



WESLACO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
THE RIGHT CHOICE

Dr. Cris Valdez
Interim Superintendent of Schools



Board of Trustees

Armando Cuellar, Jr., *President* - Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, *Vice President* - Jesse Trevino, *Secretary*
Marcos De Los Santos - Andrew Gonzalez - Isidoro Nieto - Jaclyn Sustaita

319 W. Fourth Street / P.O. Box 266, Weslaco, TX 78599-0266 • 956-969-6503

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting:
Place:
Location:
Date:
Time:

Special Board Meeting
WISD Board Room
319 W. Fourth Street
August 11, 2021
8:14 P.M.

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Armando Cuellar, Board President.

II. Establishment of a Quorum

A quorum was established. The following board members were present.

Armando Cuellar, President
Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, Vice President
Jesse Trevino, Secretary
Marcos De Los Santos, Trustee
Isidoro Nieto, Trustee
Jaclyn Sustaita, Trustee

Andrew Gonzalez was absent.

III. Public Comments

None

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to change the order of the day and convene in closed meeting. Marcos De Los Santos seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

XIV. Closed Meeting to Discuss:

The Board convened in closed meeting at 8:17 p.m. to discuss the following items:

A. Personnel Matters (Tex. Gov't Code 551.074)

1. Employment of Personnel – Certified Professional & Non-Contractual Personnel
2. Resignations
3. Deliberation Regarding the Appointment, Employment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline, or Dismissal of a Public Officer or Employee (Tex. Gov't Code 551.074 and 551.071)

B. Deliberation Regarding Acquisition of Real Property (Tx. Gov't Code 55.072)

C. Consultation with Attorney Regarding: a) Pending or Contemplated Litigation: b) a Settlement Offer: or c) a Matter in Which the Duty of the Attorney to the Weslaco ISD under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas Clearly Conflicts with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code (Tex. Gov't. Code 551.071)

Mr. Marcos De Los Santos left at 8:55 p.m.

XV. Reconvene in Open Meeting:

The Board returned to open meeting at 9:11 p.m.

A. Possible Action, If Necessary, on Items Discussed in Closed Meeting

1. Discussion and Possible Action on New Employment – Certified Professional & Non-Contractual Personnel

The Superintendent recommended that the Board approve the recommendations of certified professional and non-contractual personnel.

REASSIGNMENT OF CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL		
Name	From	To
1. Homero Colunga	Teacher Weslaco East High School	Technology Instructional Coach Weslaco East High School

ADDENDUM – CONTRACTS FOR CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL		
Name	Position	Location
1. Janet Avila	Elementary Teacher	Margo Elementary School
2. Ernesto E. Serna de Anda	Science Teacher	Cuellar Middle School
3. Andrea Serrano	English/Language Arts Teacher	Weslaco High School

REASSIGNMENT OF NON-CONTRACTUAL PROFESSIONAL		
Name	From	To
1. Jeanette Cruz	Cook 5.5 Rico Elementary School	Cook 6.5 Weslaco High School

NON-CONTRACTUAL PERSONNEL - ADDENDUM		
Name	Position	Location
1. Luis F. Lopez	Special Education Aide	Weslaco High School

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve new employment of certified professional and non-contractual personnel as discussed in closed meeting with the deletion of one candidate. Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita seconded the motion. Voting in favor were Dr. Jaime Rodriguez, Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita, and Mr. Isidoro Nieto. Motion carried.

2. Discussion and Possible Action on Resignations

Non-action item.

3. Discussion and Possible Action on Acquisition of Real Property (Tx. Gov't Code 55.072)

Non-action item.

IV. Discussion to Rename the WISD Performing Arts Center to the Susan M. Peterson Performing and Visual Arts Center

Dr. Sergio Garcia, Assistant Superintendent for Administration & Support Services, received a request from a staff member to rename the WISD Performing Arts Center in honor of Susan M. Peterson. Mrs. Peterson passed away on December 14, 2020, a few months shy of completing 40 years of service with WISD. Mrs. Peterson earned her Bachelor's degree in Michigan and moved to the valley soon afterwards. While working as a teacher she earned her Master's degree in Education from UTPA. She continued her education and earned her Superintendent certification in 2012. She also enrolled in the Doctorate Program and completed all of her classes for a Ph.D., just short of her dissertation. While raising her children, going to college, and being active in her community and church, Sue climbed the career ladder becoming the founding Principal at Weslaco East High School for 16 years. Mrs. Peterson was awarded the "Texas Principal of the Year" and the "H.E.B. in Excellence in Education Award" in 2008. In 2012, she received the Distinguished Administrator for the Texas Association of Business Professionals Award. During her tenure at Weslaco East High School, Mrs. Peterson earned numerous prestigious awards and after a proven record of accomplishments, she was promoted to Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction and Development. Mrs. Peterson was due to retire at the end of the year. She touched many lives, exemplified authentic leadership and character, keeping up with her students long after they graduated from high school. Her students strived to do better and wanted to make her proud of them, and many continued to message her their entire lives. She was very active in her community, not only in Weslaco ISD but in the city of Weslaco as well.

She was a cheerleader for Weslaco and always supported local businesses. Mrs. Peterson served on the Weslaco Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors for many years and was an active member of the Weslaco Rotary Club. She served as Board Chair for Hidalgo County Planned Parenthood and on the Board for many years. She served on the Knapp Medical Center Harvest Night Steering Committee for many years and the Weslaco Scholarship Foundation. In 2015, Mrs. Peterson was awarded Weslaco's Woman of the Year, a well-deserved and overdue award for a woman who selflessly served her entire life. She was an artist, a seamstress, crafter, and baker. She enjoyed scrapbooking and was an avid reader. She was very creative, generous, courageous, and a servant leader. She led with genuine integrity and always did unto others as others would have done for her. She was a mother figure to many young teens and gave her students and families unconditional love.

Dr. Garcia informed the Board that a timetable of not less than three (3) months shall be established before any school/major facility is named. The Board can make a decision within that three (3) month period.

Mrs. Sustaita addressed the guidelines which state that an existing school/major facility shall not be renamed. She wanted to know if the District would be able to rename a facility and to ensure the Board was following the rules.

Dr. Garcia previously contacted TASB and was informed that since the district did not have a policy on naming facilities, it would be at the District's discretion if they wanted to rename a facility.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez felt it was a very good idea to honor Mrs. Peterson in this way.

Board President Armando Cuellar commented, "Starting a program at Weslaco East, you could not ask for a better person to be right there, side by side. She was a very influential lady and is very deserving of this recognition."

V. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of the Employee Handbook for the 2021-2022 School Year

A model handbook is produced by TASB Human Resources Services for its members and is updated annually. The information in the employee handbook is subject to change as the district provides updated policy information and/or changes are made to district practices throughout the year. The goals, vision, and mission will remain the same for this school year. All employees receive a copy of the handbook.

The board members addressed the following changes to the handbook:

- Change date to 2021-2022
- Time of board meeting: change to 5:30 p.m.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve the Employee Handbook for the 2021-2022 school year as presented. Mr. Isidoro Nieto seconded the motion. Voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Isidoro Nieto, Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita, and Dr. Jaime Rodriguez. Mr. Jesse Trevino pointed out that he did not have time to review the handbook and therefore abstained from voting. Motion carried.

VI. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of Purchase of Google G-Suite Enterprise for Education 1 Year Renewal Software Maintenance and Support for 2021-2022

Weslaco ISD will purchase the Google G-Suite Enterprise for Education 1 year renewal software maintenance and support from Amplified IT from Norfolk, Virginia. Staff will use many features as part of the G-Suite Enterprise: Google Meetings, Live Streaming of Events, Meeting Recordings, Original Reports, Security Dashboards, Security Health, Investigation Tools, Data Loss Prevention (DLP) for Drive, Endpoint Management, 24/7 online support and community forums. The District may continue to use Google Meetings/Live Streaming for Virtual Board meetings/workshops and other district events this coming year.

The Google Suite Enterprise for Education consists of 1,700 staff and 17,000 student licenses. The cost of this purchase is \$39,984.00. Funds for this purchase will be available in the 2021-2022 Technology Department budget in the local maintenance fund.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve the purchase of Google G-Suite Enterprise for Education 1-Year renewal software maintenance and support from Amplified IT from Norfolk, Virginia, subject to legal counsel review. Mr. Isidoro Nieto seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VII. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of Purchase for NearPod Premium Plus Licensing for All Teachers and Students for the 2021-2022 School Year

The District has used Nearpod for the past 5 years as part of the instructional program. Nearpod is a versatile interactive software that includes core content curriculum, Flocabulary software for learning academic vocabulary, and teacher led and student self-paced options. Students completed over 750,000 Nearpod activities during the past school year. According to Mr. Scott Amdahl, Director of Instructional Technology, usage of this program has tripled over the past year. All schools are using this program especially at the elementary and middle school levels. Nearpod includes 7,500 lessons that covers all content areas and can be used anywhere by students.

The cost for district-wide licensing is \$102,541.95. Title I funds (289) will be used for this purchase. The cost includes a 2-hour training session for up to 50 participants.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to approve the purchase of Nearpod Premium Plus for the 2021-2022 school year from Nearpod, Inc., for all teachers and students, subject to legal counsel review. Dr. Jaime Rodriguez seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

VIII. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of Purchase to Renew Internet Hot Spots to Be Used By Students for On-Line Learning for 2021-2022

Weslaco ISD is planning for full face-to-face instruction for the fall 2021. The district ordered 1,600 hot spots last year for student use and is planning to renew these hot spots for students to have the necessary resources and connectivity in place for students to work online if necessary for the upcoming school year. If a student meets very specific criteria allowed by the State, the student will be allowed to connect with online learning and the District will be able to receive ADA funding.

Mr. Carlos Martinez, Executive Director of Technology, informed the Board that the District would pursue The Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) for funding this initiative. As part of the American Rescue Plan, the Federal Communications Commission launched the \$7.2 billion Emergency Connectivity Fund. All school districts can access this fund for expenses incurred between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022. The deadline to apply is August 13, 2021. Mr. Martinez believes the district has a good chance of receiving funds.

The district recently upgraded 2,573 hotspots which will have unlimited data. The schools already have these hotspots on hand. With the additional 1,600 hotspots, the district will now have 4,173 hot spots for on-line learning. The total cost for this purchase is \$384,000.00, which will be submitted for funding at 100% from the Emergency Connectivity Fund. If the District receives funding, the cost to the District would be \$0.

Mrs. Sustaita wanted to know if the district had collected all the hotspots that were distributed to students this past year or if the district was going to purchase new hotspots.

According to Mr. Martinez, staff collected most of the hotspots before the summer break. Staff at the campuses have the hotspots on-hand and can reissue them out if needed. He will follow up with Library Services to see how many of those hotspots were collected.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve the purchase to renew 1,600 Internet Hot Spots with a 1-year subscription from T-Mobile from Bellevue, Washington. Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IX. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of Replacement Chromebooks for Students

The District had enough chromebooks at the beginning of remote learning to ensure that every child who needed one received one. The chromebooks have aged and many suffered damage, which makes many devices no longer reliable enough to sustain another year of student use. Staff wants to ensure the district has enough reliable devices to meet student needs. Therefore, Administration is requesting to purchase 4,000 4GB-Chromebooks from Southern Computer Warehouse from Marietta, Georgia at a cost of \$954,520,000. This purchase would be submitted for funding at 100% from The Emergency Connectivity Fund, which allows all school districts to access for expenses incurred between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022. The District needs to meet certain stipulations so staff will need to show why the district is in need of the chromebooks. Students will be working at home from these chromebooks. If funding is approved, the cost to the District will be \$0.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to purchase 4,000 4GB-Chromebooks from Southern Computer Warehouse from Marietta, Georgia. Dr. Jaime Rodriguez seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

X. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of the Substantial Completion for Bobby Lackey Stadium Visitor Parking Lot Paving Project (CSP #21-01-19)

On February 9, 2021, the Board approved Mid Valley Paving, Inc. for the construction of a new parking lot on the visitor side of Bobby Lackey Stadium in the amount of \$715,986.25. The cost was negotiated down to \$710,000.00. This cost was funded from the Local Construction Fund. This project was determined to be substantially complete on August 4, 2021. The completion or closeout of the project is underway with the ongoing work on punch list items, additional expenditures, credits, and delay days.

Below are questions/concerns addressed by the Board and responses from Mr. Americo Garza:

- How many parking spaces will the visitor side have?
 - 251 regular
 - 14 handicap
- Is there an area designated for heavy trucks to load and unload?
 - The main driveway was designed for heavy-duty traffic and buses.
- Where will the buses that travel with band students be able to park?
 - Parking will be flexible. Buses can park in the visitor parking area or utilize the student parking lot if there is an overflow of fans.
- Has staff checked the elevation for standing water after it has rained?
 - Staff visited the site during the last rains and water was draining to the detention pond on the west side.
 - The practice area where the discus ring is located consists of dirt and has become a shallow detention pond. When it rains, the water stands there longer than in any other area. Staff will have to tap on to the main line that goes to the detention pond on the west side to drain faster.
- Will the parking lot be ready by the time football season starts?
 - The district will be able to utilize the parking lot once the Board approves the substantial completion. The contractor will not be responsible for any issues that arise once the district starts using the parking lot.

Mr. Isidoro Nieto made the motion to approve the substantial completion for the Bobby Lackey Stadium Visitor Parking Lot Paving Project. Mr. Jesse Trevino seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

XI. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of the Revised Job Descriptions for Four (4) of the Additional Positions to be Funded Under ESSER II (CRRSA) and ESSER III (ARP) Federal Programs Previously Approved by the Board

Dr. Cris Valdez recommended that the Board approve the revision to the job descriptions for the following positions approved at the August 2, 2021 board meeting. The job descriptions were revised in accordance with questions that arose at that meeting.

- ESSER II Advanced Academics Coach (1 position for 2 years)
- ESSER III Accelerated Learning Campus Coordinator (10 positions for 3 years)
- ESSER III Director of Accelerated Learning Programs (1 position for 3 years)
- ESSER III Accelerated Learning Programs Secretary (1 position for 3 years)

Questions from the Board:

Mrs. Samantha Mize, Advanced Academics Coordinator, oversees the G/T program and assists with Pre-AP, AP, and dual enrollment projects. Mrs. Mize also works with ECHS to make sure the district has a good number of students getting their associate degrees.

›Is the Advanced Academic Coach position different from the Coordinator position?

- The Advanced Academic Coach would work alongside the Coordinator of Advanced Academics to provide additional campus support to teachers for college readiness. This individual will help to enhance the Pre-AP program by tracking data reports and work with strategists to make sure they are following the contents of what is required of the program. Mrs. Mize believes this position will be very helpful to the department.

- Qualifications: Master's degree from accredited university and valid Texas teaching certificate

- Experience:

- ›Three years' experience as an Advanced Academics classroom teacher
- ›Experience as an AP Coordinator or Department Head teacher (preferred)
- ›Experience in curriculum development (preferred)

Mr. Nieto commented that additional support is necessary in order to increase the number of AP scholars at WISD because there are other surrounding districts that have a much larger number of AP scholars with distinctions. He feels that AP classes are very important.

Dr. Valdez shared that the district is rated on the CCMR indicator for College, Career, & Military Readiness in the state accountability. She stated, "Just like we support students in need of improvement and so much support is provided for acceleration, we need to provide that for G/T and those who are enrolled in AP courses as well. We need to think of that sub-group as well."

Questions from the Board:

›Dr. Rodriguez wanted to know if the individual would help with ACT, SAT preparation.

- Yes, the individual will help brainstorm and come up with a plan.

›Mrs. Sustaita wanted to know if the pay was justifiable due to the years' experience of a classroom teacher.

- According to Mrs. Mize, the pay would be close to what they are currently making as an Advanced Teacher. She requested a report of all teachers who have a masters' degree in order to notify them of the position available. However, she is not certain what type of candidate would be interested because the salary of this position might not be comparable to the salary of a teacher who has been teaching for many years. The number of workdays will increase from 187 days to 226 days.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez made the motion to approve the revision to the job descriptions for the following positions as presented. Mr. Isidoro Nieto seconded the motion. Voting in favor of the motion were Mr. Isidoro Nieto and Dr. Jaime Rodriguez. Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita and Mr. Jesse Trevino abstained. Board President Armando Cuellar voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried with a 3 to 2 vote.

XII. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of a Plan of Finance for Maintenance Tax Notes Series 2021 to be Used for Facilities Improvements District-Wide

Due to the need for roofing improvements district-wide, the Administration recommended that the Board consider to proceed with a plan of finance for the issuance of maintenance tax notes to finance facilities improvement district-wide. The estimated cost for the roofing improvements is \$27,000,000. During the Board Workshop held prior to this meeting, Mr. Cris Vela (District Financial Advisor from Hilltop Securities) and Mr. Gregory Miller (Bond Counsel with Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP Firm) presented legal requirements and the process for obtaining a Maintenance Tax Note.

The proposed budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 does not include any funding for facility renovation. The two choices available are: 1) using the District's Local Maintenance Fund's Unassigned Fund Balance, or 2) Issuing Maintenance Tax Notes. The Administration does not recommend using the District's Local Maintenance Fund's Unassigned Fund Balance for a large amount as needed for this project since they are trying to reach and maintain an Unassigned Fund Balance worth 75 days of the general fund budget's expenditures.

The Administration recommended scenario #2, which would be to issue a Maintenance Tax Note for funding of roofs in the amount of \$27,000,000 for 20 years at an interest rate of 2.635%. The loan could be refinanced if the interest rates go lower. If the Board decides to proceed, staff would come back to the Board in September for formal approval of the Maintenance Tax Notes and approval of the underwriters who sell the Notes.

Mr. Jesse Trevino made the motion to table this item pending further review and discussion. Mr. Isidoro Nieto seconded the motion.

Dr. Jaime Rodriguez supported the motion to table as long as they did not put it off for a long time. Mr. Nieto asked that Dr. Valdez sit with Mr. Andres Sanchez to determine if this was doable. Mr. Trevino wanted more time to study this option before making a decision.

The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion made by Mr. Jesse Trevino and seconded by Mr. Isidoro Nieto to table this item pending further review and discussion.

XIII. Discussion and Possible Action for the Board to Consider Approval of Employee Pay Raises for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Dr. Valdez recommended that the Board approve the pay raises for all district employees to be included in the budget for the fiscal year 2021-2022 for every employee of the district including a reduction of working days for current 230-day employees to a 226-day schedule as presented at the Budget Workshop. The Board held several discussions on the pay raises during budget workshops and budget presentations held during regular board meetings prior to this meeting.

The pay raises are as follows:

Employees	Description of Pay Raise per Employee Classification
Classroom Teachers, Librarians, and Nurses – based on a 187-day contract	\$2,000.00
Professionals (Principals, Administrators, Other- on a 230-day contract: >Change of contract days from 230 to 226 >Actual Pay:	2.74% Equivalent to 1.74% (Less days, same pay) 1.00% from midpoint
Professionals (Principals, Administrators, Other) not on a 230-day contract:	2.74% from midpoint
Paraprofessionals currently on a 230-day work schedule: >Change of contract days from 230-226 >Actual Pay	3.74% Equivalent to 1.74% (Less days, same pay) 2.00% from midpoint
Paraprofessionals not on a 230-day work schedule	3.74% from midpoint
Manual, Technical Trades (Custodial, Energy Management, Food Service, Maintenance, Safety & Security, Transportation)	3.74% from midpoint

Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita made a motion to approve the pay raises pending approval of the Compensation Plan. Mr. Isidoro Nieto seconded the motion.

Mrs. Sustaita addressed her previous inquiry of using ESSER funding to provide a \$500.00 vaccine incentive. She would like the administration to follow up to see if this is doable.

The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion made by Mrs. Jaclyn Sustaita and seconded by Mr. Isidoro Nieto to approve the pay raises pending approval of the Compensation Plan.

XIV. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.