

**MINUTES OF THE WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

253rd MEETING

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Thursday, August 20, 2009, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Austin, Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Oliver Bell, Chairman
Tom Mechler, Vice Chairman
Leopoldo (Leo) Vasquez, III, Secretary
Eric Gambrell
Pastor C. L. Jackson
Janice Harris Lord
Terrell McCombs
Carmen Villanueva-Hiles

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

J. David Nelson

WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Debbie Roberts, Superintendent
Veronica Casanova
Linda Goerdel
Michael Mondville

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL
JUSTICE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Brad Livingston
Bryan Collier
Melinda Bozarth

CONVENED

Tom Mechler, Vice Chairman, called the meeting of the Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Thursday, August 20, 2009, at 1:37 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the Open Meetings Act. A quorum was present and the 253rd meeting of the board was declared open. The board adjourned into executive session which is closed to the public in accordance with the Texas Government Code §551.071 and §551.074.

Oliver Bell, Chairman, reconvened the regular session of the Windham School District Board of Trustees in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the Open Meetings Act. During the regular session, the board conducted business from the agenda posted in the Texas Register. A quorum of the board was present and the meeting was declared open at 2:25 p.m.

Chairman Bell recognized Clint McGee from Representative Terri Hodge's office as a special guest in attendance and thanked him for his continued support.

The chairman reported the board was committed to providing the opportunity for public presentations on topics posted on the meeting agenda, as well as public comment on issues within its jurisdiction as provided in Board Rule 300.1. Persons interested in providing presentations at the meeting were required to complete a registration card and submit it at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting's posted start time. As no cards were received prior to the required deadline, the board would not hear public presentations or public comments.

**DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING
CONSENT ITEMS**

Chairman Bell called the board's attention to the Consent Items on the agenda (Attachment A), which consisted of the minutes of the June 18, 2009, meeting, appraisers for the 2009-2010 school year, personal property donations and approval of excused absences.

Chairman Bell asked if there were any comments, objections or amendments to the Consent Items. Noting there were none, he stated the Consent Items were approved as submitted.

**DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING
REVISIONS TO WINDHAM SUPERINTENDENT DIRECTIVES**

1. SD-07.17, "Re-Employment and Selection of Retirees"

Mike Mondville, WSD General Counsel, stated that the proposed revisions to the directive include reformatting to match the new policy style and rewording to make the policy more readable. He requested board approval for the policy as amended.

Janice Harris Lord moved that the Windham School District Board of Trustees approve the revisions to SD-07.17, "Re-Employment and Selection of Retirees," as presented.

Eric Gambrell seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

(Attachment A – Approved SD-07.17, copy of signed policy available upon written request.)

2. SD-07.18, "Performance Evaluations and Professional Development Appraisal System" (PDAS)

Mr. Mondville stated that the proposed revisions to the PDAS policy included textural changes and cited authorities. It was being presented per Board Policy 02.00, "Windham School District Board of Trustees Responsibilities" that requires annual approval. He requested board approval for the policy as amended.

Carmen Villaneuva-Hiles moved that the Windham School District Board of Trustees approve the revisions to Windham SD-07.18, regarding the "Performance Evaluations and Professional Development Appraisal System" (PDAS), as presented.

Terrell McCombs seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

(Attachment B – Approved SD-07.18, copy of signed policy available upon written request.)

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE WSD SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT

Chairman Bell stated that this item was discussed in executive session. He commended the superintendent on a job well done.

Leo Vasquez enthusiastically made a motion that the WSD Board of Trustees approve the Superintendent contract to include an annual salary of \$115,000.00 for the 2009-2010 school year, as presented.

Pastor C. L. Jackson seconded the motion which passed unanimously when called to a vote.

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE WSD BUDGET AND SALARY SCHEDULE FOR 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR

Debbie Roberts, WSD Superintendent, stated that she and Linda Goerdel, Chief Financial Officer, felt the results of this legislative session met or exceeded their expectations.

Ms. Goerdel gave an overview of the proposed 2009-2010 budget and salary schedule. The foundation school funding from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) will reflect a base appropriation of \$64,058,448.00, which will be for each year of the biennium beginning September 1st. As discussed in the budget briefings, this additional income above the current base appropriation, which is \$59,425,745.00, is an actual increase of \$4,632,703.00. That is a result of an exceptional item that WSD submitted through TEA based on previous pay raises, the San Saba and Marlin facilities, Career Technology Education (CTE) expansion and industry certification.

In addition to this extra income, WSD also, as a result of HB 3646, will receive funding to cover an \$80 per month pay raise for classroom teachers, full-time librarians, counselors and diagnosticians. There was also an amendment to Rider 76 that is now Rider 85 that will fund \$337,117 per year of the biennium to the district for educator salary increases.

The district is requesting permission to add a step 21 to the teacher salary schedule. This step reflects a \$40 per month increase or \$480 per year for those positions.

Start up equipment and supplies for the CTE expansion are also included in the proposed budget. Plans are to be fully staffed with the additional 27 approved CTE teaching positions by next year.

Ms. Goerdel noted a slight increase was made to the travel budget. There is also one new grant “The Special Education American Recovery and Reinvestment Act” (ARRA) which totals \$90,000. Those funds will be used primarily to purchase a research based math program to help the special education classes throughout the district.

The Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) noted in the budget between Windham and TDCJ

cover the areas of Post-Secondary (college), Education, and Recreation, which includes: Recreation, Radio and TV, Library Services and The ECHO.

Ms. Goerdel explained there was a slight increase in the college MOU due to additional college textbooks. There is also a slight increase in the education-recreation budget due to replacement of damaged library books at the Neal and Gist units.

The Project RIO budget reflects an increase of \$1.3 million per year and 42 additional full-time positions. This will allow for staff to be placed on units that do not have Project RIO offices, and provide additional staff for units that have larger workloads.

The total estimated income including regular programs, grants and MOUs is \$79,151,822.

Mr. Mechler moved that the WSD Board of Trustees approve the Windham School District operating budget and salary schedule for 2009-2010 school year as amended in regards to the Superintendent's salary and authorize the Superintendent of the WSD to make transfers as necessary and authorized through the general appropriations act and other applicable laws.

Mr. Gambrell seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

(Copy of approved budget available upon written request.)

OVERVIEW OF THE DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUSINESS SERVICES

Ms. Goerdel gave an overview of the Division of Administrative and Business Services. She informed the board that 20 people are employed in the division and the average years of service for these employees is 13.5 years. The division is divided into the Budget, Purchasing, Accounts Payable, Accounting, Payroll and Warehousing departments. She explained the functions of each department.

Some of the duties of the budget department include preparation of the annual budget for board approval, preparing monthly reports for administrators, and assisting the superintendent and chief financial officer during the legislative session.

The purchasing department has three purchasers that have all attained their Certified Texas Procurement Manager certification. They process all open market requisitions and handle discrepancies with vendors. They also report Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) information to TDCJ.

The accounts payable department reconciles receipt of goods with vendor invoices and processes payments; audits, codes and keys all travel vouchers; and schedule the use and maintenance of WSD vehicles.

The accounting department reconciles bank accounts, and audits and processes the credit card billing. They are also responsible for the fixed assets of the district and performance of field audits. The accounting department also handles WSD's investment transactions.

The payroll department processes monthly payroll as well as terminations, new hires, changes in

employment, and salary adjustments. They also process requests for direct deposits, adjustments to payroll deductions, 403(b) enrollments, and savings bonds.

The warehouse department handles all receipts of goods ordered by the purchasing department and coordinates shipment of the goods with TDCJ. They are responsible for the repair of equipment including warranty work. They also maintain the warehouse inventory and assist with maintenance of motor pool vehicles.

Mr. McCombs asked if there is a minimum amount required when the district goes through the Comptroller's Office for purchasing. Ms. Goerdel responded if the item is not in the WSD warehouse, the next step is to go through the Comptroller's Office. If there is not a state contract, then depending on cost, it is either put out for bid or goes to a vendor with whom the district is familiar. If there are multiple sources for an item, the district always goes to the comptroller first to check state contract.

Mr. McCombs also asked about the details of performing field audits. Ms. Goerdel explained the accounting employees go to the vocational shops to verify that the tagged WSD equipment is accounted for. They also check to see if the proper paperwork is done for vocational projects that are in those shops. The procurement cards are also audited to make sure the cards are being used correctly. The audits take place between April and August and a different region is audited each year.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

August is always a busy month for WSD principals as the district begins to finalize plans for the upcoming school year. In order to determine what classes to offer during the upcoming year, principals and division directors analyze the instructional needs of the offenders at each facility, as well as, district-wide resource availability.

The process begins in June with each principal completing a survey instrument that shows the number of teachers by subject area taught for the current school year, as well as, the requested number of teachers by subject area for the upcoming school year. Justifications for any requested changes in program offerings are also provided.

The Division of Operational Support then compiles data based on offenders' individualized treatment plans (ITP) for each unit. That information includes the number of offenders on each unit on the waiting list for a particular program broken down by priority level.

In August, the superintendent and the division directors meet with each principal and their respective regional administrators to talk about the needs of each unit based on the data collected. The meetings are scheduled over four days. During those meetings, a list is compiled noting the units requesting additional classes as well as those where ITP data indicates a class could be eliminated. This year, discussions also covered the expansion of the vocational program and identified units with vacant classrooms that could accommodate the new programs. Staff is in the process of reviewing these lists to make a final determination as to which units will receive the few positions available for reassignment.

This exercise is time consuming but is very helpful in getting everyone on the same page. It gives the principals a chance to share their ideas and concerns and provides everyone an opportunity to problem solve as a team. At the end of the process, unit issues have been identified and principals are aware of expectations for the new school year.

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN, WSD BOARD – WINDHAM, COMPARISON
FROM DATE ESTABLISHED IN 1969, TO THE PRESENT**

Chairman Bell stated that earlier this month, the state of Texas lost a true icon in the field of Education. An individual that made a significant impact on the history of the Windham School District and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice - Dr. Lane Murray

In 1969, Dr. Murray became the pioneer of the school district concept within a prison system, when she was named founding superintendent for the Windham School System for the Texas Department of Corrections. A position she held for more than two decades.

Dr. Murray recognized the need for an innovative and nontraditional approach to education. With no model to follow, she identified and implemented a non-grade, competency-based approach to instruction within a prison environment.

Under her direction and leadership, WSD staff grew from eight instructors in 1969; to its structure today, with nearly 1,300 total employees, of which of which more than 800 are certified teachers.

Compared to the other 1,031 school districts in Texas, in 2008 -

- WSD ranked the largest by geographic boundary;
- 8th (top one percent) in the number of schools operated;
- 50th (top five percent) in average daily attendance;
- 86th in full-time teacher positions; and
- 130th (top 13 percent) in total expenditures.

The WSD has experienced significant change and progress since its establishment in 1969. Chairman Bell expressed appreciation to Dr. Murray for laying the foundation for what is today, the best prison-based school district in the nation.

In honor of Dr. Murray, the Windham School District will be renaming their annual teacher of the year award. The first Lane Murray Excellence in Teaching Award will be presented during the Board's October meeting, along with a tribute to Dr. Murray.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

As noted earlier, no cards were received; therefore, no public comments were heard.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Bell adjourned the 253rd meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees at 3:02 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary

Note: Referenced attachments for draft minutes are available upon request. Following approval of the minutes, attachments will be maintained with the signed minutes in the Office of Record.