



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

1450 Gillette Boulevard · San Antonio, Texas 78224 · (210) 977-7000 · Fax (210) 977-7017

Minutes of Regular Meeting

The Board of Trustees  
South San Antonio ISD

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of South San Antonio ISD was held Wednesday, January 18, 2023, beginning at 6:00 PM in the ADMINISTRATION BUILDING 1450 Gillette Blvd. San Antonio, Texas 78224.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Trustee	Present	Absent	Late Arrival/Departed Early
Stacey Alderete	X		
Cynthia Ramirez	X		
Abel Martinez Jr.	X		
Shirley Ibarra	X		
Homer Flores	X		
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.	X		
Manuel Lopez	X		

Led by Michelle Martinez, Senior Executive Assistant

- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- TEXAS PLEDGE
- PRAYER

Led by Alexis Castillo, Director of Communications

Mr. Yzaguirre introduced guest Deputy Commissioner Steven Lecholop to observe online.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Gilbert F. Rodriguez, Parent, addressed the Board regarding his strong opposition to school closures.

Sylvia Bernal, Community Member, addressed the Board regarding not closing schools.

Tommie Tran, Community Member, addressed the Board regarding not closing schools.

Esther Barrera, Parent, addressed the Board regarding not closing schools.

Angelita Olvera, Community Member, addressed the Board regarding not closing schools.

Tom Cummins, AFT Representative, addressed the Board thanking them for their hard work and the possible closures of campuses.

TEA MONITOR REMARKS/REPORT

Dr. Abe Saavedra, TEA Monitor: Good evening ladies and gentlemen, and first of all happy new year and congratulations on board appreciation. You have a tough job. You've been elected to make some very difficult decisions and you've been elected to make responsible decisions. And your responsibility is really to a lot of people but the primary responsibility is to the students of your school district. There is probable nothing more important in serving the education of children than having highly qualified-high performing teachers in every single classroom. And you have many of those teachers today but in order to remain competitive to gain these teachers on an ongoing basis its becoming more difficult. There is just recently an article in the Express News just yesterday or today possibly about districts competing for the high performing teachers. Well whether we like to admit it or not, one of the primary things that needs to happen is you need to be very competitive in your salaries. And you are not at the bottom of the rankings in reference to salaries in Bexar County, you're about the middle but you need to be much closer to the top of the competitive salaries to be able to have to attract rather and be able to retain high performing teachers. That's the most important thing for the education of a child, it's not the building, it's really the quality of the teacher in front. And the only way you compete is to be able to have the resources to

be able to compete. The last couple of years' South San has had major holes in their budget, deficits in their budget. In 21-22 you plugged that hole by taking 8 million dollars from ESSER monies provided by the federal government because of the COVID situation. And you plugged that hole with 8 million dollars from ESSER. Most other the districts used that ESSER money to educate their children. They used that money to improve programs, to pay their teachers higher salaries. But South San used 8 million dollars, out of 40, the district received 40 million dollars total in ESSER money, and you used 8 million to plug a financial hole in that budget. This year, this fiscal year, you will use 9 million dollars from ESSER money to plug this year's hole. And the sad thing is that ESSER money is almost completely depleted by the end of this fiscal year. August 31<sup>st</sup> of this year, 2023, ESSER money will be almost completely spent. In talking to Mr. Kingman you will have approximately 3 million dollars left of ESSER money. And frankly the administration wants to use that as a retention bonus to keep those highly qualified teachers, those high performing teachers. So there is no more ESSER money to plug budget deficits. That will repeat itself in the next fiscal year. We've talked about some of this already in previous meetings and the need to get on this immediately. As a matter of fact, at the December meeting several Board Members directed the Superintendent to come up with some solutions immediately, let's not wait until the Spring, let's get on it now. And as difficult as it is the Superintendent has brought forward some recommendations for y'all to consider. And I totally agree with everyone that has spoken today that the responsibility is to the children and as elected officials you get to decide how you can best serve those children. But we live in a real world where money is spent on an ongoing basis. Your budget is I believe a little over about 70 million, in that range, and these deficits exceed 10% of that budget. So these are serious, you're not, these are not small deficits these are large deficits and it's your responsibility to do something about it. As you know my last several monthly reports to TEA have been pretty positive because actually I've been encouraged that this Board had worked well together in the last several months. And I would encourage you to continue to work together and make the right decisions for the benefit of the students. Thank you.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REMARKS (NO ACTION / REPORT ONLY)**

Henry Yzaguirre, Superintendent of Schools, addressed the Board and audience highlighting the great things happening in our district. He stated that January 3<sup>rd</sup> we had a block walk to promote and advertise the great things we are doing with leaving a door hanger or yard sign throughout the community. He thanked Mrs. Antoon and her team for organizing this event. He stated that we aired a commercial showcasing the district on KSAT News (commercial played). He thanks Mrs. Castillo and the Communications Department for putting that together. He stated that the state reported that our Fall semester attendance submission increased by over 3 points compared to last year. He said our goal is 93%. Mr. Yzaguirre thanked everyone who supported the attendance initiatives and believes we had more success because of breakfast in the classrooms and free transportation to all students. He stated that later we will give an Academic Health Report later tonight. He stated that during the discussions tonight that we must respect each other and our decisions. He said that the few in the community that have taken to social media and shared inaccurate information need to stop. He said not only are we a hard working community but we stress the importance of an education. He stated that he was raised in this community and encouraged all to demonstrate that we are here for the right reasons and the overall wellbeing of our district. He stated that we need to meet challenges with logic and viable solutions together. Mr. Yzaguirre stated that it is time to focus on all students and not anyone's personal agenda. He reminded that Monday we celebrated the legacy of one of the country's most prolific civil leaders and recited 2 quotes from the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; "the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy" and "the time is always right to do what is right." The Superintendent stated that we are standing at a time of challenge and controversy and today is the day to do the right thing for the future of South San ISD...God bless each and every one of you and God bless South San ISD.

### **BOARD PRESIDENT'S REMARKS (NO ACTION / REPORT ONLY)**

Ernesto Arrellano Jr., Board President, addressed the Board and audience thanking the community members that spoke tonight. He acknowledged the passion and love that everyone has for this district. He stated that when each board member is first elected they have to go through new board member training and in the training and they are told multiple times that the school board is responsible for hiring the best Superintendent for the district and the financial health of the district. He said they are expected to collaborate with the Superintendent and for the most part trust his judgment. He said that micromanagement of the Superintendent is what gets Boards in trouble and means that the Board doesn't trust their only employee. He stated that the Superintendent is going to recommend the closing of schools and that he and his staff have gone through many scenarios to get the district out of the financial hole it's in. He said we have been in a hole for many years. He said that ESSER funding has kicked the can down the road and now the road has ended. He stated that personally he knows that this recommendation does not come easily from the Superintendent as he grew up in this area and worked at some of the schools on that list. He stated that Mr. Yzaguirre is doing the job that the Board hired him to do. He stated that the Superintendent is doing the right thing and following the data to sustain and strengthen the district's financial stability. He stated that many districts state wide are grappling with this issue but South San is the first to take the bull by the horns and tame it for the betterment of the district. He said it's about the students the staff and the tax payers and we cannot and we will not mismanage the money that our taxpayers give to us. He stated that its happened in the past and it's gotten us where we are now. He said we must do something, as hard as it is, we have to do something. He said I am sure it will come up later as we discuss, if we don't do anything we have about a year and a half before we start running out of money at the district, that's one and a half school year. He asked what are we going to do a year and a half from now when we can't pay our teachers and staff what they deserve, the time is up. He said he understands the pain a transition like this has on a community, students, and staff. He reiterated that he is from this district and it does not give him any pleasure to consider these recommendations. He stated that there were a lot of speakers today and the majority were from Kindred and he went to that school for 7 years and met some of his lifelong friends. He stated that it's an awesome school. He mentioned some

staff and experiences he had there and stated that the schools that students and staff may be transitioned into would be just as awesome. He said it would not be an easy transition but they would be welcomed with open arms into those schools. He said the Superintendent and staff would make sure of it.

\*Interruption from an audience member

Mr. Arrellano stated there will be no interruptions and that she cannot speak. He stated its his time, he can talk as long as he wants to and clarified he is talking to the Board member that's telling him to wrap it up. He said either we do it or its gonna get done for us. He stated the numbers Dr. Saavedra gave regarding ESSER plugging the hole will still be there and Mr. Yzaguirre and staff are trying their best to plug that hole permanently. He stated that he promised a student that graduated from West Campus that he would read his email that was sent to the Board. Mr. Arrellano stated Mrs. Alderete please I am reading what he wrote so don't, please ma'am. Mr. Arrellano read aloud: *I am a fellow student at West Campus High School. I strongly agree with you closing the school. Most of the student's classes are at South San the school is just wasting time sending us on the shuttle busses every day to get classes over there. Our school has no classes to offer like South San does. There is hardly any staff at our school, it is not a school it is more like an office building, the restrooms are ALL locked or either flooded. The teachers unlock it whenever they feel like it. Myself and many other students dislike that school so much. Close it down.* He stated that is a student saying that, why would we not listen to what they students are saying.

\*Interruption from several audience members

Mr. Arrellano regained order and stated this was the only student that wrote an email to the school board is why he read it aloud.

\*Interruption from several audience members

Mr. Arrellano said that there are prior and current Trustees saying things on social media and other places about the merry go round of opening and closing schools. He stated yes schools were closed but when the decision was made to reopen 3 schools South San ISD was already losing students and that's the main driver of why we are in a deficit. He said now we have to close a 4<sup>th</sup> school. He said the mantra of build it and they will come didn't work, we have schools underutilized that don't have enough students and the Superintendent needs to do something. He said it's the School Board's decision to accept or deny the Superintendents recommendation but it's not the School Boards prevue to dictate to the Superintendent what he must and must not close. Mr. Arrellano said this is not the first time the Board has heard this. He said in 2020 the district paid the Texas Association of School Boards to come in and do this type of assessment and they came up with the same solution to close schools. He said thereafter the ESSER money came so we didn't have to close schools because we were plugging it as Dr. Saavedra said. He said we can't kick the can down the road anymore. He said if we do another audit it may come back with closing even more schools and by then it will be later in the year.

\*Interruption from an audience member

Mr. Arrellano stated that district is at a crossroads and the Board was elected to make tough decisions and now is not the time for ourselves or to be patted on the back. He stated that now is the time to make sure our district gets to 200 years. He stated he would not put anyone ahead of students, parents, tax payers, and staff including politicians that serve on this Board. He stated he stands by the Superintendent and what his recommendation is.

Mrs. Alderete asked for change of order: I would like to move #3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 under Discussion and Possible Action to, let me make sure I do this right, to right before Consent sir, no actually right before Presentations and Reports I'm sorry.

Mrs. Alderete made it a motion, Ms. Ibarra seconded and the Board of Trustees voted 5/2. Motion passed.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstained
Manuel Lopez		X	
Homer Flores	X		
Shirley Ibarra	X		
Abel Martinez Jr.	X		
Cynthia Ramirez	X		
Stacey Alderete	X		
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.		X	

## RECOGNITIONS

1. SSAISD School Board Recognition Month  
Alexis Castillo, Director of Communications, was called to recognize the Board for Board Appreciation Month.
2. SSAISD Business Department awarded Traditional Finances Star  
Alexis Castillo, Director of Communications, was called to recognize the business department for their achievements.

## DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

3. Discussion and possible action to permanently close Athens Elementary School and

authorize the Superintendent to, in his discretion, reassign personnel and students to neighboring campuses.

Henry Yzaguirre, Superintendent, was called to present and answer questions related to this item.

Mr. Arrellano made a motion: I move that we consider the Superintendent's recommendations as he presented them, Mr. Lopez seconded, and the Board of Trustees voted 2/4. Motion failed.

Mr. Flores logged off at: 7:42 PM

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstained
Manuel Lopez	X		
Shirley Ibarra		X	
Abel Martinez Jr.		X	
Cynthia Ramirez		X	
Stacey Alderete		X	
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.	X		

4. Discussion and possible action to permanently close Kindred Elementary School and authorize the Superintendent to, in his discretion, reassign personnel and students to neighboring campuses.

Henry Yzaguirre, Superintendent, was called to present and answer questions related to this item.

Mr. Arrellano made a motion: that we accept the recommendation of the Superintendent as presented for Kindred Elementary School, Mr. Lopez seconded, and the Board of Trustees voted 2/5. Motion failed.

Mr. Flores logged back on at 7:51 PM.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstained
Manuel Lopez	X		
Homer Flores		X	
Shirley Ibarra		X	
Abel Martinez Jr.		X	
Cynthia Ramirez		X	
Stacey Alderete		X	
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.	X		

5. Discussion and possible action to permanently close Kazen Middle School and authorize the Superintendent to, in his discretion, reassign personnel and students to neighboring campuses.

Henry Yzaguirre, Superintendent, was called to present and answer questions related to this item.

Mr. Arrellano made a motion: I recommend that we accept the Superintendent's recommendation as presented, Mr. Lopez seconded, and the Board of Trustees voted 2/5. Motion failed.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstained
Manuel Lopez	X		
Homer Flores		X	
Shirley Ibarra		X	
Abel Martinez Jr.		X	
Cynthia Ramirez		X	
Stacey Alderete		X	
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.	X		

6. Discussion and possible action to permanently close West Campus and authorize the Superintendent to, at his discretion, reassign personnel and students to South San Antonio High School and other campuses.

Henry Yzaguirre, Superintendent, and Tony Kingman were called to present and answer questions related to this item.

Mr. Arrellano made a motion: I make the motion that we accept the Superintendent's recommendation as presented, and Mr. Lopez seconded.

\*Interruption from an irate audience member who was escorted out by South San ISD Police

The Board of Trustees voted 2/5. Motion failed.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstained
Manuel Lopez	X		
Homer Flores		X	
Shirley Ibarra		X	
Abel Martinez Jr.		X	
Cynthia Ramirez		X	
Stacey Alderete		X	
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.	X		

7. Discussion and possible action to approve Budget Amendment in the amount of \$5 million for construction, renovation, and improvements to West Campus High School for the completion of Phase IV.

Mrs. Alderete made a motion: I would like to make a motion that we table both item 7 and item 8 for further discussion, Mrs. Ramirez seconded

Mrs. Alderete revised her motion: I would like to make a motion that we table both item 7 and item 8 for further discussion, other than what we get tonight so that we can have a roundtable to make sure we are making the correct decision, I want to be very informed not just one presentation on one night on the decision that I'm making, Mrs. Ramirez seconded and the Board of Trustees voted 7/0. Motion passed.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstained
Manuel Lopez	X		
Homer Flores	X		
Shirley Ibarra	X		
Abel Martinez Jr.	X		
Cynthia Ramirez	X		
Stacey Alderete	X		
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.	X		

8. Marksmen General Contractors for the West Campus HS Phase IV - Kitchen Renovation, Athletics, and Media Center Package

Item 7 and 8 tabled

Recess 9:31 PM - 9:43 PM

**PRESENTATIONS / REPORTS**

1. December 2022 Financials

Tony Kingman, Chief Financial Officer, was called to present and answer questions related to this item.

2. Academic Health Report

Millicent Marcha, Chief Academic Officer, and Erika Almendarez, South San High School Principal were called to present and answer questions related to this item.

**CONSENT**

*Policy BE (Local) states that the consent agenda shall include items of a routine and/or recurring nature grouped together under one action item. All such items shall be acted upon by one vote without separate discussion, unless a Board Member requests that an item be withdrawn for individual consideration. The remaining items shall be adopted under a single motion and vote.*

1. Board Meeting Minutes

A. December 14, 2022 Regular Called

2. Board Policy Update 120

3. District Improvement Plans

4. UTSA PREP Cooperative Program Agreement

5. Microsoft License Agreement Renewal

6. Campus Improvement Plans

7. Budget Amendment

- 8. District of Innovation
- 9. RFP 2023-03 Integrated Esports and STEM Learning Program

**Consent**

Mrs. Alderete moved to approve the consent agenda items 1 – 9 as presented, Mrs. Ramirez seconded and the Board of Trustees voted 7/0 to approve the item as presented. Motion passed.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstained
Manuel Lopez	X		
Homer Flores	X		
Shirley Ibarra	X		
Abel Martinez Jr.	X		
Cynthia Ramirez	X		
Stacey Alderete	X		
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.	X		

**CLOSED / EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*NOTICE: The Board of Trustees may elect to go into Closed Meeting any time during the meeting to discuss matters listed on the Agenda when authorized by the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. In the event the Board of Trustees elects to go into Closed Meeting regarding an Agenda Item, the Board of Trustees will hold a Closed Meeting to discuss individual personnel matters including termination, litigation and other matters the Board deems necessary. Upon completion of Closed Meeting, the Board of Trustees may, in the open session, take such action as appropriate on items discussed in a Closed Meeting. If, during the course of the meeting, any discussion of any item listed on the agenda should be held in Closed Meeting, the Board will convene in such Closed Meeting in accordance with Texas Government Code Sections 551.001 - 551.088. The Board members may take action in the open portion of the meeting on items discussed in the Closed Meeting but no action will be taken in closed session.*

*The Board will return to open session and take appropriate action, if any, on items discussed in closed session. No Action will be taken in closed session. Further, Board Members are reminded that all items discussed in closed session must remain confidential also as to avoid liability to the district. The Board will consider and discuss, the following items:*

**Closed Meeting pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code §§ 551.071, 551.072, 551.074, 551.076, 551.082, and 551.0821**

- 1. Consultation with attorney regarding TEA Investigations.

Start time: 10:22 PM.  
End time: 11:29 PM.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

- 1. Reconvene from Executive Session for action relative to items considered during Executive Session

None

- 2. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Financial Audit Report

Tony Kingman, Chief Financial Officer, Rebecca Goldstein, Weaver & Tidwell Auditors, were called to present and answer questions related to this item.

Mrs. Ramirez moved to approve the item as presented, Ms. Ibarra seconded, and the Board of Trustees voted 7/0. Motion passed.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstained
Manuel Lopez	X		
Homer Flores	X		
Shirley Ibarra	X		
Abel Martinez Jr.	X		
Cynthia Ramirez	X		
Stacey Alderete	X		
Ernesto Arrellano Jr.	X		

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Alderete moved to adjourn the meeting, Mrs. Ramirez seconded, and the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:54 PM.

**ATTEST**

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Homer Flores, Board President

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Shirley Ibarra, Board Secretary

*NOTICE: This meeting of the Board of Trustees is authorized in accordance with the Texas Government Code, Sections 551.001 - 551.146. Verification of Notice of Meeting and Agenda are on file in the Office of the Superintendent. Closed meeting, if required and if authorized by the statute, will be conducted prior to the conclusion of the meeting for any item listed on this agenda.*

*NOTICE: The Board of Trustees may elect to go into Closed Meeting any time during the meeting to discuss matters listed on the Agenda when authorized by the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. In the event the Board of Trustees elects to go into Closed Meeting regarding an Agenda Item, the Board of Trustees will hold a Closed Meeting to discuss individual personnel matters including termination, litigation and other matters the Board deems necessary. Upon completion of Closed Meeting, the Board of Trustees may, in the open session, take such action as appropriate on items discussed in a Closed Meeting. If, during the course of the meeting, any discussion of any item listed on the agenda should be held in Closed Meeting, the Board will convene in such Closed Meeting in accordance with Texas Government Code Sections 551.001 - 551.088. The Board members may take action in the open portion of the meeting on items discussed in the Closed Meeting but no action will be taken in closed session.*