

**MINUTES OF SCHOOL DISTRICT REGULAR MEETING
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SMITHVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Smithville Independent School District was held on Monday, February 23, 2026 beginning at 6:00 PM at the Smithville ISD Administrative Building PO Box 479, 901 N.E. 6th Street, Smithville, Texas 78957.

Members present: Grant Gutierrez, Michael Hancock, Chelsa Vinklarek, Josh Magden, Candice Parsons, and Bryan Jones.

Members absent: Chris Hinnant

Others present: Tracy Johnson, Holly Brockman, Ashley Marquez, Candy Biehle, Sara Goertz, Clifton Goertz, Trent Smith, Angie Westerfield, Tucker Copeland, Holly Gigout, Whitney Brown, Misty Vasquez, Amanda Janssen, Zack Harris, Jim Dickson, Stacy Tiner, Heather Goertz, Molley Ealy, Bethany Logan and Liza Rios

Call to Order - The Board President called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Roll Call - The Board President called the roll of members. Chris Hinnant was absent.

Student Led Pledge of Allegiance - Students who have earned the most Tiger Tokens at Smithville Elementary lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. The student that led the pledge was 5th grader Liberty Alloy-Bailey.

Smithville Elementary School Tiger of the Month - Smithville Elementary School is excited to celebrate outstanding students with the "Tiger of the Month" recognition. Elementary staff nominate students who exhibit characteristics such as kindness, strong character, and helpfulness. Each month, one exceptional student is honored by the campus, recognized at the school board meeting, and receives a special yard sign to proudly display at home. The Tiger of the Month for February 2026 is Shanelle Roberson-Hall, she is a 5th grader in Mrs. Stagner's class. Congratulations to Shanelle!

SHS All-Region Band Area Qualifiers - Students from Smithville High School Band advanced to the Area level in the all-region band competition. Those students recognized were:

- Monica Walker - Bb Clarinet
- Melany Villalobos - Bb Clarinet - absent
- Callie Ruyle - Alto Saxophone
- Shelton Espinoza - Tenor Saxophone - absent
- George William Metcalf - Baritone Saxophone - absent
- Tyler Gigout - Cornet/Trumpet
- Mason Scaife - French Horn
- Matthew Ferrell - French Horn
- Karah Goertz - Flute
- Lyla Vinklarek - Bb Clarinet
- Daniel Hernandez-Cruz - Trumpet - absent

Staff Recognitions -

Amanda Janssen, Music Teacher at SES was recognized for her outstanding efforts and accomplishments with the SES music program. Congratulations, Mrs. Janssen.

Public Communications – There were no communications from the public at this meeting.

Consent Agenda – Michael Hancock moved to approve consent agenda items 1 through 9 as presented, with a second from Josh Magden, the vote passed 6-0.

1. Minutes
2. Financial Statements
3. Investment Report
4. State Aid Comparison - Budgeted vs. Earned
5. Earned vs. TEA Payments
6. Tax Collection Report
7. Financial Report
8. Approve Renewal of Membership in the Region 10 ESC Multi-Region Purchasing Cooperative for 2026-2027
9. Budget Amendment – 2023 Property Audit

INFORMATION ITEMS

Superintendent's Report - The Superintendent updated the Board on important issues pertaining to the District including:

- Teacher Incentive Allotment Approval
 - SISD recently received approval for our local designation system, which is expected to result in 25 teachers receiving a designation and allotment funds based on 2023-24 performance.
- Academic UIL Results
 - 167 SES and SJHS students participated in academic UIL, with 103 placing. Overall 12 students received 1st place in their event.
- Greater Austin Regional Science & Engineering fair
 - 23 entries from SES, with 7 receiving 1st place ribbons
- Capital Region Destination Imagination Tournament
 - 6 teams from SES/SJHS competed, with our 3rd Grade Team placing first and advancing to state competition
- CTE Month
- Black History Month
- Upcoming Events
 - February 26 - SEF Golf Tournament
 - February 27 & 28 - SES Theater One Act Play Performances at 7:00 pm at SES Cafetorium
 - March 7 - ACE Community Health Fair from 1-3 pm at SES
 - March 16-20 - Spring Break

Receive a Report from Zonda Demographics - A demographic study was recently completed to evaluate historical enrollment trends, current and pending development within the district boundaries, and project future enrollment in SISD. Trent Smith with Zonda Demographics provided an overview of the methodology and findings associated with this study.

Smithville ISD Strategic Plan Update – Dr. Bethany Logan, Assistant Superintendent, gave a progress report/update on the Smithville I.S.D. Strategic Plan Priority 2: Staff Satisfaction and Engagement.

Instructional Material Adoption Update – Secondary Mathematics – Dr. Bethany Logan, Assistant Superintendent, gave a report on Smithville ISD’s undertaking of instructional materials review and adoption process for the 2026-27 school year in accordance with Texas state law, TEA guidelines, and SISD Board Policy, with final selection authority resting with the Board of Trustees.

As part of this cycle, the high school is reviewing mathematics materials. The process involves secondary math teachers and district curriculum staff on the HQIM Adoption Committee that evaluates materials using an established rubric, conducts sample lessons, and gathers campus feedback before presenting a recommendation for board approval.

To ensure vertical alignment across grade levels, Smithville Junior High School (SJHS) is simultaneously participating in the same review process, allowing the district to make coordinated, coherent instructional decisions that support student learning from junior high through high school.

Receive an Update on SB 546 – Required Seat Belts on School Buses – Dr. Molley Ealy gave an update on Senate Bill 546 of the 89th Legislative Session requires that Districts make a budget limit determination not later than the end of the 2025-26 school year regarding the cost to equip each bus operated for use by the District with three-point seat belts. All buses purchased after September 1, 2017 include seat belts; however, buses purchased prior to this date may not. An update regarding estimated costs associated with implementation of SB 546 and next steps will be provided to the Board.

Tentative March 2026 Agenda Items – Items planned for the March Agenda are:

- Board Recognitions
- Superintendent's Report
- Strategic Plan Update - Priority 3: Stakeholder Satisfaction and Engagement
- Consider a renewal of an MOU with the UT System for Student Access to T-CHAT (Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine)
- Consider Approval of an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Smithville Regarding Reciprocal Facility Usage
- Approve Award of RFP for Custodial Services
- Approve the Purchase of HVAC Replacement Systems
- Certification of Instructional Materials
- Action Regarding Contractual Employees for 2026-27

ACTION ITEMS

Employment of Contractual Personnel – Dr. Molley Ealy introduced Dr. Ashley Marquez Smithville ISD’s new Human Resources Director to the Board of Trustees.

According to Board Policy DC [Local], the Superintendent has the authority to make recommendations to the Board regarding the selection of all contractual personnel.

Renewal of Administrator Contracts

Consideration and Action Regarding Administrator Employment Contract Renewals/Extensions.

Josh Magden made a motion to approve the contract renewals/extensions as presented. Candice Parson seconded, one opposed vote and the motion passed 5-1, with Grant Gutierrez, Chelsa Vinklerek, Josh Magden, Candice Parsons, and Bryan Jones voting for the approval, and Michael Hancock against.

Certification of Unopposed Status for the May 2, 2026 School Board Election -

Sec. 2.052. Certification of unopposed status: The authority responsible for having the official ballot prepared shall certify in writing that a candidate is unopposed for election to an office (in other words, the outcome is already known due to the lack of opposition).

The certification shall be delivered to the governing body of the political subdivision as soon as possible after the filing deadlines for placement on the ballot and on the list of write-in candidates. The write-in deadline was Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 5:00 pm.

Motion to approve the certification of unopposed status for the upcoming election made by Candice Parsons, seconded Michael Hancock and the motion passed 6-0.

Action to Cancel the May 2, 2026, Regular School Board Election Due to Unopposed Candidates - The regular board election was scheduled for May 2, 2026. Positions up for election were Place 1, currently held by Chris Hinnant and Place 2, currently held by Grant Gutierrez. All incumbents have refiled and no other candidates filed for the election.

The deadline to file for a place on the ballot was Friday, February 13, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. The write-in deadline was Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. Section 2.051-2.053 of the Texas Election Code states that an election may be canceled for one of the following three reasons; 1) Each candidate (for full or un-expired terms) whose name is to appear on the ballot is unopposed; 2) The election is one in which a declaration of write-in candidacy is required; and 3) No proposition is on the ballot.

Because each of the two Trustees up for re-election is unopposed, the District is within Election Code requirements to request cancellation of the regular May 2026 election. Michael Hancock made a motion to cancel the election. Bryan Jones seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Consider Approval for the Award of an RFQ for Annual Financial Audit Services - In accordance with Texas Education Agency requirements and law, the district is required to have a financial audit performed each year. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for financial audit services was recently conducted, where responses were solicited beginning on January 21, 2026 and proposals were due on February 10, 2026. The committee evaluated the responses using the scoring matrix and will present its recommendation for the annual fiscal audit for fiscal year 2026. Stacy Tiner, business manager, presented the recommendation. Michael Hancock moved to approve the recommendation. Candice Parsons seconded and the vote passed 6-0.

Approval of a Resolution Regarding Employee Pay During Weather-Related School Closure and Delay on January 26 and 27, 2026 - On January 26 and 27, 2026, Smithville ISD canceled and delayed school operations due to a freezing weather event. All schools in Bastrop County were closed during this period for safety reasons. The administration recommends that staff salaries not be reduced for the missed instructional time on January 26 and 27, 2026. Stacy Tiner, business manager, presented. Michael Hancock moved to approve, Bryan Jones seconded and the vote passed 6-0.

Approve the Submission of a Staff Development Waiver to the Texas Education Agency - This waiver allows the district to train staff on various educational strategies designed to improve student performance in lieu of student instruction during the school year. The waiver provides for a maximum of 2,100 total waiver minutes to use for professional development during the school year for districts that provide operational and instructional minutes. If approved by the TEA, instructional time missed on January 26 and 27, 2026 due to inclement weather will not require the use of a bad weather makeup day. Dr. Ealy discussed the waiver with the board. Josh Magden made a motion to approve. Candice Parsons seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Approve a Memorandum of Understanding with Teachworthy – Dr. Logan presented the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with Teachworthy establishes a formal partnership with an approved Educator Preparation Program, fulfilling a key requirement of the 2025 legislation for districts seeking teacher certification delays. This partnership provides structured coaching and professional development support for uncertified and alternatively-certified teachers as they work toward full certification. The Teachworthy MOU directly supports the district's certification requirements to delay request application to TEA by ensuring teachers receive the high-quality training and mentorship required under current state law. Chelsa Vinklerek moved to approve the memorandum. Josh Magden seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Consider Approval of an Application to the Texas Education Agency for a Delay of Teacher Certification Requirements Application - House Bill (HB) 2 passed during the 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025, and was signed into law by Governor Abbott, requiring new limitations to Texas school districts' ability to waive teacher certification requirements for foundational curriculum courses within their district of innovation (DOI) plan.

Smithville ISD is seeking approval from the commissioner of education to delay implementation of certification requirements for foundation curriculum courses until the beginning of the 2029-2030 school year. Dr. Bethany Logan shared the information with the Board of Trustees, and after discussion Josh Magden made a motion to approve as presented. Candice Parsons seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Approve the Submission of a Waiver to TEA for Virtual Homebound Instruction – In order for the district to be able to provide credit towards attendance and receive ADA funding, students must be in attendance in person. However, in extreme cases, a district may seek approval to provide Remote Homebound instructional services, count the student as in attendance, and receive ADA funding for that student. Currently, there is an individual student who, for medical purposes, requires Remote Homebound as an option as they have

recently returned from a hospital. Dr. Ealy presented the request. Candice Parsons moved to approve. Chelsa Vinklerek seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Consider Approval of a Resolution as Required by SB 11 Regarding a Period of Prayer and Reading of Religious Texts on Each School Day - As a result of the 89th Legislative

Session, school boards must consider a resolution related to a period of prayer and reading of religious texts each school day. At the January 20, 2026 Board meeting, an overview of SB 11 and related state and federal laws was provided and discussion was held.

Dr. Ealy presented the approval. Josh Magden moved to approve. Bryan Jones seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board of Trustees entered closed session at 8:02 p.m. and returned at 8:52 p.m. with no official action taken.

Disclaimer - During the course of the meeting, the Board of Trustees may conduct a closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapter D and E. Decisions may be made as a result of executive session.

Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071, Consultation with an Attorney Regarding Legal Matters Related to Construction Issues at Smithville Junior High School – This item was discussed in closed session.

OPEN SESSION

No action was taken on the agenda item discussed in closed session.

Adjournment – Candice Parsons moved the meeting to be adjourned at 8:53 p.m. with a second from Michael Hancock, the motion passed 6-0 and the meeting was adjourned.

The notice for this meeting was posted in compliance with the Texas Open Meeting Act on Tuesday, February 17, 2026.