

# Minutes of Regular Meeting

## The Board of Trustees

### Duncanville ISD

---

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Duncanville ISD was held Monday, November 18, 2024, at 6:30 PM in the Duncanville ISD Education Plaza, 710 S. Cedar Ridge Drive, Duncanville, TX 75137.

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM

Vice President Jacqueline Culton called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. This meeting was called under the Texas Government Code 551.045.

The following trustees were in attendance: Jacqueline Culton, Carla Fahey, Cassandra Phillips, and Janice Savage-Martin. A quorum of the Board of Trustees was present, the meeting was duly called and the notice of the meeting was posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.

#### 2. OPENING CEREMONIES

##### A. INVOCATION

Trustee Phillips

##### B. PLEDGE TO US FLAG AND TEXAS FLAG

Board Members

##### C. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. T. Lamar Goree

##### 1. UPDATE OF CURRENT DISTRICT EVENTS, INFORMATION, OPERATIONS, AND PROGRAMS

Dr. T. Lamar Goree

Dr. Goree presented the Superintendent's Report. Thank you very much, Madam Vice President, and good evening to all trustees and everyone assembled today. It is my pleasure to bring you our superintendent's report for November 18th, 2024. I'd like to start, of course, by highlighting the cover photo. This is a picture from the Phil McNeely classic. This year, we had the pleasure of honoring the 2007 State Championship basketball team that was led by our own coach, Phil McNeely, who as you know is one of our trustees and certainly, let's give him a round of applause in his absence. Coach McNeely had the opportunity to lead three state championship teams in his tenure as head basketball coach at Duncanville. And this year, we did have the opportunity to honor and to celebrate that last state team and it was a wonderful, wonderful opportunity to be with him and see him interact with those children that he made such a big impact on.

I'd like to also say a huge, huge, huge congratulations to the Duncanville High School Band for a stellar performance at the UIL State Marching Competition. This marks our band's 27th appearance at this UIL State Marching competition since its founding in 1979. That's the most of any of the 6A bands in Texas. And also, it is important to note that we're proud once again to say that our Duncanville Band,

is among the top 40 bands across the state of Texas. Let's give them a round of applause for that. We also had a special treat to watch former Duncanville High School Band Director Jeff King, who still lives in our community as he was inducted into the UIL Hall of Fame and Honor that reflects the rich tradition of excellence in music education and performing arts here in Duncanville.

Friday night was certainly a special night in that we had an opportunity to not only win the first round of the playoffs, but to also celebrate Coach Samples' birthday. But a great birthday gift for Coach Samples was that it was his 350th career win as a head coach. And that celebration was important because there are not many coaches in this state that can say they've won that many games. In fact, as an active football coach, Coach Samples is the 3rd winningest coach in UIL Texas High School football history. So, let's give Coach Samples a round of applause and certainly, if you have an opportunity to go by and see him, to congratulate him, and to encourage him as we chase more wins.

I would also like to take some time just to update the board on where we are with our enrollment for this year. We are very proud that we're at 99.36% of our projected enrollment. We projected 11,643 and we're currently at 11,569, which puts us very much in proximity to what we projected for this school year. Super cool that our elementary numbers exceed our projections and that we're 103% of what we projected. And the good thing about that is that as we keep those students and create wonderful opportunities for those students to stay in our school system, we'll continue to see growth as we move across to our middle schools and our high schools as we move forward in the future. If you look there at the intermediates and the middles, those are both at 99%. Of course, the high school is down a little bit from what we projected, but we feel good about the numbers as we continue to not only work on the enrollment, but also on improving our attendance rates as we move forward.

We are excited that two of our Dallas Cowboy partners together have selected Duncanville High School as a site for this year's turkey giveaway. And tomorrow, Tuesday, November 19th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM, we will participate in that turkey giveaway and that will take place at Duncanville High School at the Panther Stadium on the visitor side. So, if you're out and about, come out and celebrate two of our cowboys as we give away turkeys.

Since 1946, Texas Youth and Government have taught teams to become responsible citizens and future leaders of our nation by providing hands-on experiences in the mechanics of government and media. Their goal is to raise the next generation of servant leaders who employ a sense of social responsibility and care for one another and to leave things better than they found it. As a result of the recent district conference, Duncanville High School has several qualifying students for state that we're proud of and we're also proud to state that we did host the conference right here in Duncanville. Our state qualifiers are three out of three media delegates, 29 out of 30 legislative delegates, 10 out of 14 state of the affairs delegates, and two out of three judicial teams. We're so incredibly proud of Governor Preston Lee and Attorney General Giselle Moreno for doing an outstanding job hosting the district competition under their leadership of Mr. Steven Cain. We truly, truly put on one classy performance for our students. Let's give those students a round of applause.

This is just another great example of when we talk about creating those championship opportunities, not only on the fields and the courts, but also in the classrooms and on the band fields and everywhere we go. So, we are really proud of those students.

The Career and Technology Education Department has been combined with the innovation department to foster a seamless pathway of choices for our students. And when we talk about the situation where we have an increase in elementary age students and we want to continue that, some of these wonderful pathways are how we plan to do that. If you look at the pictures on your screen, the top left, the Duncanville High School Health Science students recently attended the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons Annual Meeting, where our students had a chance to practice orthopedic surgery techniques with guidance from surgical residents.

The bottom left, recently, our Duncanville High School Junior Cosmetology students took a big step when they had an opportunity to wash the hair of real live clients. On the right, we have students from Reed Middle School completing their design thinking units where they use [inaudible 00:10:07], 3D drawing, and coding to complete their products and we're proud of all those students.

Again, these are just examples of the many, many wonderful opportunities we are creating through the pathways in our community. And a lot of these things you will see grow and be even greater as we implement our bond package. That does conclude our superintendent's report. And again, we'll conclude by showing off our wonderful 2007 State Championship Basketball team. Thank you, Madam Vice President.

#### **D. RECOGNITIONS/COMMENDATIONS**

Connie Wallace

##### **1. DONATIONS**

Connie Wallace

Ms. Connie Wallace presented Donations. Good evening, Vice President Culton, Board of Trustees, and Dr. Goree. Once again, we express our gratitude to the donors that support our district. Epsilon Sigma Alpha donated \$100. Texas Farm Bureau Casualty Insurance Company donated \$1,000. Holy Spirit Catholic Church donated food items, and Epsilon Sigma Alpha donated canned goods and snack items. And one very special recognition that we want to mention tonight is that our Duncanville ISD Education Foundation recently hosted a golf tournament, and they donated a portion of their proceeds to our High Hats. At this time, I would like to invite leadership from the Duncanville Education Foundation, as well as our High Hats forward because they have a check presentation for us tonight in the amount of \$12,166.

Dr. Miner addressed the board. I believe in Travel for Kids. I happened to be very fortunate when I was 13 to go to Baltimore and Washington, DC and Boston, and it changed my world because I learned I could go to those places and it was fun, it was safe, and everything good. And I hope these young women can learn the same thing. We're so happy to be able to support them.

Ms. Wallace continued. While they are taking their photograph, it's important to know that several of these young ladies will be traveling to New York during Thanksgiving break and they will participate in the Macy's Day Parade as a part of the Spirit of America Dance Group. Let's give them another round of applause.

Thank you to the Duncanville ISD Education Foundation and to Ms. Brianna Dawson, their instructor, who will accompany them and make sure they have a wonderful experience.

## 2. MADE WITH PRIDE

Connie Wallace

Ms. Connie Wallace presented Made with Pride. At this time, I'd like to move to Made with Pride in Duncanville. Tonight, we honor three outstanding Duncanville ISD Panthers, who are Made with Pride in Duncanville. Only two of them are present with us this evening. Our student honoree is currently auditioning for Allstate this evening, and so we have prayers up and fingers crossed for him, but he will be here next month so that we can give him some in-person celebratory love. So, we'll start with Mr. Evan Dahl. Mr. Dahl, if you'll please join me at the podium.

Evan is typically at the back of the house managing all things technology, making sure everything goes smoothly. But thank you for taking a break and joining us here. Evan is our staff honoree, and he is a dedicated technology specialist who consistently goes above and beyond to support the district's leadership team and assist campuses. He is one of the most reliable and solution-oriented people we know. Evan was nominated by Chief of Staff, Andrea Fields. And Evan, you are Made with Pride in Duncanville. Evan has family and friends here with him. If you'll stand and be recognized, let us see you. Thank you all.

Now, I'll bring up Ms. Adams. She is our teacher honoree. Ms. Adams is known for being an exceptional math teacher at Duncanville High School. She is dedicated. She is positive and extremely patient. Not only does she go above and beyond and out of the way to ensure that students are successful, but she also does the exact same thing for her colleagues, and she is always willing to help them out. She was nominated by Hope Clifton. Congratulations on being Made with Pride in Duncanville. And her mom is here. Mom, stand up.

Video played here.

Ms. Wallace concluded the presentation. Congratulations to our Made with Pride in Duncanville honorees, and you'll get a chance to meet Zion next month in person.

## 3. DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION CLUB OF AMERICA (DECA)

Connie Wallace

Ms. Connie Wallace introduced Dr. Williams and DECA students who presented the Distributive Education Club of America (DECA). Next, on the recognitions we have an opportunity to hear from DECA. Dr. Williams is the advisor at the high school, and she has a few students with her, and they want to share with you guys a little bit about what DECA is and what it brings to students here in Duncanville. And the month of November is National DECA month. So, at this time, will our DECA participants come on down?

Giselle Moreno started the presentation. Good afternoon. My name is Giselle Moreno. I'm the President of DECA and I am here today alongside Vice President Adrianna Fonseca, Vice President of Operations Preston Lee, and DECA sponsors Dr. Williams, Dr. Brown, and Ms. Ross. DECA, which stands for Distributive Education Clubs of America, is a Business CTE Competition Club at Duncanville High School. I'm excited to share a bit about DECA with you. So, what is DECA? DECA prepares

emerging leaders in entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management in high schools and colleges around the globe. Participants can compete at the regional, state, and international levels. DECA is organized into two unique student divisions, each with programs assigned to address the learning styles, interests, and focus of its members. There are 258,082 high school members, 3,956 high school chapters, 4,671 collegiate members, and 203 collegiate chapters. Adrianna Fonseca will tell you a little bit more about the district conference.

Adrianna Fonseca continued the presentation. Good evening. My name is Adrianna Fonseca, the Vice President of DECA. So, here, we see our chapter at our district competition, which is our regional event that tests students on their knowledge and skills of their chosen career cluster competition, which later qualifies them for the state level competition. Giselle Moreno will explain the state level competition. Thank you.

Giselle Moreno continued the presentation. The DECA State Career Development Conference is the annual three-day competition that members who place at state have the chance to compete in. Over the past few years, the conference has taken place in Corpus Christi, Dallas, and Houston, Texas. This year, the conference will be back here in Dallas. Last year, we had the opportunity to take over 40 members to the state conference in Houston, Texas.

Preston Lee continued the presentation. After the state conference is where the International Career Development Conference, which we call ICDC, happens, and that is the culmination of the DECA year. So, more than 23,000 students gathered with business professionals and entrepreneurs across the globe. Last year was held in Anaheim, California, and last year, we had the privilege of taking five DECA members from Duncanville who competed on the international level. At this competition, two DECA students, and now a Duncanville alum and myself, were privileged to place within the top 10 ranking in the world. This is an incredible week that is filled with so many people. You meet people from across the globe. I know last year; Giselle and I met people who were in China. We met people in Italy. We were able to gather so many global experiences and just able to collaborate with so many different people. It's a wonderful experience. Thank you.

Dr. Michelle Williams continued the presentation. Good evening. I am Dr. Michelle Williams, and I cannot go past the fact that I have an amazing principal that backs us up at Duncanville High School, Mr. Byrd. I also work with two amazing ladies, Dr. Suzanne Brown and Ms. Ross. This is an amazing opportunity. DECA has been around since 1946 because a lot of people have not ever heard of it. It is grueling. It is sometimes the kids, we have tears and everything and they write business plans, actual business plans with financials where I'm bringing in business and banks to come in and judge these financials. It's a great opportunity for all students. It's open not just to business students, but it's open to so many students. If they want to be a bioengineer or if they want to be a doctor, we allow them to do that to be a part so they can gain their public speaking skills.

We want to thank you guys for last year for assisting us to get to ICDC. That was a major fee for us to get there, to buy the plane tickets, to approve in that, we want to say thank you. One of the ways that our community can help us through mentorships, organize events, come and listen to our students speak, and fundraising, fundraising, fundraising, fundraising, fundraising. ICDC is not cheap to get there. We thank you for that. But it really, really is not cheap. We welcome guest speakers. We invite

you to come and be a judge at one of our events, either the district, the state, or the international level. You guys are more than welcome to be a part of that. At each level, the students make a lot more friends. They gain friends worldwide like they presented.

They have the state, the district, and the international level. And that's a major feat. Since I've been with Duncanville, this is my sixth year at Duncanville. Dr. Brown and I have coached kids to be there four times. So, that's an amazing opportunity to be there. So, supporting our competition and community engagements, I'm very big on community service. I even had foot surgery on both feet, so I've even gone out with surgical boots to assist the kids. So, we want to say thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you. Without your support, without the community support, we would not be the DECA chapter that we are today. I want to also thank you, thank Preston and Giselle and Adrianna. They're actual ICDC winners. That's not a small feat for them to do that. So, thank you guys so much for recognizing us tonight. Thank you.

Vice President Culton stated. Thank you, Ms. Wallace, for your report. We'd like to thank all who have donated your resources, your time to the district. This month, or last month, I should say, we received donations to the Panther Pantry. We received a very generous donation from the Duncanville Education Foundation and basically y'all are making dreams come true with what you all have done. So, we must just say thank you again, from the board for supporting the High Hats.

In Made with Pride, we saw three amazing individuals, those that are committed to excellence and service to others, so we must acknowledge them. And then the DECA Club, under the leadership of Dr. Williams, thank you very much for your report and for what y'all are doing to prepare the young people to assume positions in the business world of tomorrow. Thank you all very much for what you have done.

#### 4. INTRODUCTION OF DIRECTOR OF STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS Andrea Fields

Ms. Andrea Fields introduced the new Director of State and Federal Programs. Thank you, Madam Vice President Culton, board members, and Dr. Goree. It is my pleasure to stand tonight in Ms. Pamela Brown's stead to introduce our Director of State and Federal programs. We are extremely excited to announce the appointment of Dr. Sue-Ellen Washington as the new Director of State and Federal programs. With 16 years of experience in education, Dr. Washington brings extensive expertise and a deep commitment to student success in this new role. Dr. Washington began her career as a bilingual educator in Austin ISD in 2008 where she taught elementary students. She later moved to Irving ISD, serving as a teacher, a K-2 literacy specialist, and an MTSS specialist, which is a Multi-Tiered System of Support Specialist.

In 2022, she joined the Duncanville ISD family as an intervention coordinator and has continued to make a positive impact since that time. Dr. Washington holds a Bachelor of Science in Public Relations and a master's in education with a focus on Bilingual Education Curriculum and Instruction, both from the University of Texas at Austin. She earned her PhD in Organizational Leadership from Liberty University and is currently pursuing her principal certification from Lamar University. We are truly excited about the expertise and vision Dr. Washington brings to her new role and look forward to seeing the positive impact of her leadership. Please join us in giving a warm welcome to Dr. Sue-Ellen

Washington. Congratulations. Do you have family? We want to recognize your family and friends here. Stand, family and friends. Thank you.

### **3. COMMUNICATION FROM CITIZENS TO DISCUSS PENDING AGENDA ITEMS BEFORE THE BOARD**

There was no communication from citizens to discuss pending agenda items before.

### **4. CLOSED SESSION as authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code Chapter 551.**

The board went into closed session at 7:05 p.m.

#### **A. CONSULTATION WITH THE BOARD ATTORNEY ( §551.071)**

Private Consultation with the Boards' attorney with respect to pending or contemplated litigation, settlement offers, and matters where the attorney's duty to the Board, pursuant to the code of professional responsibility of the State Bar of Texas, clearly conflicts with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act.

#### **B. PURCHASE, EXCHANGE, LEASE, OR VALUE OF REAL PROPERTY ( §551.072)**

#### **C. PERSONNEL ( §551.074)**

**Appointments, Discipline, Dismissals, Duties, Employment, Evaluations, Extensions, Leaves of Absences, Non-Renewals and Proposals for Non-Renewals, Renewals, Reassignments, Retirements, and Settlements**

##### **1. DIRECTOR OF PURCHASING**

### **5. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION at 7:25 PM**

### **6. TAKE ACTION ON ITEMS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION**

There was no action taken on items discussed in closed session.

### **7. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS (ALL ITEMS MAY BE ACTED UPON AT THE SAME TIME BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES)**

**Trustee Savage-Martin made a motion to approve the consent agenda; Trustee Fahey seconded the motion.**

Trustee Savage-Martin asked. I have a question on item E, and it's just whether we are still investigating other maybe less expensive venues? I love the venue, love it, but ...

Dr. Sam Nix replied. So, what we have done is we have looked at several venues including the Cowboys Stadium, which is more expensive. We also have a few churches that we have looked at. The problem is just the size, and not only the size, what we are allowed to do, and how they support us in doing that for the venue. We also looked at the Dallas Convention Center, which is where we've been before, but it's so taxing on us as a district. And by the time you add up what we need to do and what

those costs would look like, in addition to limiting the number of tickets that we would be able to offer our families, it's a challenge for us. And so that's why we continue to go back to this venue just because of the space and what it allows us to do, and mainly because it allows our families to just be able to support their students without limit.

Trustee Savage-Martin commented. I hear you and I feel that you're looking at other venues, but I don't want to reduce the number of tickets for sure.

Dr. Nix replied. We've even looked at Duncanville High School Stadium

Trustee Fahey asked. How many seats do we need? What is the maximum number? I was thinking American Airlines Center or some big place like that, but how many seats do we need?

Dr. Nix replied. That's hard to answer, Ms. Fahey, because depending on the graduates we have ... We usually have around, rough number, 1,000 graduates, right? We used to give our graduates three tickets each. It would be such a challenge with that. We have graduates that bring anywhere from eight to 10 people to see them graduate. It's laughable, but sometimes even 15 to 20. It is such a memorable opportunity for their families to see them, and it's a challenge just trying to guess how many we would need, would we have been in a venue that just allows them to come for so long.

Trustee Fahey commented. It's just a high, high, high price.

Dr. Nix replied. And it's getting higher, which is why we tried to lock in the ...

Trustee Fahey asked. Didn't we start out with 50,000 when we first started going to Arlington?

Dr. Nix replied. We started going to UTA. If you can remember, we went to the convention center, then we went to UTA. The biggest challenge there was just space. They limited us to two tickets per graduate. That was a huge challenge for us.

**Motion passes 4-0.**

A. MEETING MINUTES

Jody Lofton

B. BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Brandy Mayo

C. FINANCIAL REPORTS

Brandy Mayo

D. EXTENDING OF DEPOSITORY CONTRACT

Brandy Mayo

E. GRADUATION FOR DUNCANVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Sam Nix

**8. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF ACTION AGENDA ITEMS**

A. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2023-2024

Brandy Mayo



Ms. Brandy Mayo introduced Ms. Lauren Eaton who presented Consider Approval of Audited Financial Report for 2023-2024. Good evening, Madam Vice President Culton, Board of Trustees, and Dr. Goree. I am here to present to let you know that Lauren Eaton, audit manager with Whitley Penn, is here to present the Duncanville ISD 2024 financial statement and single audit. Unfortunately, her partner that was bringing the copies of the presentation has been delayed, but she will come and make the presentation. We do have PowerPoint here for you on display and we can provide the copies for your board book after the meeting. You do have a copy of the full audit at your desk. You just don't have the presentation. She can refer to and you can review those documents as you go. So, I would like to bring up Ms. Lauren Eaton to the stand.

Ms. Lauren Eaton started the presentation. Hello, Dr. Goree, Madam Vice President Culton, and board members. Thank you for having me this evening. The purpose of our financial statement audit is to issue an opinion over the report. There are three types of opinions that we can provide. There's a disclaimer qualification or an unmodified opinion, which is the highest assurance that you can provide on your financial statements, and that is the opinion that we are issuing tonight. The overview of the audit process begins with our planning of the audit where we meet with management, discussing internal controls. We usually come out around August or usually a little bit earlier. We come out before the fiscal year-end to test the internal controls and meet with the various departments to identify those key controls and establish our testing. Then we come back usually a couple months after year-end to complete our substantive work, and that is verifying the balance sheet accounts and the income statement accounts. And then the final result is where we are today where we issue an opinion and the report.

As I mentioned, we do test the internal controls during our interim period and we tested the key areas and the main expenditures, which is going to be your payroll and non-payroll. We do also look at IT controls, and meet with the PEIMS regarding average daily attendance, procurement, other revenue sources like your child nutrition. And then as part of the single audit, we do perform specific tests over those federal programs. More in-depth of the substantive procedures that we do at year-end, we perform analytical procedures, and this could be either a flux analysis or a ratio analysis. We do predictive tests, taking the inputs of the data and predicting the numbers, vouching to support, obtaining third-party confirmations, and then vouching as well to a third-party report such as the TEA payment report, the comptroller's report, and the TEA payment and summary of finance.

The results of the audit, we do audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and governmental auditing standards commonly known as Yellow Book. As I said, we are giving an unmodified opinion over the financial statements, which is the highest level of assurance that you can provide, and there is a significant deficiency related to financial reporting, and we do have no findings related to compliance. As part of our single audit, which is triggered anytime the district will spend over \$750,000 in federal awards in a single year, for the current fiscal year there is \$26 million spent, and the major programs that were selected is going to be ESSER and the Child Nutrition Cluster. The opinions that we issued over these are, again, unmodified over each major federal program and we have no internal control findings related to any of the major programs as well.

The summary below is your government-wide financial statement summary. This is going to include your full accrual basis of accounting, which is all your long-term assets and your long-term liabilities,

and this provides the net position of the district. As you can see, your total assets valued at close to \$479 million. Of this, capital assets were \$188 million roughly, and your cash and investments valued at \$252 million. Your outflows and your deferred inflows, which are related to pension and OPEB were \$22.3 million and \$35.9 million respectively. For your total long-term liabilities, you had \$448 million and part of this was due to bonds of \$360 million and then the pension and OPEB, which do not represent cash liabilities. This is just a statement for GASB 68 and 75, and this resulted in a total net position of \$17 million.

For the statement activities, which is your income statement for the government wide level, total revenues equal to \$177 million. Of that, your program revenues were \$35 million and your general revenues, which include your property taxes is \$141.5 million. This was offset with your total expenses across the district of \$164 million. This resulted in an increase in net position of roughly \$13 million. There was a prior period adjustment for \$11.8 million related to reassessment of capital assets. For your general fund, this is just your current financials, your actual revenues of \$128 million did exceed your final budget amount by about \$700,000. Your actual expenditures of \$121.4 million were under your budget, \$24.6 million. And then your other financing sources, which are transfers in and out, exceeded the final budget by \$0.6 million. This resulted in a general fund balance increase of \$7.4 million with a total ending fund balance of \$71.8 million.

This is your general fund revenue broken up on the major sources. As you can see, the major income flow is going to be through state aid and then followed by property taxes, with a small portion to other state, local, and federal revenue. For your general fund expenditures, as in line with most schools, the majority of it is going to be instruction and related services and then after that, instructional and school leadership, along with the other percentages that are less than 5% individually.

This overview is how your general fund compares to your average expenditures and roughly, usually they want about 30% as a safe benchmark. And as you can see, the district is on trend of continuing with a healthy unassigned fund balance. This would be what you could use in case there's not as much inflow as you expected to continue operating. And as I said, it ended with in the general fund of \$71.8 million, or roughly 59% of your unassigned as a percentage of your expenditures.

Required communication that we are required to communicate with the board. We did receive an engagement letter from the district dated March 7th, 2024. We do have to communicate two audit risks that are not specific to the district in any way but are assumed across all our audits. And that's going to be management override because while there can be controls in place, there is always the ability of management to override them, and revenue recognition improperly due to error or fraud. And again, these are not specific to Duncanville and there was nothing that we found that indicated that these were specific to Duncanville in any way. We also verified that the district's accounting policies and methods were appropriate with industry standards, and we also did not have any disagreements or difficulties with management, and we maintained independence as a firm and a team from the district.

Other required communications is that we are not aware that management consulted with any other auditors to essentially get a second opinion on anything that was presented and none of the issues that we discussed with management was contingent upon our retention. The only significant estimate

that we believe that the district has is regarding its state aid. And that is all. Are there any questions?

**Trustee Savage-Martin made a motion to accept the annual comprehension financial report for 2023-24; Trustee Fahey seconded the motion.**

Trustee Savage-Martin commented. It's probably a comment, but I think on page 10 of that report. It's where the revenue pie was. This is so disappointing. 53% is state aid and we haven't received any of that. So, I want the people to understand that we've been operating on a little less than 50% and hopefully the state will provide those funds soon. Hopefully. But y'all, of course, understood that. Thank you very much.

**Motion passes 4-0.**

B. RESOLUTION TO CAST A VOTE FOR A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DALLAS CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT (DCAD)  
Brandy Mayo

Ms. Brandy Mayo presented the Resolution to Cast a Vote for a Member of the Board of Directors of the Dallas Central Appraisal District (DCAD). Good evening, again, Madam Vice President Culton, Board of Trustees, and Dr. Goree. You have the opportunity tonight to cast your vote for the Dallas CAD. You have 45 votes. You may cast them for any member that you like. I believe if you scroll down in your documents, you'll see a voting tabulation there. You may vote all 45 votes for one person, or you may spread them out how you would like. The vote is required to be made in a public meeting.

**Trustee Savage-Martin made a motion to cast all 45 votes for Cassandra Phillips as a member of the Board of Directors of the Dallas Central Appraisal District by approving and completing the resolution to cast votes for a member of the Board of Directors of the Dallas Central Appraisal District; Trustee Fahey seconded the motion. Motion passes 4-0.**

Trustee Culton commented. I would just like to say that we're happy to submit our vote for Trustee Phillips, who has worked extremely hard as a part of the Dallas Central Appraisal District to represent us, so thank you.

C. LONG-RANGE STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW AND REFRESH  
Connie Wallace

Ms. Connie Wallace presented the Long-Range Strategic Plan Review and Refresh. Good evening, Vice President Culton, Board of Trustees, and Dr. Goree. Since the development of the strategic plan in 2021, external and internal factors have influenced the plausibility of some of the goals and strategies, resulting in a need to revisit, refine, and refresh some aspects of the long-range strategic plan. The purpose of this presentation is to share with the board the district's updates to the Strategic Plan Goals. And this month, the changes to the goals are being brought before the board for approval per board policy. It is a recommendation that the Board of Trustees approve the revisions to the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan. Are there any questions?

Dr. Goree added to the presentation. One thing I'll add to that is that this is the information that Ms. Wallace brought forward last month to the board, and this is just an opportunity to receive the formal vote as staff moves forward with a modified plan.

**Trustee Phillips made a motion to approve the revisions to the 2021-2026 Strategic Plan; Trustee Savage-Martin seconded the motion.**

Trustee Fahey asked. Is the plan still ending 2026?

Ms. Wallace replied. Yes, ma'am.

Trustee Fahey asked. So, we haven't changed that? But I know for, "The campuses will offer diverse and inclusive activities," it mentions August 2028.

Ms. Wallace replied. Yes. For that one, we know that it's going to take a while for us to reach 100%, and so the committee scaffolded that one out a little further, but we are launching or getting started with that one now. So, I guess to answer your question, that would be the one where it will go beyond 2028. And so, in our new strategic plan, we will have that goal once again.

Vice President Culton asked. Could you briefly give us a summary of the revisions that were made to the goals?

Ms. Wallace replied. Yes, I can do that. And I do have some handouts of a side-by-side document that I can pass out to supplement our decisions. In priority one, which is student academic success ... In this one, the majority of what you'll see on the side-by-side document, the first column shows you what was approved in the initial approval, and then the second column shows you what's being proposed to carry us from 2024 through 2026, and then the final column shows the rationale. So, on priority one, the first goal that you see there, "Increase the percentage of 3rd grade students that meets grade level or above on STAAR Reading from 38% to 55% by June 2024," you'll notice that the proposal changes the percent improvement, and it changes the target expected date.

Last month, you guys had a chance to hear from Dr. Nix and he shared the accountability information with us. And so based on that information, we now know that we must regroup and revise our plan so

that we can have some goals that are attainable and in the best interest of our students in achieving those goals. And so that's the rationale that you see there. That rationale is the same for the first two. And then the third one in that priority, we added TSI met as an additional data point that we want to improve upon, as well as changing the date to 2025 as opposed to having to have achieved that by 2024. And the final one in priority one, there are no changes.

Going into priority two, you will see that there are no changes to the first goal. But the second goal, that one was rewritten to establish clearer expectations, and the goal includes the incremental targets. So, to the point that you were just referring to, Trustee Fahey, you'll see that by 2028 we want to achieve that goal, but by 2025 we want to be at 50%. And by the conclusion of this strategic plan, we want to be at 60% and so forth, but we know that we don't want to stop at just 50%. But we're just getting started on that one, so that's why we've scaffolded it over time. And that last one, in that same priority, we adjusted the language, again, to ensure that we have a clearer expectation to focus on the entire family. We were focusing... Initially it said expand social and emotional and wellness supports by 10%. And we just changed the language because we know that it's important that not only... A lot of times when we hear social and emotional, we just think about our students, but we really wanted to be laser focused in on our families and provide the wraparound services for the entire family, not just a perception that we're only focusing on our students. So that's the adjustment there.

Then in priority three you'll see that we added some. So, the reason why the first column is grayed-out is because there wasn't a direct correlation to a new proposed strategy. So, we are proposing that we develop a plan to support uncertified teachers in successfully completing required exams and assessments, helping them meet educator preparation program requirements and achieve certification. This is just based on our current reality. This is a new goal that we established. And the next one, it was to create a competitive salary structure. And we've divided that one into two, and that's why you see how it goes across on the document. So now instead of just creating a competitive salary structure, we're going to develop a comprehensive recruitment plan and we're going to streamline the hiring process. And so that one too was being rewritten to establish clear expectations.

The next one, we just adjusted the language so that it is clear in the expectation. And then the next goal there that you see improve capacity at all levels of the organization to create a quality pipeline for 70% of key leadership positions. We don't have a new one proposed. This goal will inherently be achieved as we develop our early career teachers and focus on recruitment and our professional learning.

The next one is to increase teacher retention, and we feel like this goal will be achieved through the recruitment and professional learning experiences that we're going to provide as well.

In priority four, you'll see that the first column, there's some grayed out spaces because we made some adjustments and we added some proposed goals. The first one is to administer district finances effectively and in line with regulations to achieve optimal educational outcomes. And there it's based on our current reality. With our funding sources, this new goal was established and making sure that we're able to educate our students without overspending. Then we have the next one to enhance the learning environment by increasing overall operational efficiencies and quality of district operation services. Again, we're basing that new proposed goal on our current reality. And then also with

providing a safe and orderly learning environment, ensuring safety and security measures are followed.

Since the inception of the Strategic Plan in 2021, we have had some guidelines to change at the state level, some funded and some unfunded mandates. We just wanted to make sure that based on our current reality we established goals so that we can achieve. Then you'll see where we made some adjustments. For example, provide anytime, anywhere access to technology for 100% of Duncanville ISD students. We are proud that that goal has been attained. So, we didn't carry that one forward. And then we have in create a culture of service and support with 90% satisfaction. We are in the process of using our survey data and continuing to use survey data that's collected to move closer to achieving this goal through the implementation of our bonds, safe and orderly schools and the recruitment of highly qualified staff.

The next one around the ensuring 95% of the curriculum program audit findings are addressed. The reference curriculum in program audit, at this point, is somewhat outdated. There are some things in that audit that we have been laser focused on adjusting and making sure that we achieved those changes. But by the time we conclude this audit, we will be in a position where we might need to have another curriculum audit because some things have changed at the state, some requirements. So that's why we took that one from the proposed adjustments. And then in the previous plan we had five priorities, and because we collapsed some from four and five into our new Fiscal Stewardship and Operational Excellence, you'll see that these last three under the current strategic plan, those are being removed.

This goal will inherently occur because we will administer district finances effectively and in line with regulations to achieve the optimal educational outcomes. And then the second one is to ensure 100% of district facilities receive top ratings annually for health, safety, and aesthetics. We believe that through the implementation of Bond 2023, this goal is expected to occur as well. And then the final one is to ensure that 60% of expenditure is targeted toward strategic goals and improvement. We feel that this will occur as we administer our district funds effectively following regulations and we will be able to achieve our educational outcomes. I know that was a lot of information. Are there any questions about the proposed changes that the leadership team is making?

Trustee Fahey asked. Will you remind us once more of the committee members who put this together?

Ms. Wallace replied. It was the senior leadership team.

Trustee Fahey asked. No committee members, teachers?

Ms. Wallace replied. Part of the charge from Dr. Goree was that we would not do this in isolation, but that we were divided into subgroups. We worked on this... We did more I-dotting and T-crossing at our leadership retreat, but prior to going into that retreat, we were able to work within our own departments to get feedback with our direct reports, especially in the areas that were under our purview. To make sure that we were making the proper adjustments and that we didn't have any blind spots as a leadership team, we incorporated our direct reports in our thinking before, and after,

the retreat.

Trustee Fahey asked. Were there two meetings when you all got together?

Ms. Wallace replied. Team, I might have to rely on y'all's memory here. I believe that-

Trustee Fahey commented. It seems like I read somewhere that there were two. But anyway, Thank you for your work. It's a lot of work.

Dr. Goree added. One thing I can add to that too is that the vision will be in 2026 when we do a revamp of the entire plan, is that it will be a very holistic process that will involve stakeholders, board members, community people as well as we look at how we revamped that. So, these revamps are guinea pig goals that we look at to see how and in what direction do we work best.

Vice President Colton asked. I have a question on the item, "Ensure 100% of district facilities receive top ratings annually for health, safety, and aesthetics." And we are proposing to eliminate that item. And the rationale provided was through the implementation of Bond 2023. This goal is expected to inherently occur. I believe that all our facilities that need upgrades are not able to be funded under the bond. So, I don't know why we would not have allowed that one to continue. And can you enlighten us on that one?

Ms. Wallace replied. I will invite my colleague, Mari Zamora to come to the podium and join in that conversation, if that's okay, Madame Vice President, as it relates to the top ratings.

Ms. Zamora replied. One of the things we looked at, we looked at the bond, but we were also doing some things out of the safety grants. And so, we're trying to see what's the best way to use all the funds, bond and safety funds to achieve especially the safety issues. Those are our priorities. Although not all the facilities are covered, the top issues at the facilities are covered. They are across the district.

Trustee Savage-Martin commented. I think at the beginning in '21 when this was started, I believe it was Jackie Culton, current board member and a previous board member, Renee McNeely that served on this committee. And you mentioned that we will have representation at the next stage. All right, thank you very much.

**Motion passes 4-0.**

D. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF DUNCANVILLE HIGH SCHOOL BAND TO PERFORM AT THE MUSIC FOR ALL NATIONAL CONCERT FESTIVAL ON MARCH 12-16, 2025 IN INDIANAPOLIS, IN.

Dr. Sam Nix

Dr. Sam Nix presented Consider Approval of Duncanville High School Band to Perform at the Music for All National Concert Festival on March 12-16, 2025, in Indianapolis, IN. Board, it is my absolute pleasure to stand before you for your consideration of approval for the Duncanville High School Band, and also want to just thank you so much for your support of the band and just take a moment to just

congratulate our amazing band on the great job that they did this past week at the state finals and prelims and final competition. The Music for All National Festival offers the Duncanville High School Wind Ensemble a valuable opportunity for growth through collaboration with national music programs, including performances in world-class venues and post-concert clinics. Our wind ensemble was selected as one of 23 ensembles from nearly 300 applicants. Duncanville students will also engage in workshops on college preparation and careers in the music industry. A highlight of the trip will be the world premiere of a new work composed by Duncanville graduate Adrian Hernandez, commemorating the band's 70th anniversary and celebrating the ensemble's connection to its distinguished alumni. Board, all the information is presented for you in your packet and it's my pleasure to answer any question that you may have at this time.

**Trustee Phillips made a motion to approve out-of-state travel for the Duncanville High School Wind Ensemble for the purpose of performing at the Music for All National Concert Festival on March 12th through the 16th, 2025; Trustee Savage-Martin seconded the motion. Motion passes 4-0.**

E. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CONSTRUCTION MANAGER AT RISK (CMAR) CONTRACT  
GUARANTEED MAXIMUM PRICE  
Andrea Fields

Ms. Andrea Fields presented Consider Approval of Construction Manager AT Risk (CMAR) Contract Guaranteed Maximum Price. Good evening again, Madam Vice President and Board of Trustees and Dr. Goree. Again, it is my pleasure to stand before you this evening with this action item for the approval of our construction manager at risk contract for our guaranteed maximum price for the following campuses. And of course, Board, you know there are different packages included in the total bond. This is one of the first packages that we're bringing to you for the guaranteed maximum price. This will include the campuses of Daniel, and I have it listed as elementary school, because that is what it will become. Hardin Elementary, Byrd Middle School, Reed Middle School, and Kennemer Middle School. And so of course we had our bid opening on October the 29th, 2024, and as you previously approved, Northridge Construction will oversee these packages or this project, and approval for the guaranteed maximum price is necessary so that the construction work can begin and move forward.

Board, you have in front of you beside the overview, you have the letter from WRA, our architect that is working with our construction manager at risk. There with the information that I've already shared with you, you have the total GMP included in that letter. I do want to point out that the guaranteed maximum price includes all general conditions, the construction manager at risk percentage fee, the builder's risk insurance, the general liability performance and payment bonds and the contractor's construction contingency. And of course, you see all the other allowances that are part of this. Several months ago, you gave Dr. Goree the authority to sign the agreement. So, he will do that. Right now, it's being reviewed by our bond council so that we make sure that everything is tied up neat and tidy for us as we move forward. You have also on the brief spreadsheet there, the campuses and you have the construction cost limitations that were included in this first package.

It's in the white but the guaranteed maximum pricing there and the goal that you have highlighted. If you've done your math, you know that it came in a little lower than what we had estimated it to be,



which is a good thing for us. And so tonight, Board, we are asking you to approve the guaranteed maximum price for the renovation of Daniel Elementary, Hardin Elementary, Byrd Middle School, Kennemer Middle School, and Reed Middle School as presented with the guaranteed maximum price of \$9,599,318.42 with Northridge Construction Company so that we can provide them notice to move forward. And the representatives from our bond management company are here, LAN, and also representatives from Northridge Construction if you have any questions. And I will pause at this time.

**Trustee Savage-Martin made a motion to approve the guaranteed maximum price GMP for the renovation of the Daniel Elementary School, Hardin Elementary School, Byrd Middle School, Kennemer Middle School and Reed Middle School as presented in the amount of \$9,599,318.42 and provide Northridge Construction Inc notice to proceed on this project; Trustee Phillips seconded the motion.**

Vice President Culton asked. Does the GMP include an owner's contingency?

Ms. Fields replied. Yes. If you refer to the letter inside from WRA, do you see that? The cost also includes the owner's contingency allowance at the very bottom of the paragraph there in the letter.

Trustee Culton asked. Can you tell me what that amount is?

Ms. Fields replied. No, ma'am. I cannot at this time.

Mr. Hawk replied. Good evening. The amount is 5% of the contract amount included for any unforeseen conditions or any item requested by the staff during construction.

Trustee Culton commented and asked. That's great, because we know in construction there are unforeseen conditions. It's good to have that. Could you provide an explanation of what could cause the cost to increase? We say guaranteed maximum price, but what situations could cause an increase in the construction amount?

Mr. Hawk replied. The unforeseen conditions, we have estimated some, are predominantly interior remodeling. So, if you open a wall and you find something very unusual that we're not expecting. We have done the asbestos abatement, there might be some unforeseen conditions there. There are two roofing projects. So, there might be unforeseen conditions in the decking that you might encounter. We have accounted for those to a certain extent, but if they're extensive then that may cross the GMP line. But again, we've studied, we've checked, and we have analyzed. So, there's quite a few things that could happen. But predominantly we are inside two roofing projects and not too much work outside. We're not excavating anything, so the chances are very slim.

Trustee Culton asked. And have these projects gone all through the permitting processes with the cities?

Mr. Hawk replied. Yes. We've started that. As a matter of fact, we already have received first set of comments, so we should be wrapping up in a couple of weeks.

Trustee Culton asked, and what is the anticipated schedule.

Mr. Hawk replied. Scheduled to start during the winter break, get it mobilized, get it ready, and then up and running on January 1st and keep all the way till August 1st. These are the realignment projects. Remember we talked about five plus five, 10. This is the first phase. It is very important for Daniel and Hardin to finish to get to Central and Smith. So, step by step, this is the most important part. And then the next phase there is another less important part, but these are the critical projects.

**Motion passes 4-0.**

## **9. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION AGENDA**

### **A. BOND PROJECT UPDATE**

Andrea Fields

Ms. Andrea Fields asked Mr. Hawk to come and present the Bond Project Update. Well tonight we don't have a fun video or anything, but I am going to ask Mr. Hawk to come back. We have just a very brief verbal report of what progress we've made. It's been kind of a short turnaround from the October meeting to November. I hope to have y'all some more pictures maybe next time for Christmas.

Mr. Hawk started the presentation. Good evening, Vice President, board members, and Dr. Goree. This is a brief update. You just saw the approval. So, the first five projects are critical, the second five are coming right behind. These are the realignments. All the students will be moved around, and they'll all be settled in their respective campuses. Then in '25, we'll start Central and Smith and Brandenburg for the major remodeling. Central and Smith will be completely empty so we can work the entire year of '25 to get ready for '26. High school project is coming along well. The first package is for the long lead items and for the fire alarm scope of work which is required by the fire marshal. So, that's coming along in the next month. You saw the renderings last time for the high school for the addition. That has moved forward.

We met with the city. So, hopefully next month we'll have some more renderings, some more photographs of inside details, how the cosmetology and is culinary coming along. There'll be more details on Smith and Central because we're meeting with the city on those in the next two, three weeks to get their feedback. Predominantly it's all interior, we're not doing anything outside. So those are the packages. The weapon detection system is working well. Chief Lambert has been monitoring that. Our kids at the high school back in the last year, because of the long line, students were missing the first class for 10 to 15 minutes. And now there's hardly anybody.

We were just there last week and in the parking lot at 7:32 a.m., there were hardly any students. So, they had all passed by. That's coming along. So, the investment of half a million dollars is paying off. At middle school, they're really working well. We don't have any complaints. In the IT field, we have worked with Dr. Brown. We have solicited a proposal for the IDEA Hub for the improvement of the servers. So that's being published, and we are getting prices next month for those. So, these are the updates. Some of the other miscellaneous projects will start next year, all the other buildings in the district. We hope to bring you a little bit more detail next month. Thank you.

Trustee Savage-Martin asked. You did mention Central, and I just want to verify that you're not doing anything outside, so the front facade is remaining?

Mr. Hawk replied. Yes.

Trustee Savage-Martin asked. Will the auditorium that's behind that facade stay?

Mr. Hawk replied. Well, we're studying that. There are some concepts, yes.

Trustee Savage-Martin commented and asked. Yeah, I understand. It's probably not that big of an auditorium really. But I did notice that there were four portables. Will we be providing room for those to go away?

Mr. Hawk replied. Go away. Yes.

Trustee Savage-Martin commented. Thank you on the facade.

#### B. REPORT FROM COST CONTAINMENT COMMITTEE

Dr. Edd Bigbee

Dr. Goree commented. Madam Vice President, if I could for a moment, I just want to thank Dr. Bigbee, of course for staying on to lead our cost containment work. He has truly been committed to that and has brought incredible insight into this space as we look at one of those things that will be best as we go into this budget challenging year. So, thank you, Dr. Bigbee.

Dr. Bigbee presented the Report from the Cost Containment Committee. You're welcome. Madam Vice President, trustees, Dr. Goree, I am here to bring you a summary of what's taken place so far with the Cost Containment Committee. We're still infants as far as having anything concrete to bring to you, but we felt like it was time to update you on what the committee's done and some things that we used to establish the committee with an understanding about our budget. The committee itself was the superintendent and all the members of SLT, various directors, various principals. The two teachers of the year were on the committee and two secretaries from the campuses. We had a pretty good cross section of school employees.

What is the committee? This is what we were charged with. This refers to strategies and measures implemented to control and reduce expenses within an organization. That's a standard definition. The goal was to ensure that we provide every child with a quality educational experience without overspending. And you'll see where it is tied to the old strategic plan goals. This was put together before you adopted the new strategic goals, so that's probably useless, but it is on there. You can see where it ties back to our strategic plan. This is this year's budget, I'm sure you were tired of seeing it. But just to recap where we are with it, you can see our total revenues are 125, almost 126 million. Projected expenditures, 144 million, which left us a deficit of 18.5 million or 14.7%.

When you break that down, the expenditures, 144 million total, payroll costs were 123 million, which is 85.3% of the budget. Contracted services, and this ranges from everything from copiers to do we

bring somebody in from outside, but we do quite a bit of contracted work, and that's 7.5%. Supplies and materials, 5.5 million, and other operating expenses. These are fees, dues, travel, things that don't fit into the others that are grouped into 6400, and 6600 is capital outlay. There's not a whole lot there that's spent on capital items.

You can see how it breaks down. If you take the 6200 to the 6600, which are the non-personnel costs, that's 21 million, which is 14.7% of the budget. If you'll tie that back to percentages, then that's the number we're looking at as we go through here. I'll tie that back again, when we get a little further in the presentation. You can see how that looks graphically, once again, 85%, just from me, is a pretty high percentage of personnel costs. Typically, those are in the 80% range.

I'll try to explain this, because I have to explain it to myself every time I look at it. This is kind of a breakdown in capacity costs. Typically, in any organization, you have capacity costs, which are things that you must pay. They're day-to-day costs. If nobody showed up, we would still have utilities, we would have all these things that were set in place. And so if you look at the top, we started with 144 million, the remaining dollars and remaining percent columns, if you'll think of this as your checkbook, if anybody balances a checkbook anymore, but you just get online and find out what your balance is, but if you'll think of that, then the expenditure when you write the check is in under the 144,000 column. The remaining difference is the difference between the number of the check that you wrote and what's left.

So that tells you what you have left in the bank, if you were doing the checks. So, we started with 144 million personnel costs to 123 million. So, if you subtract from 123 from 144, you get the 21.2. Once again, it ties back to that 14.7%. Utilities in the budget, we're going to pay utilities regardless, that's another 3.2 million. So, if you go over to the balance, subtract it from the 21 million above it, then you'll have a balance of 18 million, and so on down the line, it works the same way. It's just that you're decreasing it by how much that column has. Insurance, we don't like paying near that much, but that's the cost of property and casualty insurance now. Operating leases, this is mostly copiers. Elections, we must have an election, unless nobody runs against one of you, and then we'll save that amount of money, which is what we hope for every year.

Testing materials, that's for assessment of students, 243,000, and once again, the remaining is 13 million. Legal costs, this varies some, but this is what was budgeted, and you can see we're down to 13 million. The audit, \$75,000, which we don't have any choice but to have an audit, and tax appraisal, we must have our property appraised, so that was \$400,000 in the budget.

When you get down and do your check register, when you get to the bottom, there's \$12.5 million left that aren't capacity costs, or 8.7%. So, if we're looking at \$18 million deficit, if we cut everything out of capacity costs or out of variable costs, what was left, then we still wouldn't be anywhere near where we are. So, the only answer to that is the personnel costs must come down, and that's not something you want to think about or look at, but we've got to be fiscally responsible. You can't do it by just reducing the variable costs, but you can't reduce all of those anyway.

Trustee Savage-Martin asked. Is the remaining as of 10/31?

Dr. Bigbee replied. This is what was in the budget. This was the budget that was adopted, then these were pulled out of what was in that budget. I went back in, and looked at each line item in the

budget, and pulled them out. When you approved the 144 million, these capacity costs were approved. It doesn't mean they're going to spend exactly that amount on them, but it's just a number that we're working with. And the whole idea of it's to say that our capacity costs are going to be higher than if we reduced everything else, the variable ones, without doing anything with personnel. Any more questions? I know that can be confusing.

Vice President Culton asked. What is in the variable column? What kind of expenses are in that?

Dr. Bigbee replied. That's like travel, supplies, and materials. There's a little bit of 6200 or the contracted that are variable. Most of it's in supplies, travel fees, and those kinds of items. This is just how it looks in a graph, that the capacity costs are over 91% of our budget.

Okay, how'd we get here? I'll spend a little bit of time explaining this too, because it can be a little bit confusing, and I blew it up so I could see it better, because I could hardly see it up there. Hopefully, you can see it better on your screen or in your book. We wanted to look at, "where did our costs come from versus increasing costs and not increasing revenue?" So, I went back to 2021, and the only addition to the budget that time is you approved the increase in health insurance for all employees. The next column over shows 325,000, that's what it costs to increase that. And the next column is the enrollment that we had, and the last column is ADA.

And once again, enrollment is nice, but ADA is what we get funded from. So, I wanted to go through and compare all of those, as we move through the years, so you can see where we got to the deficit piece of that. It wasn't mishandling money; it wasn't anything along those lines. It just took place. '21, '22, the health insurance went up \$32 a month, so that was a cost of half a million dollars. And if you look at the red number underneath, that adds 500 and the 325. So, it's kind of a running tally of how much we've spent in those areas. And you can look at the ADA, the reduction in ADA, and it's about \$5,700 in state funding for each ADA. So, as we dropped 404 ADA, you can see we're a negative \$2.3 million owed on that side. So, we have a running total of minus 825 in expenditures and we have a minus 2.3 million in revenue, so you can see those contribute to each other.

'22, '23, there was quite a bit of salary increases that were done. And if you remember, we talked about whether we were going to pay those out of the ESSER. And hopefully, the state will come through with something to help us with that later. So, the teacher raise was about \$3.8 million. The 4% of midpoint for all the other non-teaching employees was 2.5. You instituted longevity pay. If you remember at that time, everybody with 15 years or more received longevity pay, that was 502,000. We hired 12 teachers with ESSER money, that was about 1.2 million. I don't have a total down there, but that adds up to \$8,002,000. If you take that 8,002,000, add it to the red column above, the 825, that's where that \$8.8 million comes from. That's just a running tally of that. On the ADA side, we lost more ADA, so we lost another 1.1 million of funding from ADA. So now, we've got a total of \$3.4 million that we've lost in revenue because of the decline in ADA.

'23, '24, we paid \$4.4 million worth of salaries out of ESSER. And if you add that 4.4 million to the 8.8 above, and then we're now at \$13.2 million in expenditures. Once again, we lost ADA, so it was 1.1 million. So now, we're at \$4.5 million less on revenue. '24, '25, which is this year, there were increases in the budget, and you can see that most of these are just individual things that we added to the budget, 200,000 for fuel. Hopefully, that's enough, the prices come down a little bit, so that should

help.

Insurance, 300,000. Utilities, 200,000. Substitutes, 450,000. Overtime and extra duty, 500,000, and equity adjustments, because there was no salary increase, you must go back and make equity adjustments within all our salary schedules, or the people coming in will make the same amount of money that people were here for a year. So that was \$1.8 million.

So that totals 3.4. Add that to the total above, that \$16.7 million in expenditures that are now with us, that were mostly paid out of ESSER funds before, we lost another \$667,000 in ADA. So, we've totally lost \$5.2 million in revenue. You put those two together, then we're almost \$22 million negative, because of the increase in expenses that either moved into general fund or just occurred in the general fund, and the loss in ADA. Even though we're looking at an \$18.5 million deficit, these numbers show that we could have been at 21 point... I can't see it up there, 21.8. So, there's been some work within the budget over these years to reduce it down to where that deficit is only 18 million. I know that you have to say that real fast, but rather than the 21 million. I'll stop there, because I could very easily have lost you.

Trustee Savage-Martin commented. No, it really helped me. But I would just like to help the people at home, ADA means average daily attendance, and we lost that through COVID, of course. And then, ESSER is from the federal government. They were trying to help us during COVID times, but then they took that money away.

Dr. Bigbee replied. Yes. This year, it's not in the budget any longer, so the general must absorb all of that.

Dr. Goree added. Dr. Bigbee, if I could add one thing too, is that we are, too, being very, very intentional this year about our average daily attendance, and really working through our student services department with our schools, to increase our attendance rates of students, not only because they need to be in school to learn, but it is certainly, one percentage point could be as much as \$800,000. We do have plans and we're working intentionally in that space.

I also do want to acknowledge that \$21 million, when I accepted the job, it was \$21 million. But Ms. Fields and the team worked very closely to reduce that, and a lot of that was by capturing personnel costs and decisions that we made. Thank you, Dr. Bigbee, for acknowledging that we've already begun to move in the right direction.

Vice President Culton asked. Dr. Bigbee, so when did we last receive ESSER funds?

Dr. Bigbee replied. We received them, basically, we could spend them over a three-year period. You expend the funds, and then they reimburse you [inaudible 01:46:36] you spend it, but it's been over the last three years, the last year being the last year. Well, we're still spending a few of those funds. They must be spent by the end of December this year. There's not too many that are being spent this year, but we still had some employees that were being paid out of ESSER, and that'll finish up the ESSER funds, and they're no more.

Vice President Culton asked. So, December of 2024?

Dr. Bigbee replied. 2024, yes, we must have them spent by. The grant ended in September, but we can continue to spend those funds until the end of the calendar year.

Vice President Culton asked. So, for 2022, '23, the 8.002 million in ESSER funds were funds that we had in the bank to spend for these items?

Dr. Bigbee replied. They were, they were spent outside of the general fund. The budget that you approved for that year didn't include all those costs, because they were being paid out of federal money. So that 8.8, when you approved the budget then, I don't remember exactly what the budget was then, did not include that \$8.8 million, because it was being paid out of federal. Just like we have some other federal programs that don't ever impact the general fund, that's what the ESSER funds didn't. The problem is once they end, then it all goes back to the general fund.

Dr. Goree added. In fact, I can add one thing to that, too. I do think it's important, I agree with Trustee Martin, that the money was intentional, it was needed so that we could recapture lost learning. But to your point, Ms. Culton, is that that \$8 million is now a general fund expense. So, within the next few months, we must determine what we are going to cover or what we are going to cut out of those things in those funds.

Vice President Culton asked. So, to look at this, did we have ESSER funds in '24, the 4.4 million?

Dr. Bigbee replied. Yes, we paid 4.4 million out of ESSER funds at that time.

Vice President Culton commented. Okay, so let me tell you what I'm thinking. If we were 16, 18 million in the hole as of the end of the 2024 school year, but this 8 million and this 4.4 million, we actually had the ESSER funds to cover, I don't know why we would've been operating at a deficit then. I could see this year, because there is no ESSER funding.

Dr. Bigbee replied. We weren't operating at a deficit, because we were funding all of those out of ESSER money. We had balanced budgets. In fact, every year, the budget balanced, but it balanced because we were paying all these different costs outside of the general fund. And we didn't have a deficit really to show until this year, when all the ESSER funding ended, and everything got dumped back into the general fund. That's why it got so high.

Yeah, it's not like we've been running along and said we've been in deficit for years. No, all the audits will show that we weren't in a deficit budget, because we were paying all those costs out of federal money.

Vice President Culton commented. That's great. So, but because of the items that you mentioned, the ADA decreases, and the fact that we no longer have the ESSER funds, if we continue to operate per our budget, by the end of this year, we will be 21.8 in the-

Dr. Bigbee replied. Yes, if you hadn't made some concessions earlier.

Vice President Culton commented. Yes, we had the adjustments. Yeah, okay.

Dr. Bigbee replied. That saved 3 million there. I know it's a lot to get your mind around, because I've been looking at it for a good while.

Trustee Fahey asked. I was wondering, with the '24, '25 year, those numbers will still be changing, because we're not finished with this school year. So, are these numbers, are they like a maximum, are they right in the middle, or how might these numbers change?

Dr. Bigbee replied. They're budgeted numbers. That means when the budget was rolled over and created.

Trustee Fahey commented. And we always budget a little bit.

Dr. Bigbee commented. No, that should be a maximum.

Trustee Fahey commented. So, the ADA can change if we have super-duper attendance and no sick kids.

Dr. Bigbee replied. Or brought some more enrollment in. And we can get a 'flu epidemic, and it'll wipe it all out. It's so variable that it's hard to predict. Yes, everything here is based on budgeted numbers. And quite frankly, it won't be that bad at the end of the year. We won't spend all of that, but we've got to look at it like we were going to, because you plan for the worst-case scenario and then hope you come out better. Does that make sense?

I went back and looked at the last five years, just to see, "Okay, how did we get here expense wise and how did we get here revenue wise?" And I won't make you suffer through all of that, but if you compare the total revenue in 2021 and the total projected revenue in '24, '25, we don't have any more money than we did then in revenue.

But so, as that happened, no revenue increase. And if you look at the bottom total expenditures, 14.7% increase in expenditures. Now, a big piece of that came because of the end of ESSER, but that's where we are. You can see that it's a deficit of \$18.5 million. So, with no increased revenue, the expenditures is what got us here. It wasn't the fact that... Other than losing the ADA, which kept us from increasing our revenue there. So, it's more on the expenditure side than revenue.

There wasn't a whole lot more we could do about revenue, unless we get more students, or once again, that they attend better, or our illustrious state government comes through with more funds, I'll just put it that way. Or we create other revenue streams, and we've discussed that also, are trying to, "Okay, what could we do to possibly increase revenue?" We haven't nailed any of this stuff down, we just talked about what we might be able to do.

This is how we went about it. We met on 26th September, October 2nd, and November 6th. We brainstormed, just individually and in groups of "Okay, what could we possibly do?" And we got some



doozies, some answers. I like the one best that we would sue the government. And those ideas were compiled and discussed. And many of these items I'm going to mention here, but it's not anywhere an exhaustive list. It's just some things that we came up with as a committee. And actually, I threw one in, just because I was the chairman of the committee, I could do that, so I put one in on my own. And here's the areas that initially are going to be explored. I have no idea the cost savings or anything of these areas, but you needed to see what we've been discussing.

Strategic staffing, which certainly began last year, but as we do any kind of staffing, we need to make sure that we're not duplicating positions, that we're not doing things that were just not absolutely necessary. Offline campuses or closing campuses, I know that's a dirty word, but if you've watched the news much, a lot of our neighbors are in the same position. We talked about a reduction in the number of employees, we talked about the personnel costs have to come down. Scheduling and master scheduling, can we save some money by scheduling at the different campuses? Consolidation of grade levels, which some of that's going to take place with the bond.

Energy management, and we're not talking about thermostat at 80 in the summer and 20 in the winter, but there can be some energy management things that can help with our budget. And some of you were probably around when you had an energy manager, and we were cooking teachers in their classrooms. We're not advocating any of that kind, we're just like a concerted effort to save energy costs. Food for meetings, and we're not talking about your food. You guys don't get any pay, but we spent a lot of money on our meetings. You'd be astounded by how much money we've spent on food for meetings. And if you've got a bunch of teachers, you better feed them, or they won't come to your meeting, particularly after school.

But we're going to focus on trying to reduce those, particularly with administrative meetings, and consolidating some other meetings, maybe where we don't have those expenses. And I threw this one in, since, well, the six years I was here, we seemed to... A lot of our federal programs didn't fund themselves. They would, "Okay, we need two more employees, but we don't have any federal funds for them, so we funded those out of the general fund." So, we need to comb through the general fund, find those, and make those programs self-sufficient, and not fund those. I can't tell you off the top of my head how much that would save us, but if it even saves us one teacher, then it's a good thing to do, so that's an avenue that we need to explore.

And that's pretty well an overview of where we are. Once again, I said we're looking at some revenue generating. Dr. Brown even said we could farm out part of his building. I don't understand all the technology of it, but there were some areas there where we might raise some revenue. We're not going to explore just trying to reduce expenditures and look at other revenue sources. I suggested a bake sale, but that didn't go very far. Any questions or comments?

We will continue meeting until we get to some kind of a resolution, and that'll be in 2025 sometime, so you're not through with me yet.

Vice President Culton asked. What is our schedule for this?

Dr. Bigbee replied. We would like to have it early enough in the budget process for next year, so we will know what we can do to bring that deficit down going into next year. You're going to begin the budget process early in 2025. The quicker we can get to it, the better. Now, you'll probably begin part

of that budget process before we get totally through with it, but that's the idea, so you can build next year's budget based on some of the recommendations that you approve.

Vice President Culton asked. I hate to really ask this question, but one of your items is offline campuses, closing campuses. So, is that a viable possibility?

Dr. Goree replied. One thing I'll speak to is that next year, and we actually just met around this topic, and actually, what you will have next year is you'll have Central, Smith, and Brandenburg that will be offline. Because we're having to absorb those students at our other schools, next year is not going to be a realistic year to close a campus, even though we probably would have capacity to do that. We're going to be tightly strapped until we reopen those three schools in their choice capacities. Remember, Smith will be for our pre-K students, Central will be a non-attended zone choice school, as Brandenburg will be, too. So, I think that conversation will come later, after you reabsorb those students and see what those numbers look like. And we're hoping, by that time, we'll have more students.

Dr. Bigbee added. But we will have some offline, so there'll be some savings. I don't think this committee's advocating closing anything.

Dr. Goree added. I'll agree with Dr. Bigbee, there were some very interesting suggestions out there, things that I would've never thought of. Great, great, wonderful, great minds in the room especially. And I want to give a special shout-out to our secretaries. They know where all the bodies are buried, and it was interesting, hearing the things that they brought to the conversation. But again, there will be some things that just... Even when you talk about the elephant in the room, people, we know we're going to have less people at the table. How we work through that, we're being very sensitive.

Again, I'll compliment that we did reduce that 21 to 18, and a lot of that was done with Ms. Fields and her team when they were working towards people and the positions that we just didn't feel, "How do we redefine and rethink through positions?" And those are things that we're doing every day. And hopefully, I'll agree with Dr. Bigbee, early in the year, we want to bring this information back earlier than later, so that people can make decisions in their best interest, based on what we have to offer, because there is going to have to be some changes in personnel.

Vice President Culton commented. If we're looking at closing any schools in the foreseeable future, then there needs to be a hefty piece of public communication, so that we can provide them with the opportunity to provide feedback. The sooner that we can get this information, the better. The sooner with the budget process, the better, because we're going to have some tough decisions to make, and we don't want to have to make them without having all the information.

I appreciate it. Thank you very much for your continued service, and hopefully we can come up with some type of money-making idea, some patents, some trademarks, something. Thank you.

## **10. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS**

There were no communications from citizens.

**11. ADJOURNMENT AT 8:57 PM**

---

Dr. T. Lamar Goree  
Superintendent of Schools

---

Board President

---

Board Secretary