

# UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bill Johnson Student Activity Complex, Auditorium,  
5208 Santa Claudia Lane, Laredo, TX. 78043

## REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

6:00 PM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Ramiro Veliz, Ricardo Rodriguez, Gilbert Aguilar, Aliza Oliveros,  
Javier Montemayor, Francisco Castillo, Michelle Molina

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Garza, Rebecca Morales, Laida Benavides, David Canales,  
Emma Leza, Gerry Rodriguez

I. Roll Call, Establish Quorum, Call to Order

*This meeting is called to order at **6:01 PM**.*

II. Pledge of Allegiance

A. Honor the Texas Flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under God, one  
and indivisible.

III. Recognitions:

A. COMMUNITY HERO - UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE DIANA SALDAÑA

B. SAN ISIDRO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RAPTORETTES DANCE TEAM - MA  
REGIONALS CHAMPIONSHIP - OUTSTANDING 1ST PLACE TEAM BEST IN  
CLASS ELEMENTARY SELECT

C. RAUL PERALES MIDDLE SCHOOL OILERS CHEER TEAM - UNITED CHEER  
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP - 1ST PLACE IN THE NOVICE NON-TUMBLING  
DIVISION

D. MOLINA MIDDLE SCHOOL - SPARKLING EMERALDS DANCE TEAM - SPIRIT  
FEST COMPETITION - JAZZ DIVISION CHAMPIONS

E. LOS OBISPOS MIDDLE SCHOOL - SILVER GEMS DANCE TEAM - MA  
NATIONALS COMPETITION - BEST IN CLASS GRAND NATIONAL CHAMPION  
TEAM - GRAND NATIONAL'S WINNERS CIRCLE DANCE TEAM

F. UNITED MIDDLE SCHOOL - MAVERETTES DANCE TEAM - MA NATIONALS  
COMPETITION - NATIONAL WINNER'S CIRCLE

G. LYNDON B. JOHNSON HIGH SCHOOL - WIND ENSEMBLE

H. JOHN B. ALEXANDER HIGH SCHOOL - VARSITY ORCHESTRA - UIL  
CONCERT AND SIGHT-READING SWEEPSTAKES

I. JOHN B. ALEXANDER HIGH SCHOOL - CONCERT WINDS, SYMPHONIC WINDS  
AND HONORS WINDS - UIL SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS

J. UNITED HIGH SCHOOL - WIND ENSEMBLE - UIL SWEEPSTAKES - MUSIC FOR  
ALL NATIONAL FESTIVAL

K. UNITED HIGH SCHOOL - SYMPHONICS BAND

L. UNITED SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL - SYMPHONICS WINDS AND HONORS WINDS

V. Public Comments:

Comments are limited to three minutes per speaker, except that non-English speakers requiring a translator are limited to six minutes. The presiding Board officer may modify or waive these time limits as appropriate. Public comment shall not be used for personal attacks by the speaker against District employees or students. Speakers who engage in personal attacks or use insulting, profane, threatening or abusive language during any Board meeting shall be ruled out of order by the presiding Board officer and may be escorted from the Board meeting room by District peace officers or security staff. Any concerns or complaints regarding individual District employees, students, or parents must be resolved via the appropriate complaint process, as stated in Board Policy BED (Local). Pursuant to section 551.042 of the Texas Government Code, no Board Member or Administrator may respond to a member of the public regarding an item that is not listed on this agenda, unless such response is a recitation of District policy or a statement of specific factual information.

*Juan Arredondo: Mr. Arredondo speaks on behalf of the custodial staff. "The forgotten" he says and states that this economy has been difficult for them particularly because of low wages, and inflation. Mr. Arredondo reminds the board that this personnel worked through the pandemic and that the work has since doubled with a shortage of 100 custodial staff. As a head custodian, Mr. Arredondo asks UISD administration and board members for higher wages. "I do not think we ask for too much. We leave it in your hands knowing we can trust you and hope not to be disappointed more than we feel", he said. Lastly, he respectfully asks for a response to his request.*

*Victor Torres: Mr. Torres, president of the Alexander High School Band Parent Association says he has seen a significant increase in the band number of students and states that they foresee yet a greater number for the following school year. He asks administration to provide an additional band director to lower the student to teacher ratio currently at 52:1, and states this is a safety issue. "It is the largest band in Laredo", he said.*

*Kenya Villarreal: Ms. Villarreal begins by thanking the board for allowing the public to voice their concerns. Ms. Villarreal, a band parent of five years, asks the board to address their concern of the student to teacher ratio. She claims it is a safety issue and low quality*

instruction and states that the band is providing great results as is and claims results can only get better.

*Edna Garza: Not In Attendance.*

*Leticia Juarez: Not In Attendance.*

*Bella Dianely: After greeting the board and audience, Ms. Dianley reminds the board that she has been asking for transparency and accountability. She referred to the tax collection item for Renewal of the Tax Collection Law Firm of Castillo, Reyes and Del Rio, "no questions were asked", on behalf of the board. Ms. Dianely expresses her concern of high costs of legal fees being paid out. "It is rude that the board has no regard for the employees economic situation, but yet you all have no questions?", she asks rhetorically. Ms. Dianely also reminds the board that the district has only 5 licensed in school psychologist specialists to address mental health, and other conditions such as anxiety and depression. Ms. Dianely believes this is a lack of transparency.*

*Clarissa Fraga voices her opinion on the renewal of the Delinquent Tax Attorney contract. Ms. Fraga begins by asking the board that she would like that the taxpayer money be put to "good use". She suggests the district should hire in-house attorneys and do away with discretionary funds, support student clubs, support mental health, additional support for bands, additional pay for custodians, annual retention bonuses, among other things. Fraga also questions the district logo and asks why it was changed.*

*Edna Olmeda speaks on Mission Statements and pay raises. She states that the staff is fed up with the excuses and tired of "not being valued and being overworked". She says the district pays too much money on legal fees and construction contracts. She criticizes the board for following steps of what other districts do, basically .... Ms. Olmeda totals the administrative staff in the district's organizational chart and says it adds up to about \$5.8 million dollars in salaries and calls this wasteful spending. "We are underpaid, overworked and undervalued", said Ms. Olmeda in closing.*

*Valentine Ruiz speaks on fraud, waste and abuse of taxpayers money in UISD and LISD. Mr. Ruiz begins by stating that the attorneys commit fraud by allowing the board to "create/make rules that violate taxpayers rights". Rules such as the first amendment right to free speech. Mr. Ruiz believes that these rules are made to bully staff, students and district employees. He suggests that they (attorneys) allow this in order to "cash-in" when defending the districts on these "unconstitutional board policies". He asks that UISD administration hire in-house attorneys and expresses his opposition to renewing the contract to the Delinquent Tax Collection Law Firm. Mr. Valentin Ruiz, invites the public to speak out about what he considers to be a waste and abuse of taxpayer money. He further states that the district has no issue paying out said attorneys but cannot provide decent wages, cost of living increases mostly for custodial, food service staff and transportation. His solution is that the district hire in-house attorneys and entices the community to speak out against fraud, waste and abuse. "Ya basta con el fraude de los contratos y salarios excesivos, que nosotros pagamos con nuestros impuestos", said Mr. Ruiz and threatens the board with being voted out.*

#### IV. Consent Agenda Items

##### A. Monthly Disbursements

##### B. Property Tax Refunds for the Month of March 2024

##### C. Awarding Bids, Proposals, Qualifications, and Extensions

##### D. Low Attendance Day Waiver for United Independent School District for August 29, 2023

##### E. Low Attendance Day Waiver for United Independent School District for January 15, 2024

##### F. Low Attendance Day Waiver for the following campuses: UHS, USHS, LBJ, SGMS, LBVM, Cuellar Elementary and Muller Elementary

##### G. Low Attendance Day Waiver for Lyndon B. Johnson High School and Lamar Bruni Vergara Middle School

##### H. Boundary changes effective for the 2024-2025 school year for the following campuses: Freedom Elementary School, Bonnie Garcia Elementary School, and J. Zaffirini Elementary School

##### I. Renewal/Extension of Delinquent Tax Collection Contract with Castillo Reyes & Del Rio Law Group, LLC

##### J. Vision and Mission Statements and Goals for United ISD 2024-2025 School Year

##### K. Memorandum of Understanding between United Independent School District and U.S. Consulate General in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico

##### L. Resolution Declaring Portable Building Unnecessary and Approval of Donation to Texas A&M International University

##### M. Interlocal Agreement between United Independent School District and Texas A&M International University Regarding Donation of Portable Building

*A motion is made by Javier Montemayor to approve items A through M, seconded by Aliza Oliveros and unanimously approved.*

#### IV. Items for Individual Consideration

##### A. Approval of Donations

*Donations are read in:*

- *United High School Baseball Team received \$\$2,000.00 from Tamez Law Offices that will go towards team supplies and equipment.*



- *UISD Partners for Scholars received \$5,000.00 from Robert and Suzette Tijerina that will be used for Student Scholarships*
- *The LBJ High School Anglers Fishing Team received \$1,000.00 from the Satellite Club of Laredo Evening Rotary to be used for team equipment*
- *Borchers Elementary received \$3,000.00 from PTC Booster Club to be used towards campus and student incentives*
- *R Perales Middle School Cheer Team received \$1,650.00 from the Cheer Booster Club, to be used for Cheer Team Banquet*
- *Trautmann Elementary received \$3,000.00 from the Rodriguez Family/Redman Redwig Council No. 16, to be used for student incentives*
- *Arndt Elementary received \$1,001.00 from Toro Automotive, to be used towards student incentives*

*There were no donations under \$1,000.00.*

*Grand total is **\$16,651.00***

*On a motion by Aliza Oliveros and seconded by Michelle Molina, the board unanimously approved the additional donations.*

**B. Approval of Board Minutes for the Months of January, February and March 2024**

*On a motion by Aliza Oliveros and seconded by Michelle Molina, the board unanimously approved.*

**C. Request from Board Members in re: Use of Board of Trustees Discretionary Funds for Various Campuses and Departments**

*Mr. Mike Garza reads in additional requests:*

- *Request from UISD Police Dept. \$2,500.00 sponsored by Michelle Molina to be used for promotional items for community relations*
- *LBJ High School principal requesting \$1,500.00 sponsor is Gilbert Aguilar. Funds to be used for instrument repair and band supplies*
- *Molina Middle School requesting \$800.00 sponsored by Gilbert Aguilar to be used for Teacher Appreciation Week*
- *Salvador Garcia Middle School requests \$4,500.00, sponsored by Gilbert Aguilar to be used for Gym upgrade*
- *Arndt Elementary requests \$300.00, sponsored by Gilbert Aguilar to be used for Teacher Appreciation*
- *UISD Police Department requests \$1,000.00, sponsored by Ramiro Veliz and \$500.00 sponsored by Gilbert Aguilar for Police Week Incentives*

- *Prada Elementary requesting \$300.00 for Teacher Appreciation Week Incentives*
- *Transportation Department requesting \$300.00 for Bus Week staff incentives*
- *WMS, Kazen, Finley, Fasken, Muller and UHS, sponsored by Michelle Molina in the amount of \$600.00*

*On a motion made by Ramiro Veliz to approve with the added requests, and seconded by Michelle Molina, the board unanimously approved.*

V. Closed Session: Board will adjourn into closed session pursuant to the following sections of the Texas Open Meetings Act

*The board adjourns into closed session at **7:18 PM.***

A. TGC 551.071 Consultation with Board's Attorney; Closed Meeting

1. Administrators In Charge Duties and Responsibilities

B. TGC 551.071 Consultation with Board's Attorney; Closed Meeting

TGC 551.074 Personnel Matters; Closed Meeting

1. Discussion, including consultation with legal counsel, regarding nonrenewal of Nurse's Term Contract, and matters incident thereto
2. Discussion regarding Internal Auditor's Annual Evaluation and modification of employment contract
3. Discussion regarding the appointment of Principal at San Isidro Elementary School
4. Discussion regarding the Appointment of Principal at George Washington Middle School

C. TGC 551.071 Consultation with Board's Attorney; Closed Meeting

TGC 551.076 Deliberation regarding Security Devices or Security Audits

- Student Activity Fund Audits: Elementary Schools - Arndt, Benavides, Freedom, Newman, Prada, Salinas
- Student Activity Funds Audits: Middle School - United MS 6th Grade
- Student Activity Funds Audits: High Schools - Johnson 9th Grade, United 9th Grade, United South 9th Grade, Alexander HS, STEP Academy
- Water Bottle Filling Station ESSER III Funds - Davis-Bacon wage rate compliance for November 2023, December 2023, January 2024 and March 2024
- UVC Lamps ESSER III Funds - July 2023, December 2023, January 2024

- Status of Ongoing Audits

VI. Reconvened from Closed Session, the Board will take appropriate action on items, if necessary, as discussed in Closed Session

*The board reconvened at 7:40 P.M., No action was taken in closed session.*

A. Possible action to finalize the nonrenewal of Nurse's Term Contract

*Pursuant to Board Policy BB Legal and Local, Chapter 21 of the Texas Education Code, Term Contract Employee Jessica Durance was provided written notice of the proposed non-renewal for employment contract. More than fifteen calendar days have passed since the date of delivery of the proposed non-renewal and Durance did not file written request for a hearing pursuant to Section 21.207 of the Education Code. As such, administration recommends that the board take final action to non-renew Jessica Durance's Term Employment Contract, and direct the district legal counsel to provide written notice to Jessica Durance of same.*

*On a motion by Javier Montemayor, seconded by Aliza Oliveros and Michelle Molina, the board unanimously approved.*

B. Possible action regarding Internal Auditor's Annual Evaluation and modification of employment contract

*The recommendation is to approve the Internal Auditor's Annual Evaluation and to modify the employment contract, as discussed in closed session.*

*On a motion by Gilbert Aguilar and seconded by Aliza Oliveros, the board approved unanimously.*

C. Possible action regarding appointment of Principal at San Isidro Elementary School

*Mr. Mike Garza thank all the applicants and finalists and makes the recommendation of Ms. Adamina Meza as principal at San Isidro Elementary.*

*Francisco Castillo makes a motion to accept the recommendation, seconded by Gilbert Aguilar and unanimously approved.*

*Mrs. Aliza Oliveros thanks tha applicants and finalists and congratulates Ms. Meza.*

D. Possible action regarding appointment of Principal at George Washington Middle School

*The recommendation for principal of Washington Middle School is David Guzman.*

*On a motion by Michelle Molina and seconded by Ramiro Veliz, the board unanimously approved.*

*Mr. Francisco Castillo also takes a moment to thank the applicants for participating,*

VII. Adjournment

*On a motion to adjourn made by Michelle Molina and seconded by Aliza Oliveros, the board unanimously approved.*

*There being no further business of the UISD Board of Trustees, this Regular Board Meeting is adjourned at **7:43 P.M.***

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Ramiro Veliz, III  
Board President

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Michelle Molina  
Board Secretary



**United Independent School District**  
**UISD Boardroom**  
**201 Lindenwood Dr. – Laredo, Texas 78045**

**Special Called Meeting**  
**May 06, 2024**  
**11:30 a.m.**

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Administrators-In-Charge – Laida Benavides, Mike Garza, Rebecca C. Morales

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ramiro Veliz, III, President – Present  
Aliza Flores Oliveros, Vice-President – Present  
Michelle Molina, Secretary – Present (Arrived during Closed Session)  
Gilbert Aguilar, Member - Present  
Francisco "Frank" Castillo, Member – Present  
Javier Montemayor, Member –Present  
Ricardo Rodriguez, Member – Present

**LEGAL COUNSEL PRESENT:** Stephen Trautmann

**I. Roll Call, Establish Quorum, Call to Order**

*Mr. Ramiro Veliz, III called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m.*

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

A. Honor the Texas Flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under God, one and indivisible.

**III. Public Comments:**

Comments shall be limited to current Board agenda items, student recognitions, or charitable causes. Comments are limited to three minutes per speaker, except that non-English speakers requiring a translator, are limited to six minutes. The presiding Board officer may modify or waive these time limits as appropriate. Speakers who engage in personal attacks or use insulting, profane, threatening, or abusive language during any Board meeting shall be ruled out of order by the presiding officer and may be escorted from the Board meeting room by District peace officers or security staff. Any concerns or complaints regarding individual District employees, students, or parents must be resolved via the appropriate complaint process, as stated in Board Policy BED (LOCAL). Pursuant to Section 551.042 of the Texas Government Code, no Board Member or Administrator may respond to a member of the public about an item that is not listed on this agenda, unless such response is a recitation of District policy or a statement of specific factual information.

*Jorge Mendoza - addressed the board regarding the Superintendent hiring process. He stated the current three administrators are very qualified employees and are doing a good job but recommended that the district do a state-wide or nation-wide search to make sure we get the best qualified person to fill that position. He recommended someone from the outside that is not controlled by the board or is not a current employee or family of employee. Mr. Mendoza stated he did not agree with spending a lot of money on legal costs when it can be spent on the kids. He also stated that he had been selected to attend the recent planning meeting and he saw it as a waste of time. He thought he was going to meet with higher ups to discuss different issues and instead there was 100 people playing games.*

#### **IV. Items for Individual Consideration**

A. Discussion and possible action to approve employment contracts and addendums for professional employees for the 2024-2025 school/work year

*Mr. David Canales presented the information for Item VI-A. He stated he had removed the following two names from the list, Arlene Treviño (Associate Principal at United High School) and Delta Renteria (Nurse at Ruiz).*

*A motion to approve the employment contracts and addendums as presented was made by Aliza Flores Oliveros and seconded by Francisco Castillo.*

*Motion was unanimously approved.*

#### **V. Closed Session:**

Board will adjourn into closed session pursuant to the following sections of the Texas Open Meetings Act:

*The Board adjourned into Closed Session at 11:38 a.m.*

A. TGC 551.071 Consultation with Board's Attorney; Closed Meeting  
TGC 551.074 Personnel Matters; Closed Meeting

1. Conduct Board Policy DGBA (Local) Level Three appeal hearing for Ana Cordova, and matters incident thereto
2. Discussion, including consultation with legal counsel, regarding proposed nonrenewal of Classroom Teacher's Term Contract, and matters incident thereto
3. Discussion regarding the appointment of Principal at John Arndt Elementary School

B. TGC 551.071 Consultation with Board's Attorney; Closed Meeting

1. Consultation with legal counsel regarding Board Policy DGBA (Local) Level Three appeal hearing of Ana Cordova, and matters incident thereto
2. Consultation with legal counsel regarding Superintendent vacancy, possible hiring processes available to the District, and matters incident thereto

## **VI. Reconvened from Closed Session**

The Board will take appropriate action on items, if necessary, as discussed in Closed Session:

*The Board reconvened from Closed Session at 1:01 p.m. Mr. Ramiro Veliz, III stated that no action was taken in Closed Session.*

A. Possible action regarding the Board Policy DGBA (Local) Level Three appeal hearing of Ana Cordova

*Stephen Trautmann stated the recommendation was to partially grant and deny the remedies as discussed in closed session and to allow legal counsel to proceed as discussed in closed session.*

*A motion to approve legal counsel's recommendation was made by Aliza Flores Oliveros and seconded by Gilbert Aguilar.*

*Motion was unanimously approved.*

B. Possible action regarding proposed nonrenewal of Classroom Teacher's Term Contract, designation of Board-Appointed attorney to conduct nonrenewal hearing, and authorization to Administrators in Charge to send notice of same to affected employee

*Mr. Mike Garza stated that as the Administrator In Charge overseeing Human Resources, he is recommending to propose the non-renewal of classroom teacher Jesus Manuel Gonzalez's term contract of employment, to designate Jose Maldonado, Jr. to conduct the non-renewal hearing and to authorize Mr. Garza to send notice of same to the affected employee, Jesus Manuel Gonzalez, III*

*A motion to approve Mr. Garza's recommendation was made by Michelle Molina and seconded by Aliza Flores Oliveros.*

*Motion was unanimously approved.*

C. Possible action regarding appointment of Principal at John Arndt Elementary School

*Mr. Mike Garza stated his recommendation for Principal at John Arndt Elementary School is Griselda Flores Ibarra. He also thanked all those who applied and who were interviewed including the other finalists.*

*A motion to approve Mr. Garza's recommendation was made by Michelle Molina and seconded by Gilbert Aguilar.*

*Motion was unanimously approved.*

D. Discussion and possible action regarding the hiring process to be used by the District for the Superintendent vacancy

*Javier Montemayor made a motion that this board go out for a Superintendent search and that they set this for the next board meeting to discuss the specifics and the*

*parameters and all the details regarding the search and if it will be TASB firm or a state firm. Michelle Molina seconded the motion.*

*Francisco Castillo stated he wanted to make sure if this is already specifically mentioning TASB.*

*Stephen Trautman stated TASB will be one of the options and said there are other firms in the state that do that and thinks it's best that the board have options but the ultimate decision is the board's.*

Motion was unanimously approved.

## **VII. Adjournment**

*A motion to adjourn was made by Aliza Flores Oliveros and seconded by Gilbert Aguilar. Motion was unanimously approved.*

There being no further business before the Board of Trustees, the Special Called Meeting of May 06, 2024 was adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

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Ramiro Veliz, III, President

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Michelle Molina, Secretary

Minutes Presented for Approval: July 17, 2024

Minutes submitted by:  
*Alejandra Salinas*, Secretary to Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Policies