

AT A BOARD WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE ECTOR COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT HELD AT THE ADMINISTRATION BOARD ROOM, 802 NORTH SAM HOUSTON, ODESSA, ECTOR COUNTY, TEXAS, AT 6:00 P.M., MARCH 16, 2021, WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

Present:

Delma Abalos
Dr. Steve Brown
Carol Gregg
Tammy Hawkins - Virtual
Nelson Minyard
Dr. Donna Smith
Christopher Stanley

Absent:

School Officials: Dr. Scott Muri, Mike Adkins, Staci Ashley, Dr. Stephanie Howard, Dr. Lilia Náñez, Jason Osborne, Deborah Ottmers, Alicia Syverson, Dr. Kellie Wilks, Patrick Young

Others: Mike Atkins, Robert Cedillo, Andrea Martin, Dr. Corey Seymour, Alicia Press, Nancy Vanley, Tania Haygood, Dr. Stacy Johnson, Annette Macias, Staci Ashley, Jaime Miller, Ashley Osborne, Jennifer Perkins, Chelsea Pinkerton, Carrie Beyer, Ruth Campbell, Albert Anchondo, Mary Franco

25405 **Meeting Called to Order:** Delma Abalos, Board President, called the Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

25406 **Verification of Compliance with Open Meeting Law – this is to certify that the provisions of Section 551.001 of the Texas Government Code have been met in connection with the public notice of this meeting:** Board President Delma Abalos, verified that the provisions of Section 551.001 of the Texas Government Code have been met in connection with public notice of this meeting.

25407 **Opening Remarks by Superintendent:** In Dr. Muri's opening remarks he welcomed everyone back from Spring Break. He told Trustees that we now have about 71% of our students in face-to-face learning; that is an overall number for the District. He encouraged everyone to listen to the New York Times podcast, *The Daily*, called 'Odessa' which chronicles the return to school during the pandemic. Two of four episodes have been released so far. Dr. Muri called it a good look at school and life during the pandemic. He also said the powerful stories are good reminders of the importance of educators in the lives of children, and the impact extra-curricular activities have on students' motivation to be in school.

25408 **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)*

There were no public comments.

Report/Discussion Items

25409 **Guidance and Counseling Presentation:** Trustees heard a presentation from the Guidance & Counseling Department. ECISD Guidance & Counseling provides a full range of support for students from college and career advice to mental health and crisis support to social/emotional learning. They do this with a team of 88 counselors assigned across the District's 43 schools. In the first semester, ECISD counselors conducted more than 5,000 sessions/contacts with students and families. The department is active on social media using YouTube, Facebook and Twitter to provide resources and other support. Social/Emotional Learning is an immediate priority of the Strategic Plan. Our District used a Student Connectedness survey in the fall and will use it again before the end of the school year. Overall, students in ECISD elementary schools express a good level of connectedness (measured in engagement, rigorous expectations, school climate, and sense of belonging) while students in middle schools and high schools rate those areas lower. Guidance & Counseling is leading the work in providing professional development about Social/Emotional Learning for all ECISD staff. This work along with emphasizing mental health awareness plus college, career, and military readiness for every student are the next areas of focus for counselors.

No action required.

25410 **Talent Development Presentation:** Trustees received an update from the Talent Development Department. Talent Development has three key areas of focus: creating/expanding talent pipelines, outlining career pathways, and guiding professional learning. Defined, Career Pathways is an organized approach to career planning in which a course is plotted for identifying occupational interests, determining education and training needs and establishing an action plan for reaching career goals and progression. Opportunity Culture, Teacher Incentive Allotment, National Board Certification, and Emerging Leader Academy are all examples of current career pathways created for ECISD teachers. Many avenues exist for teachers to hone their skills, become mentors and team leaders, and earn more money without leaving the classroom. Executive Director of Talent Development Ashley Osborne told Trustees the District would have a teacher earn a six-figure salary in the near future. She used the example of a middle school math teacher with 10 years of experience, with a Masters degree, who is a Multi-Classroom Leader (an Opportunity Culture role), and earns a Teacher Incentive Allotment designation as one who would top \$100,000 in a particular year.

No action required.

25411 **Presentation and Discussion of Expansion at Austin Montessori Elementary:** Trustees heard a presentation from Austin Montessori Elementary Principal Tania Haygood. Trustees discussed the expansion of the

Montessori program into 6th grade at Austin Elementary. ECISD is committed to improving education for children and creating choices designed to meet the needs of students and interests expressed by students, families and the community. Austin Montessori is a Choice School serving students from 3-year-old prekindergarten through 5th grade. Adding 6th grade to the model would allow students to have a culminating year of Montessori and provide students an opportunity to complete the final three-year Montessori cycle (currently PK-3, PK-4, PK/ 1st, 2nd, 3rd/ 4th & 5th). As it is a Choice School, Austin receives students from throughout the community and sends students to all six middle schools. A survey of Austin families revealed 80% of 5th-grade families would prefer to have their children attend 6th grade at Austin in the Montessori program.

No action required.

25412 **Discussion of Deletion of Policy GNC(LOCAL): Relations with Educational Entities Colleges and Universities:** Deputy Superintendent Dr. Stephanie Howard presented this item for discussion. Trustees were asked to consider the deletion of Policy GNC(Local): Relations with Educational Entities College and Universities. This policy, which refers specifically to student teachers and interns, has not been updated or revised since 2002. As the District develops more talent pipelines (as prioritized through the Strategic Plan), other partnerships will be added. In consultation with the Texas Association of School Boards, TASB recommended deletion of this policy and moving all the language to Administrative Regulations. This policy will be placed on the March 23, 2021 agenda for a second reading and a vote.

No action required.

25413 **Legislative Update:** In Dr. Muri's legislative update, he talked to Trustees about several financial topics. He said the Texas Education Commissioner made the decision recently to allow school districts to be held-harmless for enrollment and attendance drops during the pandemic. It means ECISD will not lose the funding for the 2,000 or so students missing from last year to this year. He added there will be stipulations for receiving this money, and it means about \$8.5 million to ECISD. From the federal level, Dr. Muri said the first round of CARES Act funding benefited ECISD, which received money directly from the state and nearly \$1 million combined from the City of Odessa and Ector County (CARES Act funding for technology purchases for students). Two additional rounds of CARES Act money has been approved to provide to states for education – it could mean about \$25 million for ECISD that is currently sitting in state coffers and potentially another \$75 million earmarked for ECISD. This money is designated from the federal government to address students' learning loss over the next few years. Dr. Muri told Trustees there are legislative discussions ongoing about how money will be distributed to school districts, as the state may use it to replace regular school funding – called supplanting. Dr. Muri testified with a congressional committee during Spring Break and he will be meeting with state leaders in Austin next week to talk about this topic saying

federal money earmarked for school districts should go directly to school districts and not be used to supplant regular funding from the State of Texas. He added, the data now shows significant amounts of work will be needed to help students overcome all they have lost since the pandemic started one year ago and maintaining the same level of funding for education will not produce the necessary results.

No action required.

25414 **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 a public officer or employee of the District; or hear a complaint or charge against an officer or employee.] Consultation with Attorney – Section 551.071 of the Texas Open Meetings Act [The Board will meet in Closed Session in Consultation with the Board’s Attorney Regarding all Matters as Authorized by Law.]:**

There was no closed session.

25415 **Closing Remarks by Superintendent:**

There were no closing remarks.

25416 **Adjournment:** Delma Abalos, Board President, adjourned the Board meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Board President
Delma Abalos

Board Secretary
Dr. Steve Brown