

Minutes of the Regular School Board Meeting

The Board of Trustees Sweetwater Independent School District

A Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Sweetwater Independent School District was held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 5:30 pm at the Puckett-Dudensing CTE Building, 1205 Ragland, Sweetwater, Texas.

Members Present: Jeff Allen, Domingo Castillo, Dennis Cumbie, Mark Garcia, Kelly Sheridan, Tasha Soto, Reggy Spencer

Members Absent: Brenda Valdez

Others Present: Casey Bills, Krystal Woolard, Ann Allen, Sonya Davison, Carmen Crane, Mindi Jeter, Marina Wilcox, Scott Cottenior, Kevin Stoker, Amy Nixon, Peggy Elliott, Carolyn Mullican

1. Call to Order

Board President, Mark Garcia called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and announced that a quorum was present. Everyone in attendance stood and recited the pledges to the American and Texas flags.

A. Board Social Contract – Tasha Soto read the Board Social Contract.

2. Public Forum

Mark Garcia introduced Carolyn Frawley who read a short statement expressing her concern on the Agenda item allowing daily prayer time in the schools. (Senate Bill 11)

A. Public Hearing: Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST)

Mr. Spencer called on Casey Bills, CFO, to give a report on the FIRST Rating from the 2024-25 data. Mrs. Bills reviewed the data and announced that once again SISD received a Superior rating. Mrs. Bills also presented the the Required Disclosures of reimbursements received by the Superintendent and Board members.

3. Action Items

A. Consider and Act on the Audit Report for the Year ending August 31, 2025

Mr. Spencer introduced Gerald Rogers from the auditing firm, James E. Rogers and Company, CPA. Mr. Rogers gave each Board member a copy of the Independent Auditors report. He reviewed the audit report and audit results. Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions for clarity. Dennis Cumbie made the motion to accept the Audit Report as presented, seconded by Tasha Soto, motion passed 6-0. Voting in favor were: Jeff Allen, Domingo Castillo, Dennis Cumbie, Mark Garcia, Kelly Sheridan, Tasha Soto.

B. Consider and Act on the 2026-2027 Academic Calendar

Mrs. Carmen Crane came forward to present information on how the committee selected this calendar. Mr. Spencer suggested that this decision be tabled until the February board meeting to evaluate the impact after the new football schedule is set.

C. Consider and Act on Targeted Improvement Plans (TIPs)

Mrs. Carmen Crane gave presented each Board member a packet outlining the Targeted Improvement Plan for SIS and East Ridge. She also reported that we have a grant pending for our Local Improvement Plan. Following the presentations, Dennis Cumbie made the motion to approve the TIP, seconded by Tasha Soto, motion passed 6-0. Voting in favor were: Jeff Allen, Domingo Castillo, Dennis Cumbie, Mark Garcia, Kelly Sheridan, Tasha Soto.

D. Consider and Act on Senate Bill 11, allowing daily prayer time

Mr. Spencer informed the Board that we are required to act on Senate Bill 11, which would require the district to allow daily prayer time for students. Mr. Spencer's recommendation was to NOT adopt this plan, citing several reasons, including the undue strain it would put on campus administrators. Jeff Allen made the motion to deny the adoption of a daily prayer time, seconded by Kelly Sheridan, motion passed 6-0. Voting in favor were: Jeff Allen, Domingo Castillo, Dennis Cumbie, Mark Garcia, Kelly Sheridan, Tasha Soto.

E. Consider and possible action regarding entering an interlocal agreement between SISD and the City of Sweetwater, Nolan County, Nolan County Hospital District, and Wes-Tex Ground Water District regarding granting consent for the sale of trustee properties by the City of Sweetwater at below market value.

Ethan Whittenburg, representing the City of Sweetwater appeared before the Board requesting the Board enter into an interlocal agreement with several taxing entities to sell properties at below market value. Jeff Allen explained what is involved and the steps buyers must take before and after the sale. Dennis Cumbie made the motion to accept the agreement as presented, seconded by Tasha Soto, motion passed 5-0. Voting in favor were: Domingo Castillo, Dennis Cumbie, Mark Garcia, Kelly Sheridan, Tasha Soto, Jeff Allen abstained from voting.

4. Bond Update

At this time, Mr. Spencer expressed his appreciation to the Board for everything they do for our kids and community. He reported that we getting very close to finishing the gym and finalizing a few other projects, including obtaining prices for covering the CTE building porch. Mr. Spencer also reviewed with the Board other improvements adjustments needed in the gym. He stated it would be volleyball season next year before we would have games in the gym.

5. Superintendent Reports

Mr. Spencer reported due to the weather expected beginning Friday, that all Friday and Saturday activities had been moved to Thursday, January 22. He has been contacted by Russ Petty asking for any unused furniture be donated to the new non-profit Day Care Center. Mr. Spencer also presented a document showing our pay for substitute teachers as compared to area districts.

6. Closed Session: Closed Session will be held for purposes permitted by the Texas Open Meeting Act, Texas Government Code Section 551 Subchapters D and E.

A. 551.074 Discuss Personnel Matters

*****The Board went in to a Closed Session at 6:46 pm.

*****The Board returned to Open Session at 7:53 pm.

7. Consider and Act on Superintendent's contract

Dennis Cumbie made the motion to extend Mr. Spencer's contract through January 2028. Domingo Castillo seconded the motion, motion passed 6-0. Voting in favor were: Jeff Allen, Domingo Castillo, Dennis Cumbie, Mark Garcia, Kelly Sheridan, Tasha Soto.

8. Consent Agenda

- A. Act on Monthly Minutes
- B. Act on Financials
- C. Act on Investment Report
- D. Act on the engagement of James E. Rodgers and Company, P.C. for the annual audit report ending fiscal year 2026.
- E. Act on Order of General Election

Domingo Castillo made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Dennis Cumbie, motion passed 6-0. Voting in favor were: Jeff Allen, Domingo Castillo, Dennis Cumbie, Mark Garcia, Kelly Sheridan, Tasha Soto.

9. Announcements

Mr. Spencer reminded the Board the February meeting will be Wednesday, February 11.

10. Adjourn

Domingo Castillo made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm

School Board President

Date Approved

School Board Secretary