

STATE OF TEXAS

(Minutes conducted via electronic voting)

COUNTY OF CAMERON

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the **20th day of October 2023**, the Board of Trustees of the Brownsville Independent School District met in a **Special Called Board Meeting** at the Administration Building, 1900 Price Road, Brownsville, Texas, for the purpose of transacting any and all business that came before the Board and with the following to wit:

PRESENT:

Jessica Gonzalez	President
Daniella Lopez Valdez	Vice-President
Frank Ortiz	Member
Minerva Pena	Member

ABSENT:

Denise Garza	Absent
Eddie Garcia	Absent
Carlos Elizondo	Absent

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Rene Gutierrez	Superintendent of Schools
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ALSO ABSENT:

None

WHEREUPON, a quorum being present and it appearing before the Board, it is hereby so found that notice of this **Special Called Board Meeting** has been duly given in the manner and for the length of time as prescribed by law. The meeting was called to order and declared ready for the transaction of business with the following to wit:

- I. Special Called Board Meeting called to order by Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President at 12:00 p.m.**
- II. Moment of Silence led by Dr. Rene Gutierrez, Superintendent of Schools.**
- III. Pledge of Allegiance led by Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President.**
- IV. Roll Call: Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President stated, I have Ms. Daniella Lopez Valdez, myself, Mr. Frank Ortiz, Ms. Minerva Pena, thank you guys for being here, that makes us a quorum.**
- V. Recommend approving the agenda of the Special Called Board Meeting of Friday, October 20, 2023, with any corrections/deletions.**

Motion made by Jessica Gonzalez, seconded by Daniella Lopez Valdez, and unanimously carried to recommend approving the agenda of the Special Called Board Meeting of Friday, October 20, 2023, with no corrections/deletions as stated by administration. (4-0-0)

VI. Superintendent's Report: * SB1566

A. Conference Presentations:

1. Open Public Hearing - Efficiency Audit

Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President stated, I, at this time, I will open the public hearing.

2. Efficiency Audit Presentation

Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President asked, Dr. Gutierrez, would you like to introduce, I would just wanted to say, I know it's a very informative presentation so if my colleagues, we keep our questions at the end as with the comments from the public, go ahead. **Dr. Rene Gutierrez, Superintendent of Schools stated, yes, thank you, madame President and Board Members, we have the efficiency audit presentation, we are gonna have it presented by Moak Casey and Dr. Nelly Cantu and Mr. Cespedes has been working, they have been working with Moak and Casey for this efficiency audit. It is more of a compliance type of an efficiency audit due to the fact that we are going to have a tax ratification election coming up, it is a compliance and it was advised by Moak and Casey for us to have this presentation in Special Called Board Meeting prior to the beginning of early voting so that we could be in compliance for the TRE that our community of voters are going to start the early votes this coming Monday, October the 23rd. So, this would, this presentation would keep us in compliance prior to the TRE election, so go ahead Dr. Cantu and Mr. Cespedes. Dr. Nereida Cantu, Deputy Superintendent stated, good afternoon madame Chair, Dr. Gutierrez and Board Members, yes, presenting today, we have Moak Casey, Ms. Aimee Ma that will be presenting. And as Dr. Gutierrez mentioned, House Bill 3 required the school districts Board of Trustees to conduct this efficiency study before seeking the voter approval of the adopt M&O tax , are you all able to see my screen? So, at this time, I would like to introduce Ms. Aimee Ma Who is joining us via zoom. Ms. Aimee Ma, Moak Casey Representative stated, thank you very much Dr. Cantu, are you all able to see my screen? **Dr. Gutierrez replied, yes maam. Dr. Cantu echoed, yes maam.** Ms. Ma Stated, thank you, again, my name is Aimee Ma From Moak Casey, I will be presenting the efficiency audit report for Brownsville ISD. This year, Brownsville ISD proposed an M&O tax rate for tax year 2023 or school year, 23-24 that exceeds their voter approval tax rate. Because of this, HB3 generally requires a school district Board of Trustees to conduct an efficiency audit before seeking voter approval to adopt that tax rate. The LBB releases the guidelines that govern what is included in a district's efficiency audit, the structure of the actual report is very prescribed per the guidelines, we don't have a lot of control over what information is included or is not included. And again, the purpose of the efficiency audit is to provide information to voters regarding the school districts fiscal management, their efficiency and their utilization of resources before an election to adopt an M&O tax rate. Currently, the district has a Tier I tax rate or their MCR of 6192 and without an election the districts M&O tax rate would be 7462, that is what is included in the green box here. The district has proposed to increase the M&O tax rate by 4.3 cents through the voter approval tax rate election for a total M&O tax rate of 7892. The district expects this to generate about 3.1 million dollars in M&O tax revenue for the first year and the district intends to use the additional**

tax revenue to increase employee salaries. The peer districts that are included in the report are as shown below, they are Edinburg CISD, La Joya, Laredo, McAllen, Pharr San Juan Alamo, San Antonio and United ISD. The peer groups, the peer districts were selected based on a number of factors for how they compare to district in terms of their enrollment, their 5-year growth, their ADA-WADA ratio, their Tier II M&O tax rate, their geographic proximity and their district type. And see here that in this table, a lot of the peer districts noted in the double asterisk are also going for a TRE this fall. The accountability rating for Brownsville was an A, for the most recent year we had data available. This is, their overall score of 91 was right in line with the peer district average score of 91 when it comes to the FIRST rating. Brownsville earned a superior rating for the FIRST, which is an A. For student characteristics, Brownsville is very similar to their peer district average, you can see that their economically disadvantage percentage is similar to their peers and their peer districts have a significantly higher percentage of students that are classified as economically disadvantaged. This is also true for English learners, for special education and for bilingual ESL. Brownsville also exceeds their peers in the state average for the number of students that are classified at CTE. When it comes to attendance rate, the district had a 97.1 percent attendance rate in the 20-21 school year based on the TAPR. This is greater than the peer district average of 95% and the state average of 95%. When it comes to operating revenue, the district receives 15,578 dollars in total operating revenue per student, this is greater than the peer district average of 14,838 and the state average of 12,381. In terms of operating expenditures, the districts total operating expenditures are 14,442 for the most recent year we have complete data while the peer districts average is hovering around 14,244 per student and both of these exceed the states total average operating expenditure of 11,874 per student. Like most of its peers and districts across the state, the largest categories of expenditures are instruction, plant maintenance and operations and food service operation. For the district payroll, the average teacher base salary in the district is higher that the peer district average and the state average. That is also true for the average administrative base pay and the superintendent (inaudible). For fund balance, the district's unassigned fund balance for the 21-22 school year totaled 132 million dollars, around 132 million dollars compared to its 3 months operating expenditures of 103 million dollars. For staffing levels, the district is very similar to the peer district average in terms of teaching staff, support staff, administrative staff, paraprofessional staff and auxiliary staff. The total, the number of students per total staff at the district is the same as the peer district average of 6.4, this is less than the state average of 17.2 and the number of students per teaching staff for the district is very similar to the peer district average and the state average. For teacher turnover, the districts teacher turnover rate for the 20, for the most recent year data is available, statewide is 8.9%, this is less than the district average of 11.3% and significantly less than the state average of 17.7%. And that concludes the high-level results from the efficiency audit and happy to answer any questions you may have, you all may have, thank you. Ms. Gonzalez asked, do I have any questions from my colleagues? Okay, since we are in official open public hearing, is there any questions from the public, comments? Okay, then I will now close the public hearing.

3. Close Public Hearing - Efficiency Audit

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Persons wanting to address the Board during Public Comment shall before the beginning of the meeting print their names and the subject matter on the sign-in sheet provided at the entrance of the Board Room. As per Policy BED (Local) all Board Meetings, Public Comment shall be limited to items on the agenda posted with notice of the meeting. The Board allots 30 minutes for Public Comment. Speakers shall limit comments to a maximum of 5 minutes or the allotted time, depending on the number of speakers that have signed up. Complaints or grievances on the following subjects; employee complaints, personnel matters, student complaints, removal of alternative education program, complaints against individual board members, and expulsions, shall be directed to the appropriate policy for attempted resolution before bringing the matter before the Board. The Board President shall determine if the topic shall be redirected to the appropriate policy or redirected to Administration. Comments on issues shall be constructive and courteous.

None

Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President stated, I want to thank you maam, for your presentation, it was very detailed, we do appreciate you.

The Board may deliberate or take action regarding the following agenda items.

Board policy BE (Local) and Roberts Rules limits debate to two opportunities. A Trustee may debate a motion for three minutes on the first speaking opportunity and two minutes on the second opportunity.

All Presentations Limited to five (5) minutes

VIII. Announcement(s):

Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President stated, next up is announcements, Dr. Gutierrez. **Dr. Rene Gutierrez, Superintendent of Schools stated, well, the announcement is what I said earlier. It's that we are going to have the tax ratification election coming up and early voting starts on Monday, October 23rd. So, it will go for the next two weeks and then election day is Tuesday, November the 7th and so, those are the announcements as far as the tax ratification election coming up starting on Monday.** Mr. Frank Ortiz, Board Member interjected, just a question Dr. Gutierrez, I see that we see the sample ballot here, do we have it available for distribution district wide? **Dr. Gutierrez stated, sample ballot, yes, we do and its even online sir, we have it, we put it in the district online, yes, it's on the website.** Mr. Ortiz stated, okay, thank you sir.

IX. Adjournment.

Motion made by Minerva Pena, seconded by Daniella Lopez Valdez, and unanimously carried to recommend approving to adjourn the Special Called Board Meeting at 12:15 p.m.

➤ **There being no further business appearing before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.**

(HANDOUTS ADDED TO OFFICIAL MINUTES)

**(AUDIO/VIDEO TAPES OF THE OPEN MEETING AND THE WRITTEN CERTIFIED AGENDA
OF THE CLOSED MEETING ARE ON FILE)**

Approved by:

Jessica Gonzalez, President of the Board

Date

Attested by:

Denise Garza, Secretary of the Board

Date

Notes: Font style designation

Board of Trustees

Administration

Board Attorney

Staff Attorney

Speaker/Presenter

(Minutes presented at Special Called Board Meeting held on April 9, 2024)