

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF ECTOR COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT HELD AT THE ADMINISTRATION BOARD ROOM, 802 NORTH SAM HOUSTON, ODESSA, ECTOR COUNTY, TEXAS, AT 6:00 P.M., SEPTEMBER 19, 2023, 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. Keeley Boyer, Dr. Lilia Náñez, Deborah Ottmers, Dr. Anthony Sorola, Alicia Syverson, Dr. Kellie Wilks

**Others:** Tatiana Dennis, Aaron Hawley, Baldo Valeriano, Jeff Russell, Jaime Miller, Mauricio Marquez, Misty Hiner, Betsabe Salcido, Andrea Moreno-Hewitt, Jessica Gore, Tracey Borchardt, Albessa Chavez, Wes Wells, Ruth Campbell, Rita Lopez, Mary Franco

**26432** **Meeting Called to Order:** Christopher Stanley, Board President, called the Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**26433** **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.

**26434** **Pledge Allegiance to United States and Texas Flags:** The United States and Texas flag pledges were led by Bonham Middle School Students Bella Fortune and Maelee Fortune.

**26435** **Invocation:** The Invocation was led by Lead Pastor Donnie Williams, The Bridge Church.

**26436** **Special Presentations:**

**Recognition of Advanced Placement Scholars:** Chief Communications Officer Mike Adkins introduced a total of 41 ECISD students who are recognized as AP Scholars this year. At the conclusion of an Advanced Placement (AP) course, students are given the chance to take a corresponding AP exam on which they earn a score from 1 to 5, 5 being the best score. All public universities and colleges in Texas, and most private colleges and universities, offer college credit for a “Qualified” designation, which is a student who scores 3 or higher. These honors are based on the student’s AP scores last year; so, a number of them were seniors then and are now graduated. We are introducing you to our current students.

**AP Scholars:** Student with scores of 3 or higher on three or more Advanced Placement exams.

Odessa HS AP Scholars: Sal Lugo (sophomore) and Anika Gundlapalli

Permian HS AP Scholars: Shaun Price, Kamden Nance, Madison Morga, Morgan Hinojos, Alexa Montoya (junior), Roger Giba, Laney Cobb (junior)

**AP Scholars with Honor:** Students who receive an average score of 3.25 on all AP exams taken, AND scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

Permian HS AP Scholars with Honor: Nathan Reyes and Jordyn Jones

**AP Scholars with Distinction:** Students who receive an average score of 3.50 on all AP exams taken, AND scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

Permian HS AP Scholars with Distinction: Sapna Yadalla

**Introduction of UIL State VASE Qualifiers:** Chief Communications Officer Mike Adkins introduced the UIL State VASE Qualifiers. ECISD had five students who won awards at the State’s Visual Arts Scholastic Event, also known by the acronym VASE. In all, 12 students qualified for the competition. VASE recognizes exemplary student achievement in the Visual Arts by providing high school art students and programs a standard of excellence to achieve. Students create artworks, write about their creative processes and understanding of visual art, and articulate information about their artwork during an interview with a VASE juror. There were 31,000 entries this year. Only 1,190 made it to the state competition (that’s just under 4%). For the second year in a row, all four high schools in our school district that offer art classes, were represented at State VASE. Our kids won a total of four medals and one Gold Seal.

Odessa High School

- Jazira Perez – “Shell Shocked” All-State Medalist

New Tech Odessa

- Maya Galvan – “The Superstar Baby” All-State Medalist

Odessa Colligate Academy

- Luibov Bazuelva – “Light House” All-State Medalist

Permian High School

- Britton Morrow – “Car Chase” All-State Medalist
- Emilee Dameron – “The Sparrow” Gold Seal Medalist – Grand Champion

**Presentation of Education Foundation 2023-24 Grants:** Chief Communications Officer Mike Adkins introduced Education Foundation Board President Lisa Wyman. Ms. Wyman presented a \$72,700.24 check to the ECISD Board of Trustees.

The Education Foundation of Odessa was founded in 2000, and one of its main focuses since then is to fund innovative grants for teachers. Grant applications are approved in the spring semester to be implemented during the next school year. Last

spring The Education Foundation Grants Committee received 33 eligible applications for consideration and were able to fund 25 of those grants totaling \$72,700.24. To date, the Education Foundation has awarded more than \$2.8 million to ECISD teachers through their Grants for Inspiration and Innovation program.

The Education Foundation's mission is to create opportunities for education in Ector County ISD and these grants are just one of the many ways the Foundation supports ECISD. The Education Foundation is a volunteer board with no full-time staff of its own. The efforts of this board are supported through the ECISD Development Office.

**26437** **Opening Remarks by Superintendent:** In his opening comments, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Scott Muri congratulated all of Team ECISD for earning two more awards given by the Mexican American School Board Association this past weekend. One of the awards is for Outstanding Workforce Development Initiative for talent development pipelines and the second for English Language Learner initiatives, specifically the Emergent Bilingual Global Leadership program. Additionally, two of our students were selected to have artwork on display at the conference in San Antonio.

**26438** **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)* The following seven citizens participated during this portion of the meeting.

In public comment, three students who are part of the FFA program – Luis Perez, Ailani Castillo, and Evin Anderson – spoke to the board about their experiences in the program, the impact of FFA and the use of the Ag Farm facilities. They spoke of the wide range of agriculture science pathways that offer career options for them, and how involvement in the organization helps with their social, leadership, and public speaking skills. Christina Butler, FFA sponsor, thanked the school board for allowing the students to address them.

Jeff Russell spoke to the Trustees about the items pertaining to the tax rate. He said he feels that as the state compressed maintenance and operations tax rates in Texas the past several years, the total tax rate should have decreased, too, to give money to the taxpayers rather than being used to pay down existing bond debt.

### **Board Policy**

**26439** **Discussion of and Request for Approval of TASB Local Policy Update 121 Revisions: DEA(LOCAL): Compensation and Benefits: Compensation Plan:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Woodall to approve TASB Local Policy Update 121 Revisions: DEA(LOCAL): Compensation and Benefits: Compensation Plan as presented. The changes are minimal, to reduce redundancy, and does not change district operations.

Motion unanimously approved.

Action Items

**26440** **Discuss and Consider Adoption of an Order directing the Defeasance and Redemption of all of the District's Outstanding Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds, Series 2013, all of the District's Outstanding Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2020-A; and a portion of the District's Outstanding Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2016; in the Aggregate Principal amount of \$34,435,000; and Levying an Ad Valorem Tax in payment thereof; and enacting other provisions relating to the subject:** Moved by Miller, seconded by Woodall to approve the Adoption of an Order directing the Defeasance and Redemption of all of the District's Outstanding Unlimited Tax School Building Bonds, Series 2013, all of the District's Outstanding Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2020-A; and a portion of the District's Outstanding Unlimited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2016; in the Aggregate Principal amount of \$34,435,000; and Levying an Ad Valorem Tax in payment thereof; and enacting other provisions relating to the subject as presented. This series of early payments will save the District \$6,137,250 in future interest costs.

Motion unanimously approved.

**26441** **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Ordinance to Set 2023 Tax Rate for 2023-2024:** Moved by Abalos, seconded by Woodall to approve the Ordinance to Set 2023 Tax Rate for 2023-2024 as presented. The total tax rate adopted is \$1.014, which is a 16.392-cents decrease (13.92%) from last year.

A school district's tax rate is broken into two parts: Maintenance & Operations (M&O) which provides funding for day-to-day operations; and Interest & Sinking (I&S), also known as debt service, which provides the funding for debt (bond) payments. The total tax rate approved by the board breaks down as follows:

\$ .7596 for M&O – this rate is compressed down from \$.9810 last year  
\$ .2544 for I&S – this rate is increased from \$0.19692  
\$ 1.014 total tax rate

TO NOTE:

- The total tax rate is the less than the prior year, decreasing from \$1.17792 to \$1.014.
- The total tax rate of \$1.014 is below the total voter approval rate of \$1.016.
- The total tax rate of \$1.014 is below the total No New Revenue tax rate of \$1.03681.
- The total tax rate of \$1.014 is below the maximum tax rate allowed of \$1.016 without a tax rate election.
- The M&O tax rate of .7596 is below the voter approval/rollback/no new revenue tax rate of .862762.
- The M&O tax rate is decreasing down from .9810 to .7596.
- The I&S tax rate is increasing from .19692 to .25440, but is lower than the allowable of .256418 to cover bond costs.

In a comparison of last year's average taxable value and last year's tax rate with this year's average taxable value and this year's tax rate the average homeowner can expect to save \$506 in property taxes.

Motion unanimously approved.

**26442** **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Purchases over \$50,000**: Moved by Woodall, seconded by Hawkins to approve the Purchases over \$50,000 as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

**26443** **Discussion of and Request for Approval of 2023-2024 Budget Amendment #2**: Moved by Woodall, seconded by Brown to approve the 2023-2024 Budget Amendment #2 as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

**26444** **Discussion of and Request for Approval of Extension of Bank Depository Contract**: Moved by Brown, seconded by Miller to approve the Extension of Bank Depository Contract with Frost Bank as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

**26445** **Discussion of and Request for Approval to enter into Interlocal Agreements with Purchasing Cooperatives (COOPS) and Ector County ISD**: Moved by Hawkins, seconded by Woodall to approve to enter into Interlocal Agreements with Purchasing Cooperatives (COOPS) and Ector County ISD as presented. These purchasing cooperatives are through Education Service Center (ESC) Region 13. This co-op is free.

Motion unanimously approved.

**26446** **Discussion of and Request for Approval of 2023-2024 ECISD Campus Improvement Plans**: Moved by Hawkins, seconded by Brown to approve the 2023-2024 ECISD Campus Improvement Plans as presented. Each school, regardless of rating, is required to build a Campus Improvement Plan annually.

Motion unanimously approved.

**26447** **Consent Agenda**: Moved by Abalos, seconded by Brown to approve the 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 Resolution of the Board to Designate Investment Officer(s)
- E. Request for Approval of Staff Development Waiver

- F. Request for Approval of Interlocal Agreement between Ector County ISD and Region 18 for Reading Academies
- G. Request for Approval of Extracurricular Status of 4-H Organization Resolution and Adjunct Staff Members
- H. Request for Approval of Memorandum of Understanding between Ector County ISD and Greater Opportunities of the Permian Basin (GOPB), Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy – Children with Disabilities
- I. Request for Approval of Memorandum of Understanding between Ector County ISD and Greater Opportunities of the Permian Basin (GOPB), Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy – Parent Power Program
- J. Request for Approval of Memorandum of Understanding between Ector County ISD and Greater Opportunities of the Permian Basin (GOPB), Inc. Head Start School Readiness Academy - Transition
- K. Request for Approval of Public School District and Open-Enrollment Charter School Agreement 2023-2024 between Ector County ISD and Texas Virtual School Network

Motion unanimously approved.

#### **Report/ Discussion Items**

**26448** **Presentation and Discussion of Spring 2023 Panorama Data:** Associate Superintendent of Student and School Support Alicia Syverson presented this item for discussion. School Connectedness is the belief held by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals. It is one of the district's Indicators of Success in the strategic plan. More than 20,000 students in grades 3-12 across 38 schools took this survey last spring; they take the survey twice each year. Connectedness percentages are higher among elementary students than middle school and high school kids. Overall, ECISD's Connectedness declined from 59% to 51%, and the work is now to understand the reasons for the students' responses and help schools build a sense of belonging with students.

No action required.

**26449** **Presentation and Discussion of 2023 CCMR Results:** Associate Superintendent of Student and School Support Alicia Syverson presented this item for discussion. Board Goal #3 sets a CCMR goal of 65% by May 2024, however, ECISD hit that target in May 2022 and is now pushing beyond that. ECISD's new CCMR score is up 8 percentage points to 73%. The state has specific guidelines that define College Ready, Career Ready and Military Ready. One year ago, a CCMR score of 60 was an A; this year the standard has been increased to 88. Due to that, ECISD's improved CCMR score of 73% projects to be a C.

No action required.

**26450** **Information Items:** The Board of Trustees were provided with the following information items: Financials, Purchasing Report, Reclassified Auxiliary and Stipend/Supplemental Pay Plan and Routine Personnel Report.

**26451** **Closing Remarks by the Superintendent:** There were no closing remarks.

**26452** **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.]**  
**Section 551.082 of the Texas Government Code [Board will deliberate a complaint or charge brought against an employee of the school district by another employee.] (Level III Grievance Hearing – Rachel Hurford):**

Board President Christopher Stanley convened to the Board of Trustees to closed session at 8:03 p.m.

Board President Christopher Stanley reconvened the Board of Trustees to open session at 9:23 p.m.

**26453** **Possible Action Concerning Level III Grievance Hearing – Rachel Hurford:**  
Moved by Brown, seconded by Woodall to uphold the Level II decision.

Motion unanimously approved.

**26454** **Adjournment:** Board President Christopher Stanley adjourned the Board meeting at 9:23 p.m.

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**Board President**  
*Christopher Stanley*

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**Board Secretary**  
*Tammy Hawkins*