

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF ECTOR COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT HELD ON APRIL 16, 2024, BEGINNING AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING BOARD ROOM, 802 NORTH SAM HOUSTON, ODESSA, ECTOR COUNTY, TEXAS, WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

Present:

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

Absent:

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

Others: Tatiana Dennis, Jessica Gore, Lisa Wills, Mark Gabrylczyk, Magaly Nieto, Sam Magallan, Melissa Skinner, Heather Potts, Albessa Chavez, Shari Riley, Thelma Chapa, Ryan Merritt, Jaime Miller, Javier Ruiz, Naomi Fuentes, Taylor Roy, Anthony Garcia, Dora Flores, Stacey Nunez, Berta Saldibar, Marissa Lopez, Aaron Hawley, Jennifer Valencia, AJ Valencia, Tracey Borchardt, Brenda Guerrero, April Mendoza, Mandy Hinojos, Martha Cirrincione, Jenavy Garcia, Cynthia Garcia, Lily Garcia, Stephanie Burton, Liz Garcia, Victoria Henderson, Heather Potts, Nory Leachon, Rita Lopez, Mary Franco

26683 **Meeting Called to Order:** Christopher Stanley, Board President, called the Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

26684 **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.

26685 **Pledge of Allegiance to United States and Texas Flags:** The United States and Texas flag pledges were led by ECISD Transition Learning Center Student Jaden Walker. Regrettably, Josue Rodriguez was unable to attend.

26686 **Invocation:** The Invocation was led by Board Member Dr. Steve Brown. Unfortunately, Pastor Zuniga of Kingdom Church was unable to attend.

26687 **Special Presentations:**

Presentation of 2024 CoSN Chief Technology Officer of the Year Award to Dr. Kellie Wilks: On April 9, 2024 our Chief Technology Officer Dr. Kellie Wilks was honored with the 2024 Withrow Chief Technology Officer of the Year Award from CoSN - The Consortium for School Networking, a premiere association of K-12 education technology leaders. The Withrow CTO of the Year Award, named after long-time EdTech leader Frank Withrow, recognizes an individual who has been a key education innovator.

Dr. Wilks has a long-standing history of supporting ECISD. She was involved in the Raising Blended Learners Grant and the Math Innovation Zones Grant, as well as initiatives to bridge the digital divide. She is a collaborative leader who has developed partnerships in the community that encourage shared best practices and provide opportunities for all students.

Recognition of Permian High School Students Who Qualified for International Thespian Contest: Chief Communications Officer Mike Adkins introduced the ten Permian HS student who qualified for the International Thespian Festival at Indiana University in June 2024. To qualify, each student competed in their category against approximately 3,000 students from across Texas. This is just the second year Permian has competed at Texas Thespians since the '90s. Last year, two qualified to go on; this is a big, big increase and these students represent the hard work and success being built with MOJO theatre.

PHS International Thespian Festival Qualifiers:

- Brooklyn King - Stage Management
- Rachel Herrera - Stage Management (Texas Theatre Scholar Award)
- Kaleb Burton - Solo Musical Theatre (Texas Theatre Scholar Award)
- Madelyn Linville - Solo Musical Theatre (Texas Theatre Scholar Award)
- Megan Lowry - Solo Musical Theatre
- Hope Joyce - Solo Musical Theatre
- Colton Lewis - Group Acting
- Jonah Davisson - Group Acting
- Wade Harvey - Group Acting
- Jay Dean – Monologue

Recognition of CTE State Qualifiers: In ECISD, about 8,000 students are enrolled in Career & Technical Education (CTE) classes and many of them participate in the contests associated with those courses. Skills USA, Business Professionals of America and Texas Association of Future Educators give students in CTE courses the opportunity to test their skills against students from across the state and nationally. This year over 100 CTE students qualified for state competitions and while we were not able to bring them all here at the same time, they were recognized for their achievements through a video presentation.

Skills USA | Welding - 12, Auto Tech - 2, Auto Collision - 3, Culinary Arts - 80
Business Professionals of America | OHS - 7, PHS - 13
Texas Association of Future Educators | (6)

Presentation of Spirit Scholarship Winners from Odessa High School and Permian High School: Chief Communications Officer Mike Adkins introduced the Odessa High School and Permian High School Spirit Scholarship Recipients. When a company requests to use one of our trademarked logos for Permian High School or Odessa High School, it must agree to a licensing agreement and the annual fee that goes with it. Those fees are pooled into a scholarship fund for PHS and OHS, five students from each high school are selected from the pool of applicants. Those students represent four areas of involvement – Athletics, AVID,

Career & Technical Education, and Fine Arts. This year's Broncho Spirit and MOJO Spirit Scholarship recipients are:

Odessa High School

- Alexa Soto | AVID-Culinary Arts & Sports Medicine | UTPB | Major: Sports Medicine
- Jacqueline Marquez | Baylor University | Major: Pre-Med
- Natalie Lopez | AVID | UTPB | Major: Education - HS English
- Jenavy Garcia | Fine Arts | UTPB | Major: Business
- Andy Del Real | Football, Track & Powerlifting | UT Permian Basin | Major: Petroleum Engineering

Permian High School

- Jaizlynn Kuhlmann | AVID-Powerlifting Team | UTPB | Major: Nursing
- Giancarlo Garcia | UT San Antonio | Major: Kinesiology
- Larissa Garcia | Band -Drum Major | UT San Antonio | Major: Physical Therapy
- Edith A. Lopez-Gutierrez | UT Permian Basin | Major: Biology
- Jamorah Caufield | AVID-Track & Field, Miss PHS | TX State University | Major: Respiratory Therapy & Psychology

26688 **Opening Remarks by Superintendent:** In his opening remarks, Superintendent Dr. Scott Muri talked about “award” season beginning as we move into the final weeks of the school year. He reminded them of the ECISD Outstanding Teachers picnic at a RockHounds game coming up in two weeks. This is the annual celebration of the campus teachers of the year, and the two teachers of the year will throw out the first pitch of the game.

26689 **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)*

In public comment,

Sapna Yadalla, a senior at Permian High School addressed the board sharing her experience in band. She said fine arts programs create spirit, require discipline to practice and improve, and expand a student's mind in ways textbooks cannot. She thanked the school board for supporting fine arts in a big way.

Bond 2023

26690 **Bond 2023 Update:** Deborah Ottmers, Chief Financial Officer and Dr. Anthony Sorola, Associate Superintendent of Operations provided the Board of Trustees with a Bond 2023 update. Trustees received an update on the progress of Bond 2023 projects. A local Career & Technical Education (CTE) committee is studying ideas for the new CTE Center. The committee has met three times so far and has made two site visits to existing CTE Centers – CTECH in Hobbs, New Mexico, and the LIFT Center in Abilene. Another committee is at work studying middle schools. This committee has met twice and has scheduled a site visit to Griffin MS in Lewisville for May 3. This Friday, two architect firms will host project planning sessions for the Transportation Center, Permian HS auditorium, JROTC

projects, and the middle school. The Fine Arts Department has now ordered 135 instruments at a cost of \$372,000 and 26 of those have arrived and are on campus being used by students. In regard to interactive flat panels, the IT Department anticipates installation will be complete in all classrooms by June. In the finance update, money has now been encumbered for land purchases, architect services, technology items, fine arts instruments, and athletics projects. A little more than \$20 million has been encumbered, which is about 5% of the total bond cost. Looking forward, two Requests for Qualifications are currently posted for Geotechnical & Special Testing and Construction Manager at Risk, and contracts are being finalized with architects DLR for the new Transition Learning Center and with JSA for the new Agricultural Farm.

No action required.

Action Items

26691 **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Purchases over \$50,000:** Moved by Brown, seconded by Woodall to approve Purchases over \$50,000 as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

26692 **Discussion of and Request for Approval for the Superintendent to Negotiate and Enter into a Lease Agreement with Sunset Golf & Country Club, LLC. Concerning the Property Located at 9301 Andrews Hwy., Odessa, Texas 79768:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Miller to authorize the Superintendent to negotiate and enter into a Short-Term Lease Agreement with Sunset Golf & Country Club, LLC. concerning the property located at 9301 Andrews Hwy., Odessa, Texas 79768, the said lease to expire on or before August 1, 2024, for the primary purpose of winding down the golf course operations of the current owner and to allow the District additional time to close on the land purchase. In so authorizing the Superintendent, the Board finds that the three-part test articulated by the Texas Supreme Court for satisfying the requirements of Texas Constitution, Article III, Section 52(a), has been met in connection with the proposed transaction.

Motion unanimously approved.

26693 **Consent Agenda:** Moved by Abalos seconded by Hawkins to approve 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 Odessa HS Business Professionals of America Students Out-of-State Travel to Chicago, IL
- E. Request for Approval of Odessa HS Texas Association of Future Educators' Students Out-of-State Travel to Washington, DC
- F. Request for Approval of Permian HS Texas Business Professionals of America Students Out-of-State Travel to Chicago, Illinois

- G. Request for Approval of Instructional Materials Allotment Certification of Provisions of Instructional Materials Survey 2024-2025
- H. Request for Approval of Low Attendance Waiver

Motion unanimously approved.

Report/Discussion Items

26694 **Presentation of the Fine Arts Program**: Dr. Aaron Hawley, Executive Director of Fine Arts presented this item for discussion. ECISD is proud to house some of the most exemplary fine arts programs in Texas. From elementary school music and art to advanced programs, a total of 25,978 students, representing 79% of ECISD's student body, receive fine arts instruction each week. Data shows the significant benefits of participating in fine arts, with a graduation rate of 90.8% among fine arts students, nearly 20% higher than those not engaged in such programs. Moreover, 91.9% of fine arts students pass End of Course exams, surpassing their non-participating peers by approximately 14%.

The 5th-Grade Strings program has expanded to 15 elementary schools, involving over 400 students. Community support for fine arts education continues to grow, evidenced by the recent Bond 2023 initiative, which allocated \$18.5 million for fine arts and JROTC (a branch of fine arts). The impact of this investment is already evident, with significant improvements underway. Notably, Permian High School's auditorium, undergoing a \$12.5 million renovation. Additionally, \$3.5 million has been allocated for the replacement of outdated instruments.

The impact of the Bond is already being felt, with 135 new instruments ordered at a cost of \$372,310, and 26 instruments already distributed to students.

No action required.

26695 **Budget Update Discussion**: Chief Financial Officer Deborah Ottmers presented this item. Trustees continued their discussion of budget priorities for the 2024-25 school year. ECISD is in the same position as school district across Texas, cutting budgets due to the Texas Legislature's inaction regarding school funding during the last legislative session. The state has not increased the basic allotment for public education since 2019 while costs have risen dramatically. Money is available and set aside for public education, but it has not been distributed. Legislators will not meet again until January 2025, so Trustees must consider that it looks like schools will have to wait until next summer to learn if public education will receive new funding. Because of the uncertainty around funding, board members expressed hesitancy to give raises, which become a permanent part of future budgets. They looked at a plan to give employees a one-time Retention Incentive/Stipend to current full-time employees who return to ECISD next year. The incentive would be approximately 3%, which equals a cost of about \$6 million. The remaining ESSER 3 federal funds will help allow ECISD to do this for its employees by freeing up fund balance for this incentive. The one-time Retention Incentive/Stipend would be about the size of a typical raise – the average teacher could see about \$1,950 and the average hourly employee could see about \$930; the minimum would be \$500. This incentive would be paid in the fall. Some part-

time employees would not be eligible for the incentive. The District is anticipating a budget deficit of about \$24 million for next year, that is with mostly the same expenses but without any additional revenue expected. Operational costs continue to rise, and fund balance must be kept at recommended guidelines so significant cuts will need to be made. Among potential areas to reduce the budget, Trustees discussed software and contracted services agreements, choosing not to fill vacancies among central office staff and elementary school paraprofessionals, reorganizing middle school double-block schedules, and increasing class sizes (25 to 28 in elementary and 24 to 30 in secondary core classes). These reductions would shrink the potential budget deficit from \$24 million to \$12 million and fund balance could be used for the remaining amount.

No action required.

26696 **Board of Trustees' Continuing Education Report:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Scott Muri presented this item for discussion. The State Legislature requires school districts to provide the public with a record of school board member continuing education credit hours. These records, as recorded by the Texas Association of School Boards along with the Framework for Governance Leadership were provided. All Trustees met the annual requirements.

No action required.

26697 **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.]** (Discussion of 2024-2025 Employment Contract Renewals for Administrators, Teachers, and Professional Support Employees); and (The Board of Trustees will deliberate the hiring of the Principal at Buice Elementary School; Principal at Cavazos Elementary School; Executive Director of Leadership; and an Executive Director of Guidance and Counseling.)
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 7:50 p.m.

Board President Christopher Stanley reconvened the Board of Trustees to open session at 8:12 p.m.

26698 **Request for Approval of the 2024-2025 Employment Contract Renewals for Administrators, Teachers, and Other Professional Support Employees:** Moved by Brown, seconded by Woodall to approve the 2024-2025 Employment Contract Renewals for Administrators, Teachers, and Other Professional Support Employees as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

26699 **Request for Approval of Recommendation to Hire Principal at Buice Elementary School:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Brown to approve the hiring of Stephanie Moran as the Principal at Buice Elementary School as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

26700 **Request for Approval of Recommendation to Hire an Executive Director of Leadership:** Moved by Miller, seconded by Woodall to approve the hiring of Anthony Garcia as the Executive Director of Leadership as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

26701 **Request for Approval of Recommendation to Hire Executive Director of Guidance, Counseling and Wellness:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Miller to approve the hiring of Taylor Roy as the Executive Director of Guidance, Counseling and Wellness as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

26702 **Information Items:** The Board of Trustees were provided with the following information items: Acknowledgement of Quarterly Donations, Financials, Purchasing over \$50,000 Informational Report and March Routine Personnel Report.

26703 **Closing Remarks by the Superintendent:** In his closing remarks, Superintendent Dr. Scott Muri announced Dora Flores, currently the principal at Burleson, will be transferred to be the Principal at Cavazos Elementary for the 2024-2025 school year.

26704 **Adjournment:** Board President Christopher Stanley adjourned the Board meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Board President
Christopher Stanley

Board Secretary
Tammy Hawkins