



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

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

February 24, 2026

Board Members Present: Collin Sewell, Ed Rivera, Erich Holmsten, Theresa Barrera-Shaw, David Dunn, Gary Lindgren, Dr. Nanette Cocero, Najuma Atkinson, Stacy Eng, Ryan Green
Gary Lindgren left the meeting at 6:05 PM CST.

Board Members Not Present: Connie Miner, Lilya Matos

Legal Counsel, Staff, and Consultants Present: Dr. Jeffrey Cottrill, Cody Grindle, Dolores Gonzalez, Jessica Hess, Martin Winchester, Dr. Colleen Stearns, Layne Fisher, Mike Higgins, Tony Kingman, Robyn Birkla, Genevieve Cheng, Kaitlin McDermott, April Seidensticker, Dr. David Lee, Christopher Ruszkowski, Joe Hoffer, Paola Alaniz Cantu, Tanya Torres, Keawe Liu, Fidel Ozuna III, Elizabeth Valades

Audience Present: None

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Sewell at 5:01 PM CST.

Welcome and Call to Order

Board Chair Sewell welcomed the Board Members to the February 24, 2026, Board of Directors meeting and confirmed quorum was present for the meeting in addition to members of the management team. Board Chair Sewell conducted the meeting 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.

Board Chair Sewell also welcomed and introduced three new board members: Najuma Atkinson, Stacy Eng, and Ryan Green.

General Comment

Jessica Hess, Chief Governance Officer, stated that there were no requests.

Agenda Item Comment

Presiding Officer 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. No prior requests to comment on a specific agenda item were made.

TEA Conservator Report

TEA conservator Christopher Ruszkowski presented the monthly TEA Conservator Report. No action was taken on this item.

CEO/ Organizational Updates

Dr. Jeffrey Cottrill, CEO and Superintendent, shared a CEO Update regarding Org-Wide Goals, Class of 2025 Matriculation, Class of 2026 Matriculation, College Signing Day, Scholarships, Recruitment, Persistence, and Team and Family Highlights. No action was taken on this item.

24-25 Goal Attainment Update: Matriculation

Martin Winchester, Chief Human Assets Officer, shared an update on 24-25 Goal Attainment Update: Matriculation. No action was taken on this item.

FY25 Audit Final Compliance Report

Tony Kingman, Interim Chief Financial Officer, presented the Final Compliance Report for FY25 Audit. The board passed a motion to approve the Final Compliance Report for FY 2025 as presented.

Motion by: Theresa Barrera-Shaw
Second by: David Dunn
All in favor: All
All opposed: None

FY 2026 External Auditor

Tony Kingman presented FY26 External Auditor, sharing the RFQ timeline, evaluation criteria, and final evaluation results, noting that the top-rated firm and selection recommendation is Whitley Penn LLP. The board passed a motion to approve the FY 2026 External Auditor as presented.

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

FY 2027 Advanced Budget Requests

Tony Kingman also presented FY27 Advanced Budget Requests. The board passed a motion to approve the FY 2027 Advanced Budget Requests as presented.

Motion by: David Dunn
Second by: Erich Holmsten
All in favor: All
All opposed: None

Committee Updates

Audit Committee Member Ed Rivera presented the Audit Committee updates. The Audit Committee met on February 10, 2026, with Theresa Barrera-Shaw, Dr. Nanette Cocero, and Ed Rivera present. The committee received presentations regarding Philanthropic Grants Audit and Internal Audit Updates, with no action recommended on these items. The committee also received a presentation regarding the FY 2026 External Auditor, which was recommended for approval and was presented earlier in tonight's meeting. The committee moved into Executive Session to receive a presentation regarding Graduation Requirements Audit MAP and Updates, subsequently reconvening in Open Session, with no action recommended on this item. Graduation items will be presented moving forward at the Academic Committee. The next Audit Committee meeting is March 10, 2026.

Dr. Nanette Cocero, Academic Committee Chair, presented the following updates: the Academic Committee met on February 12, 2026, with David Dunn, Theresa Barrera-Shaw, and Connie Miner present. The committee received presentations regarding Middle of Year DIBELS Data and an overview of IDEA Hardy Turnaround Plan Milestone Progress and Campus Goals, with no action recommended on either item. There is an Academic Board Workshop on March 26, 2026, and the next Academic Committee meeting is April 9, 2026.

Finance Committee Chair Erich Holmsten presented the Finance Committee updates. The Finance Committee met on February 20, 2026. The committee received a CFO Update, with no action recommended on this item. The committee received presentations on the FY 2025 Final Compliance Report, FY 2026 External Auditor, and FY 2027 Advanced Budget Requests, all of which were recommended by the committee and presented earlier tonight. The committee also received presentations regarding December 2025 financial statements, February 2026 budget amendments, Public Funds Investment Act Q2 Report, Payment during Closure resolution, and purchasing and travel policy exceptions. These items were all recommended for board approval and are on tonight's consent agenda. The committee entered Executive Session to discuss legal and real estate matters, subsequently recommending the IDEA Omnibus Resolution as discussed in Executive Session. This item is on tonight's meeting agenda for Executive Session. The next Finance Committee meeting is March 13, 2026.

Board Chair, Collin Sewell, presented the Executive Committee updates. The Executive Committee met this morning, February 24, 2026 with Collin Sewell as the presiding officer. and committee members Ed Rivera and Erich Holmsten present. The committee received the TEA Conservator Report and a presentation regarding Final 24-25 Goal Attainment Update: Matriculation, which was recommended and also presented earlier in tonight's meeting. The Committee also received a presentation related to Greenhouse E3 Contracts, which is on tonight's consent agenda. The committee then moved into Executive Session to discuss Administrative Professional Pay Scales, as well as Superintendent Performance Feedback. The committee subsequently reconvened in Open Session and recommended the Administrative Professional Pay Scales for board approval. This item will be presented again tonight in Executive Session. The next Executive Committee meeting is March 24, 2026.

Consent Agenda

The board passed a motion to approve the Consent Agenda in one board action.

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

Districtwide Intruder Detection Audit Report Findings

Jorge Chipres Castaneda, Managing Director of Safety and Security, presented an update regarding the districtwide intruder detection audit report. No action was taken on this item.

Executive Session

Considering the nature of the rest of the safety information, Board Chair Sewell called for a motion to move into Executive Session pursuant to Texas Govt. Code 551.076 Security Personnel and/or Security Audit. Further, considering the remaining items on the agenda, Board Chair Sewell proposed to continue in Executive Session pursuant to Texas Govt. Code 551.074 Personnel Matters, Texas Govt. Code 551.071 Consultation with Legal Counsel regarding pending legal matters, Texas Govt. Code 551.074 Superintendent Performance Review, and Texas Govt. Code 551.072 Real Estate Matters (purchase, lease, or sale of real property).

The Board passed a motion to move to Executive Session pursuant to Texas Govt. Code 551.076, Texas Govt. Code 551.074, Texas Govt. Code 551.071, and Texas Govt. Code 551.072.

Motion by: Nanette Cocero
Second by: David Dunn
All in favor: All
All opposed: None

The Board moved into Executive Session at 6:51 PM CST.

Open Session

The Board passed a motion to reconvene in Open Session.

Motion by: Nanette Cocero
Second by: David Dunn
All in favor: All
All opposed: None

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 8:15 PM CST. No action was taken during Executive Session.

Votes on Executive Session Items

The Board passed a motion to approve the next steps related to the IDEA Foundation Proposal as discussed in Executive Session.

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

The Board passed a motion to approve the IDEA Omnibus Resolution as discussed in Executive Session.

Motion by: David Dunn
Second by: Nanette Cocero
All in favor: All
All opposed: None

The Board passed a motion to approve the Administrative Professional Pay Scales as discussed in Executive Session, and finding that the compensation proposal is fair and reasonable and not excessive based on Mercer study and TEA regulations.

Motion by: Nanette Cocero
Second by: Theresa Barrera-Shaw
All in favor: All
All opposed: None

Adjourn

The Board passed a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 PM CST.

I certify that the foregoing are the true and correct minutes of the regular meeting of the Board Meeting of IDEA Public Schools held on February 24, 2026.

Signed by:

8DB22C2786DB400...
Ed Rivera, Board Secretary

4/3/2026

Date