special Presentations:**

Presentation of Mexican American School Board Association Awards for Outstanding Workforce Initiative and Outstanding Special Education Initiative:

During the MASBA 2024 Annual Conference held in San Antonio Ector County ISD was presented with the award for Outstanding Workforce Development Initiative and the award for Outstanding Special Education Initiative.

The Outstanding Special Education Initiative acknowledged the innovative approach ECISD took to hire virtual diagnosticians, virtual speech pathologists, and use of contractor services to complete 1,800 new evaluations and 1,300 3-year re-evaluations in the 2023-2024 school year. Speech pathologists and educational diagnosticians are hard to fill positions throughout the state and nation.

The Outstanding Workforce Development Initiative highlighted ECISD's career placement work connecting the future talent pool of workers (our students) with local industry needs, strengthening the local workforce. The program reduces barriers for students by introducing them to employers, providing career counseling, supporting them through resume building and the application process, coaching them on professional etiquette, and preparing them for interviews which are held on campus.

Presentation of Mexican American School Board Association Student Art Exhibit Winner: Mike Adkins, Chief Communications Officer introduced Permian High School junior Yaretzi Barrera Alapizco as the first-prize winner of this year's MASBA Student Art Contest. Yaretzi's artwork, *La Muerte Dijo Sí... Yo Digo No!* earned her a \$1,000 arts grant from MASBA and widespread recognition for her exceptional talent and attention to detail. Congratulations to Yaretzi and her teacher, Laree Morris.

Announcement of New Tech Odessa as College Board AP School Honor Roll and Individual College Board National Recognition for Students: For the second consecutive year, George H.W. Bush New Tech Odessa has earned a place on the College Board's AP School Honor Roll. The AP School Honor Roll recognizes schools whose Advanced Placement (AP) program is delivering results for students while broadening access. NTO is a Bronze member of the Honor Roll due to having 86% of seniors who took at least one AP Exam during high school, 25% of seniors scoring a three or higher on at least one AP Exam, and 5% of seniors who took five or more AP Exams.

NTO is being further recognized with the AP Access Award, which honors schools that encourage more low-income and underrepresented minority students to take AP courses. The percentage of students taking AP Exams are underrepresented minority and/or low-income students mirrors the school's overall student demographics. For example, if 50% of a school's student body is low income, then 50% of the AP Exam takers must also be low income for a school to receive the AP Access Award.

An additional 48 students were introduced via video, each of whom collectively earned 66 College Board National Recognitions. To qualify for any of these awards students must have:

- Taken the Fall 2023 PSAT/NMSQT and score in the top 10% of test takers from their award program in their state OR
- Earn a score of 3 or better on 2 or more distinct AP exams in the 9th and/or 10th grade AND
- Earn a cumulative GPA of 3.3 (B+) or higher by the time of submission

26903 **Opening Remarks by Superintendent:** In her opening comments, Interim Superintendent Dr. Keeley Boyer acknowledged October 15 as the close of Hispanic Heritage Month and introduced a video giving a glimpse into some of the ways ECISD schools celebrated throughout the month.

26904 **Public Comment:** Individuals who wish to participate during the portion of the meeting designated for public comment shall sign up with the presiding officer or designee before the meeting begins as specified in the Board's procedures on public comment and shall indicate the agenda item on which they wish to address the Board.
BED(LOCAL)

There was no public comment.

Bond 2023

26905 **Bond 2023 Update:** Chief Financial Officer Deborah Ottmers and Associate Superintendent of Operations Dr. Anthony Sorola provided the Board of Trustees with an update on the progress of Bond 2023 projects.

The new middle school project is nearing completion of construction documents and remains on track for groundbreaking in January; the presentation included an architectural drawing of the school's auditorium.

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center slide displayed a drawing of the front of the school. Design documents will be presented to the CTE committee later this month. Groundbreaking is scheduled for summer.

The Permian High School auditorium project is moving from schematic design to construction design phase. Construction could begin in May 2025.

PHS JROTC facility will be located on the west side of the campus just north of the football practice field, and is moving to construction design now.

The Transition Learning Center (TLC) is a complex facility, and design is moving forward. The new building will face 12th Street along Whitaker, facing the existing TLC. Look for construction to begin in January 2025.

The new Agriculture Farm design includes an academic building, an animal barn, and an arena to seat about 100 people.

Staff and community advisory committees have been active with architects, assisting in the design of state-of-the-art facilities for our students and staff.

Each middle school is getting new bleachers in the main gymnasium. The projects are completed at Nimitz and Crockett with the rest expected to be finished by Thanksgiving.

New choir risers have arrived. More than 570 instruments have been ordered and 304 have arrived. About \$1.4 million has been spent on Fine Art's needs.

In regard to technology projects, surveillance cameras are being received. So are storage servers which are to be installed soon. A Request for Proposals is out for PA/Bells/Alarms/Clocks.

The financial update shows about 2% of bond funds have been spent so far, and about 5% has already been committed through purchase orders.

The Bond Oversight Committee meets again on October 22; the TLC and CTE committees will meet in November.

No action required.

26906 Discussion of and Request for Approval of Bond 2023 Purchases over \$50,000:

Moved by Brown, seconded by Woodall to approve the Bond Purchases over \$50,000 as presented. On the list this month are \$7.7 million to CSI Lubbock for the refresh and replacement of all Public Address (PA) systems, bells and alarms in each ECISD schools; \$1 million to a pool of companies to establish a commission agent for all new construction projects ensuring buildings meet requirements, specifications, and industry standards; and \$150,000 to SAFEbuilt Texas, LLC, for third-party review and inspection of projects outside the city limits.

Motion unanimously approved.

Public Hearing on Financial Accountability

26907 Public Hearing of District's FIRST (Financial Integrity Rating Systems of Texas)

Report: Chief Financial Officer Deborah Ottmers presented this item for discussion. For the fifth year in a row, Ector County ISD received a perfect score of 100 on the state's FIRST report which assesses how school districts spend their money annually. This FIRST report is for 2023-24, which is based on financial data from 2022-23. Our District earned a Superior Achievement rating, which is equivalent to a grade of A. This was the seventh time in the past eight years ECISD earned an A. In the 22 years since this report's inception, ECISD has earned an A in financial integrity 18 times. Created by the 76th Texas Legislature in 2001, FIRST is designed to encourage public schools to better manage their financial resources to provide the maximum allocation possible for direct instructional purposes. The FIRST ratings are calculated using a series of financial indicators, such as administrative cost expenditures; the accuracy of a district or charter's financial information submitted to TEA; and any financial vulnerabilities or material weaknesses in internal controls as determined by an external auditor.

There was no public comment.

Action Items

26908 Discussion of and Request for Approval of 2024 Certified Tax Roll:

Moved by Miller, seconded by Woodall to approve the 2024 Certified Tax Roll as presented. Information from the Ector County Appraisal District shows total taxable value of property in Ector County for 2024 is \$17,967,940,049.

Motion unanimously approved.

26909 **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Mineral Lease Consideration:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Thayer to approve the Mineral Lease Consideration as presented. To proceed, the District must follow the activities outlined in Policy CDB, Texas Education Code 11.153 (a-b), and Natural Resources Code 71.005. The initial action presented at this meeting is the approval of a resolution permitting the District to advertise a Request for Proposals (RFP) to all interested companies.

Motion unanimously approved.

26910 **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Purchases over \$50,000:** Moved by Miller, seconded by Abalos to approve the Purchases over \$50,000 as presented. This month's sole item is a \$100,000 contract to engage a firm to lead the search for a new superintendent. The firm will assist in identifying qualified candidates, conducting staff and community engagement sessions, and meeting with the school board to develop a candidate profile that aligns with the District's needs.

Motion unanimously approved.

26911 **Discussion of and Consider Approval of Recommendation to Hire Superintendent Search Firm:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Miller to approve the recommendation to hire the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) to conduct Superintendent Search as presented. At a Board Workshop held on October 10, 2024, Trustees interviewed representatives from four firms selected to lead the District's superintendent search. These four were shortlisted from 11 firms that responded to the District's Request for Proposals. From TASB's proposal: Since 1988, TASB's Executive Search Services (ESS) has conducted over 800 superintendent searches for Texas school boards. More than 90% of ESS-placed superintendents remain with their districts after five years. ESS tailors the search process to address the unique needs of each school board and district. With a statewide network of experienced field service representatives and consultants who are former superintendents with over 30 years in public education, ESS is equipped to find the most qualified candidate for the role.

For:	Abstained:
Abalos	Brown
Hawkins	
Miller	
Stanley	
Thayer	
Woodall	

Motion passed.

26912 **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Resolution to Nominate Candidates to the Ector County Appraisal Board:** Moved by Miller, seconded by Hawkins to approve the Resolution to Nominate Candidates to the Ector County Appraisal District

Board as presented. ECISD is responsible for appointing five (5) people to the ECAD Board of Directors. The five are Feliz Abalos, Robert Chavez, Dorothy Jackson, Mari Willis, and Wayne Dunson.

Motion unanimously approved.

26913 **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Appointment/Reappointment of School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) Members:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Miller to approve the Appointment/Reappointment of School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) Members as presented.

The school board is required to establish a SHAC to reflect community values in the District's health education instruction. A majority of council members must be parents of enrolled students who are not District employees. With a maximum of 14 seats available on the SHAC, seven positions were filled in this appointment: Abena Cann, Abigail Carrasco, Lauren Luciom, Lupe Torrez, Monique Lopez, Roxann Castillo, and Baldo Valeriano. Approved SHAC Members will serve for a two-year term.

Motion unanimously approved.

26914 **Consent Agenda:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Woodall to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

- A. Request for Approval of Minutes of Meetings
- B. Request for Approval of Bills for Payment
- C. Request for Approval of Acceptance of Donations Over \$10,000
- D. Request for Approval of Annual Renewal of Memorandum of Understanding with Texas Tech University for Opportunity Culture Research in 2024-2025
- E. Request for Approval of Data Sharing Agreement with Education Resource Strategies, INC. for Opportunity Culture Research in 2024-2025

Motion unanimously approved.

Report/Discussion Items

26915 **Presentation of the 2025 ECISD Medical Plan Committee Update:** Yolanda Gordan, Director of Benefits and Risk Management and Eric Smith, Universal Benefits Consortium Principal Consultant provided Trustees with an update on the 2025 Medical Plan. ECISD's Medical Plan runs January 1 through December 31. As healthcare costs continue to increase, plan adjustments are necessary for the coming year (2025) and those adjustments will be made via benefit changes, not premium increases for employees.

One of the steps ECISD has taken to help keep healthcare costs low for employees is the opening of a Health and Wellness Center in March 2021. At the clinic, services are provided at no cost to employees/dependents on a health plan – except those on the Health Savings Account (HSA) qualified plan that carries at \$25 co-pay. The clinic has a Nurse Practitioner available 40 hours per week, and an MD for 20 hours per

week. More employees are using the clinic yearly. A telemedicine provider is also available at no cost to employees and dependents on a plan.

Large claims so far this year (2024) include 15 claims totaling \$3.6 million (that works out to .05% of members = 29% of claims). The District has paid more than \$17.5 million in claims so far in 2024.

Changes to the healthcare plans will include an increase in deductibles (in-network and out-of-network) and an increase in the co-insurance percentage for all options: Option I, New Option II (like Option III but without the HSA), and Option III.

Pharmacy changes include the implementation of a preferred pharmacy network, the addition of international mail order at no cost, and an increase of brand/specialty deductible for Option I and New Option II. Open enrollment is starting next week.

No action required.

- 26916** **Possible Request for Approval to Move to Closed Meeting - Personnel Matters - Section 551.074 of the Texas Government Code [Board will deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of public employees of the District or hear a complaint or charge against an officer or employee.]**
Deliberation Regarding Real Property – Section 551.072 of the Texas Government Code [Board will deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property.] (The Board of Trustees will discuss the purchase of real property.)
Consultations with Attorney – Section 551.071 of the Texas Open Meetings Act [The Board will meet in Closed Session in Consultation with the Board’s Attorney Regarding all Matters as Authorized by Law.]:

Board President Christopher Stanley convened the Board of Trustees to closed session at 7:35 p.m.

Board President Christopher Stanley reconvened the Board of Trustees to open session at 8:07 p.m.

- 26917** **Request for Approval to Authorize the Negotiation and Execution of a Contract to Purchase Property – Property A:** Moved by Thayer, seconded by Woodall to Authorize the Negotiation and Execution of a Contract to Purchase Property for a new Transportation Center located at 8860 & 8866 Northwest Loop 338 as presented. This property is 35.12 acres with 20,500 square feet of total office space and 74,500 square feet of total warehouse/shop space.

Motion unanimously approved.

- 26918** **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Bond 2023 Purchases over \$50,000:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Woodall to approve Bond 2023 Purchases over \$50,000 as presented. The item on this list is to Basin Abstract and Title for a

maximum of \$5.5 million for the potential purchase of the property for the new Transportation Center.

Motion unanimously approved.

26919 **Information Items**: The Board of Trustees were provided with the following information items: Quarterly Donations Informational Report, Financials, Purchasing Over \$50,000 Informational Report, and Routine Personnel Report.

26920 **Closing Remarks by the Superintendent**: There were no closing remarks.

26921 **Adjournment**: Board President Christopher Stanley adjourned the Board meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Board President
Christopher Stanley

Board Secretary
Dr. Steve Brown