

STATE OF TEXAS

(Minutes conducted via electronic voting)

COUNTY OF CAMERON

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the **26th day of October, 2023**, the Board of Trustees of the Brownsville Independent School District met in a **Special Called Board Meeting** at the Administration Building, 1900 Price Road, Brownsville, Texas, for the purpose of transacting any and all business that came before the Board and with the following to wit:

PRESENT:

Jessica Gonzalez	President
Daniella Lopez Valdez	Vice-President
Denise Garza	Secretary
Carlos Elizondo	Member
Eddie Garcia	Member
Frank Ortiz	Member
Minerva Pena	Member

ABSENT:

None

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Rene Gutierrez	Superintendent of Schools
Nick Maddox	Board Attorney

ALSO ABSENT:

None

WHEREUPON, a quorum being present and it appearing before the Board, it is hereby so found that notice of this **Special Called Board Meeting** has been duly given in the manner and for the length of time as prescribed by law. The meeting was called to order and declared ready for the transaction of business with the following to wit:

- I. Meeting called to order by Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President at 5:30 p.m.**
- II. Moment of Silence led by Dr. Rene Gutierrez, Superintendent of Schools.**
- III. Pledge of Allegiance led by Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President.**
- IV. Roll Call: Ms. Jessica Gonzalez, Board President announced that all Board Members are present.**
 - A. Recommend approving the agenda of the Special Called Board Meeting of Thursday, October 26, 2023, with any corrections/deletions.

Motion made by Eddie Garcia, seconded by Denise Garza, and unanimously carried to recommend approving the agenda of the Special Called Board Meeting of Thursday, October 26, 2023, with no corrections/deletions, as stated by administration. (7-0-0)

II. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lazaro Cardenas – Mr. Cardenas stated, okay, good evening Dr. Gutierrez, Board President Gonzalez and Board Members. My name is Lazaro Cardenas and I am a proud member of AOBEBE the Association of Brownsville Educators, the largest and longest serving association in BISD. Thank you for gathering here today to discuss matters of great importance for our community. The selection of a superintendent will guide our educational institution towards excellence. This responsibility is not to be taken lightly as it shapes the future of our children and the vitality of our community. First and foremost, it's essential that we approach this process with transparency and inclusivity. Input from parents, teachers, students and community members is invaluable. We must create avenues for open dialogue and feedback, ensuring that the collective voice of our community resonates in the crucial decision-making process. As we navigate through this selection, we should be guided by a clear set of criteria, we must look for a candidate who possesses a deep commitment to the wellbeing and academic growth of our students. Someone who understands the unique needs of our diverse community and is equipped to foster an inclusive and equitable learning environment. Furthermore, we should seek a superintendent who demonstrates strong leadership skills, this individual must be a visionary capable of setting a strategic direction for our district and adept at making tough decisions when necessary. We need a leader who can inspire and motivate our educators fostering an environment where they can excel and innovate. In light of the urgency, we must also consider the appointment of an interim superintendent. This individual should be an experienced and seasoned leader who can provide stability and continuity during the transitional period. Their role will be pivotal in maintaining the momentum of our educational initiatives, ensuring that no student is left behind. I urge us all to take the opportunity to reflect on the qualities we value most in an educational leader. Let us remember that this decision affects not only the present but the future of our community. We must be vigilant in our pursuit of excellence and resolute in our commitment to providing the best education for our children. In our pursuit of educational excellence, fiscal responsibility must be paramount, while valuing expertise, we should ensure superintendent compensation aligns with our budgetary constraints. The selection process should prioritize candidates who understand and respect the financial parameters. Ensuring sustainable leadership that benefits both students and tax payers alike. In closing, I want to thank each and every one of you for your dedication to our community's education journey. Together, we have the power to shape a brighter future for our children and ultimately, for our society as a whole. Let us proceed with purpose, unity and a steadfast commitment to excellence. Thank you very much.

Ezequiel Silva – Mr. Silva stated, good afternoon Board Members, ex Superintendent, I'm here to address you guys to let you guys know that how you guys vote, how you guys go forward is gonna define who you guys are in society, here locally and abroad. Some of you are seeking other positions, some of you will seek re-election, and some of you will not be serving as the second term. Why, because of the actions and some of the comments have done. I am a taxpayer, I have every right to be here and address you guys in the way that I do and that is an adult, I am not a kid. I will tell you this, I don't have a college education, I don't have a doctorate degree, I graduated with a high school diploma, that's all I have. I took some college courses just to prove that I'm not dumb and I passed with A's and 90's and 4.0 GPA's, but guess where I got my education? I got it from BISD, I went to Martin Elementary or Ebony Heights at the time and then it became Martin Elementary and then Russell Elementary and then Stell and then

Pace. And I graduated and I got married, I became a family man and now I own businesses, businesses that pay taxes, taxes that go into this school district. So, I have an input in what I say, how this district should be ran, some of you were voted in not because you were the best choice, because we wanted to vote the people that were there out. Why, because we had superintendents that were just puppets, not because the Board told them what to do and how to act, but because the superintendent manipulated them and told them what to do and how to do it because they just wanted an easy way out. And that is, not work and make a big paycheck and that's exactly what's happening right now, we are having a superintendent that didn't care about our district not seeking somewhere else for more pay, not that he left the district any way better. So, what you all got to choose, you all are gonna have to choose somebody that you all are gonna be able to tell him what to do and listen to the taxpayers. Because the children, the high school students, the junior high student, the elementary students, they're naive like I was. Is there favoritism? When I was growing up with the teachers and coaches and all that, yes. Were there people in positions that shouldn't have been there? Absolutely was the student sacrificed, the future, because of that? Definitely so, but back then there was a little more sense of unity than the way it is now, blame it on social media, make it on bloggers, make it that everything now is being televised and now nothing could be really hush, hush. Or just plain ignorance from the Board that does not put the superintendent to work, you need to put the superintendent that you are gonna get to work for us and administer the rules that you all put in place, put that person to work for the district. Have them listen to the teachers, have them listen to the parents, make sure that person that you guys get cares what you guys say, each one of you is a vote. This is not a popularity contest, this is not you're applying for homecoming king or homecoming queen or none of that, this is real adult stuff. This is 640-million-dollar budget, if you guys were not good looking, trust me, with that kind of money, everybody here is beautiful that's sitting there, because everybody wants it, everybody wants a piece of it. But lets not forget the reason why you get that money, that is to make a good product and those products is our children, our youth and the legacy that you guys are gonna leave behind and how you behaved with each other, how you address the superintendent and how you are gonna make that superintendent work, work for you all. If they only last two years, make two years, those two years count, thank you.

Adina Alegria – Ms. Alegria stated, good afternoon President Gonzalez, Members of the Board, Dr. Gutierrez and esteemed guest here with us today and those joining us from the Brownsville ISD YouTube Channel. My name is Adina Alegria, executive director of Texas Valley Educators Association, affiliated with Brownsville Union Coalition. As discussions continue today for the search for Interim Superintendent and Superintendent, I, and on behalf of all TVEA members, would like to offer our congratulations to Superintendent Dr. Rene Gutierrez. I firmly believe one should go to where they are celebrated, appreciated and ultimately, where they are content. Thank you, Dr. Gutierrez, for always, always, having an open-door policy for myself and TVEA president, Albert Alegria. It is my hope that you are as welcoming and have an open-door policy to other unions in McAllen ISD as you have been with TVEA. I also hope that what any McAllen ISD employee wishes to leave for a better job opportunity, you bestow those employees the same courtesy that this Board is bestowing upon you and let them leave before their contract is up. Brownsville ISD Board of Trustees, as you move forward with not only the search for Interim Superintendent but also Superintendent, I wish you the clarity and discernment needed to help you choose Dr. Gutierrez successor. We hope those candidates realize the importance of working with associations such as Texas Valley Educators Association and that they realize that we serve as an intermediary between our members and yourselves. Associations are here to

improve the overall working conditions for the employees of the district, we hope that you find a leader that exhibits great morale and empathy and as Dr. Brad Johnson put it “Ultimately, and individual who understands to the core that we cant say we are doing the best for our students if we aren’t doing the best for our employees.” Thank you for your attention this evening.

The Board may deliberate or take action regarding the following agenda items.

Board policy BE (Local) and Robert's Rules limits debate to two opportunities. A Trustee may debate a motion for three minutes on the first speaking opportunity and two minutes on the second opportunity.

III. CLOSED MEETING: as pursuant to the Texas Government Code Sections: 551.071, 551.072, 551.074, 551.082, and 551.084. 5:45 p.m.

A. Discussion of possible steps for Superintendent search and Interim Superintendent selection.

IV. BOARD RECONVENES - Board action on agenda items discussed in Executive Session. 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Nick Maddox, Legal Counsel stated, (inaudible) such as years of experience as superintendent, it consisted of student population and student enrollment for those districts, it consists of Brownsville roots and relationships with the community and I am proud to say that the entire Board, unanimously adopted this rubric and stuck with it throughout this process. At the end of this process, the Board has their lone finalist based solely on a rubric which is Dr. Jesus Chavez. So, tonight, is your search firm recommendation that Dr. Jesus Chavez be approved as your Interim Superintendent pending our negotiations on your behalf.

Motion made by Jessica Gonzalez, seconded by Denise Garza, and unanimously carried to recommend approval of Dr. Jesus Chavez as Interim Superintendent pending negotiations. (7-0-0)

V. Announcement(s): None

VI. Adjournment.

Motion was made by Jessica Gonzalez, seconded by Denise Garza and unanimously carried to recommend approval to adjourn the Special Called Board Meeting at 7:30 P.M. (7-0-0)

➤ **There being no further business appearing before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.**

(HANDOUTS ADDED TO OFFICIAL MINUTES)

(AUDIO/VIDEO TAPES OF THE OPEN MEETING AND THE WRITTEN CERTIFIED AGENDA OF THE CLOSED MEETING ARE ON FILE)

Approved by: _____
Jessica Gonzalez, President of the Board
Date

Attested by: _____
Denise Garza, Secretary of the Board
Date

Notes: Font style designation

Board of Trustees

Administration

Board Attorney

Staff Attorney

Speaker/Presenter

(Minutes presented at Rescheduled Board Meeting held on April 9, 2024)