



IDEA Public Schools
2115 W. Pike Blvd.
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Regular Board Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2023

Board Members Present: Collin Sewell, Ed Rivera, Erich Holmsten, Gary Lindgren, Theresa Barrera-Shaw, Anthony Ryan Vaughan

Board Members Not Present: Dr. Nanette Cocero, Michael Adams

Legal Counsel, Staff, and Consultants Present: Dr. David Lee, Cody Grindle, Dr. Ernesto Cantu, Dr. Jeffrey Cottrill, Martin Winchester, Mike Higgins, Joe Hoffer, Jennifer White, Dr. Monique Morgan, Fidel Ozuna, Sandra Sotelo, Karla Casas, Kathey Mitchell, Daniel Garza, Jacklyn Verdin, Ben Bracher, Linda Parga, Macy Tores, Raquel Sanchez, Yasmine Vasquez, James Dworkin, Stephen Parmer, Laurie Guitierrez, Andrea Fernandez, Tanika Issac, Javier Campos, Layne Fisher, Janessa Smith, Sidney Cook, Dolores Gonzales

Audience Present: Sylvia Flores

The meeting was called to order by presiding officer, Collin Sewell, at 9:05 AM CST.

Welcome and Call to Order

Collin Sewell, Board Chair, welcomed the Board Members to the October 27, 2023, Board of Directors' meeting and confirmed quorum was present for the meeting in addition to members of the management team. Mr. Sewell, as presiding officer, conducted the meeting in Odessa, Texas, as duly posted. He further indicated some members joined via videoconference and a phone line was available for members of the public to join in the meeting if they wish to do so.

General Comment

Jennifer White, Managing Director of Governance and Policy confirmed there were no prior requests for employee and staff comments. Present on the public line was a principal, Sylvia Flores at the meeting only to observe.

Agenda Item Comment

Collin Sewell stated that the public, employees, and staff have three (3) minutes each to comment on items that are on the agenda for this meeting if they wish to do so. Jennifer White confirmed that no prior requests to comment on a specific agenda item were made. She provided the opportunity for anyone for the meeting and in the public line, but no requests to comment were made.

Organizational Update

Dolores Gonzales, Chief Program Officer, provided and Academic update. Dr. Ernesto Cantu, Chief of Schools, shared an update on persistence data.

Committee Updates

Ed Rivera, Chair, provided the Audit update.

The IDEA Audit Committee met on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, and received various updates including, the Child Nutrition TDA Reviews update, the Student Activity Accounts Consulting Engagement Report, the July and August 2023 Corporate Card Violations Reports, the Spring 2023 Whistleblower Report, the Grant Compliance Monitoring Reports, and the Philanthropic Funds Audit Draft Report. We discussed and recommended the 2023-24 1st Audit Plan Amendment, special engagement for the MD of Internal Audit, and the Internal Audit Budget Proposal. Our next Audit Committee meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2023.

Erich Holmsten, Committee Chair, provided the Finance update.

The IDEA Finance Committee met on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, and reviewed a cash update and recommended the financial statements for June and September 2023. In the budgetary segment of the meeting, we recommended the September 2023 budget amendments and the October 2023 proposed budget amendments. Regarding compliance, the items recommended were the purchasing policy exceptions. We discussed the September 2023 corporate card report and recommend the FY 2023 Annual Audit. Additional discussions included the real estate divestiture update. The next IDEA Finance Committee meeting is Friday, November 17, 2023.

Collin Sewell, Board Chair, presented the Executive update.

The Executive Committee met on Tuesday, October 24, 2023. Several items were discussed including a settlement agreement and Senate Bill 763. During the Executive Committee, the IDEA Board of Directors voted no to employing school chaplains instead of licensed school counselors as described in the terms outlined in Senate Bill 763, passed late this spring. The law contains a great deal of ambiguity, which could present several potential legal challenges for the district. We will revisit the issue once again this spring in the hopes of further clarity from the state and after additional discussion and legal counsel on the matter. The next Executive Committee meeting is Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 8:30 a.m.

23-24 Organizational Goal Setting Process update

Dr. Jeffrey Cottrill, CEO/Superintendent provided an update to the board on the 23-24 Organizational Goal Setting process.

FY 2023 Audit Report

James Dworkin, Chief Financial Officer and external audit firm, Blazek & Vetterling presented the FY 2023 Audit Report. The Board passed a motion to approve the 2023 Audit Report with finalization of audit report to be delegated to the CEO/Superintendent.

- Motion by: Erich Holmsten
- Second by: Anthony Ryan Vaughanp-
- All in favor: All
- All opposed: None
- Motion passed unanimously.*

District Improvement Plan (DIP) and Campus Improvement Plan (CIP)

Dr. Jeff Cottrill, Superintendent/CEO presented the District Improvement Plan (DIP) and Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) which was previously provided in a training to the Board. The Board passed a motion to approve the District Improvement Plan (DIP) and Campus Improvement Plan (CIP).

Motion by: Erich Holmsten
Second by: Theresa Barrera-Shaw
All in favor: All
All opposed: None
Motion passed unanimously.

Policy Recommendation

Jennifer White, Managing Director of Governance and Policy provided a brief overview on the Accelerated Instruction Policy. The Board passed a motion to approve the Accelerated Instruction Policy.

Motion by: Gary Lindgren
Second by: Erich Holmsten
All in favor: All
All opposed: None
Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Collin Sewell, Board Chair took the agenda out of order referring to item 9 and called for a motion to move to Executive Session pursuant to Tex. Govt. Code 551.071 Consultation with Legal Counsel regarding pending legal matters, Tex. Govt. Code 551.072, Tex. Govt. Code 551.074 Personnel Matters, Tex. Govt. Code 551.076 Security Personnel and/or Security Audit, and Tex. Govt. Code 551.082 School Children, School District Employees, Disciplinary matter, or complaint.

Executive Session

The Board passed a motion to move to Executive Session.

Motion by: Ed Rivera
Second by: Anthony Ryan Vaughan
All in favor: All
All opposed: None
Motion passed unanimously.

The Board moved into Executive Session at 9:59 AM CST.

Open Session

Mr. Sewell called for a motion to reconvene in Open Session. The Board passed a motion to reconvene in Open Session.

Motion by: Ed Rivera
Second by: Erich Holmsten
All in favor: All
All opposed: None
Motion passed unanimously.

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 11:17 AM CST. No action was taken during Executive Session.

Votes on Closed Session Items

SB 763 Chaplains in Schools

The Board did not take any further action on SB 763 Chaplains in Schools. The IDEA Board of Directors voted no to employing school chaplains instead of licensed school counselors as described in the terms outlined in Senate Bill 763, passed late this spring. The law contains a great deal of ambiguity, which could present several potential legal challenges for the district. The board will revisit the issue once again this spring in the hopes of further clarity from the state and after additional discussion and legal counsel on the matter.

23-24 Goals, corresponding Staff Development Cycle Policy, and Procedures

The Board passed a motion to approve the 23-24 Goals, corresponding Staff Development Cycle Policy, and Procedures with documents and metrics as distributed to the board and discussed in closed session.

Motion by: Anthony Ryan Vaughan

Second by: Eric Holmsten

All in favor: All

All opposed: None

Motion passed unanimously.

Recognition Program Update

The Board passed a motion to approve the Recognition Program Update.

Motion by: Anthony Ryan Vaughan

Second by: Gary Lindgren

All in favor: All

All opposed: None

Motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Collin Sewell, Board Chair read all items under the consent agenda and asked if Board Members had questions or wanted to discuss further any of the items on the list. The Board decided to pull item j from the consent agenda and proceeded to vote.

a) Contracts

(1) Construction & Improvements

(2) Non-Construction

(a) Contracted Services

(b) Software Services

(c) Interlocal Agreements

(d) Cooperative Agreements

(3) Contract Ratifications

(4) Personnel agreement, R.S.

b) Purchasing Policy exceptions (Finance Committee, October 24, 2023)

c) September 2023 Budget Amendments (Finance Committee, October 24, 2023)

- d) October 2023 Proposed Budget amendments (Finance Committee, October 24, 2023)
- e) June 2023 Financial Statements (Finance Committee, October 24, 2023)
- f) September 2023 Financial Statements (Finance Committee, October 24, 2023)
- g) 2023-24 1st Audit Plan Amendment (Audit Committee, October 10, 2023)
- h) Special engagement for MD of Internal Audit (Audit Committee, October 10, 2023)
- i) Internal Audit Budget Proposal (Audit Committee, October 10, 2023)
- j) Agreement with Dept. of Education-**pulled from the agenda**
- k) September 29, 2023 Board Workshop meeting minutes
- l) September 29, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes
- m) October Committee Meeting Minutes

The Board passed a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion by: Anthony Ryan Vaughan
Second by: Gary Lindgren
All in favor: All
All opposed: None
Motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

The Board passed a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 AM CST.

Motion by: Reba C. McNair
Second by: Eric Holmsten
All in favor: All
All opposed: None
Motion passed unanimously.

I certify that the foregoing are the true and correct minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of IDEA Public Schools held on October 27, 2023.

DocuSigned by:
A. Ryan Vaughan
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Anthony Ryan Vaughan, Board Secretary

12/1/2023

Date