

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

Meeting No. 322

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Friday, March 5, 2021 via Zoom Video Conference.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Patrick O’Daniel, Chairman
Derrelynn Perryman, Vice Chairman
Pastor Larry Miles, Secretary
Mano DeAyala
Hon. Molly Francis
Hon. Faith Johnson
Sichan Siv
Eric Nichols
Dr. Rodney Burrow

WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kristina Hartman, Superintendent
Robert O’Banion
Amanda Coleman
Luann Pickett
Michael Mondville

CONVENED

Chairman Patrick O’Daniel convened the meeting of the 322nd Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Friday, March 5, 2021, at 11:09 a.m. 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 was present and the meeting was declared open.

Chairman O’Daniel reported that the WSD Board was committed to providing the opportunity for public presentations on posted agenda topics as well as for public comments on issues within its jurisdiction as provided in Board Rule 300.1. As no speaker registration cards were received by the Board staff, no public presentations on posted agenda topics were heard.

RECOGNITIONS

Robert O’Banion, Director of Operations, introduced Amanda Coleman, who is the Communications Administrator for the district.

Robert said that Amanda Coleman recently joined the Windham School District as the Communications Administrator. With more than eight years of experience in marketing and communications, Amanda received her bachelor’s degree in Mass Communications from Sam Houston State University and master’s degree in Journalism from Baylor University. Recently,

she completed her dissertation and will graduate in May 2021 with a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Sam Houston State.

Mr. O'Banion stated that for years, Amanda worked overseeing corporate marketing and communication strategies before returning to her alma mater to work in Sam Houston State University's Marketing & Communications Department. Amanda started as the institution's first Marketing Automation Specialist overseeing the launch and implementation of a new mass email system. She was quickly promoted to Assistant Director of Marketing where she oversaw marketing for the university including developing campaigns, leading cross-divisional teams to implement marketing projects and communications plans, and managing the university's crisis communications.

Robert said that Amanda's focus in joining WSD is to help shape and tell the story of educating the district's students to reduce recidivism. Specifically, she will work to improve internal and external communications to all of the district's stakeholders. Mr. O'Banion asked the Board to please join WSD in welcoming Amanda Coleman.

The Chairman thanked Mr. O'Banion and congratulated Ms. Coleman.

CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF CONSENT ITEMS

The Chairman called the Board's attention to the Consent Items on the agenda, which consisted of the minutes of the December 17th, 2020 meeting, appraisers for the 2020-2021 school year, excused absences and personal property donations.

There being no other comments, objections or amendments to the Consent Items, the Consent Items were approved as submitted.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Operations Updates

Superintendent Hartman stated that the Windham School District's Division of Operations, led by Director Robert O'Banion, is a committed group of 70 staff members dedicated to the financial, analytical, technical and human resource needs of the district, in support of providing quality educational opportunities.

She said that the daily operations of the division are significant as there are many moving parts. This past year has been an exceptionally dynamic and exciting year. Although the COVID-19 pandemic stretched resources, demanded critical thinking and challenged communications within the division, the staff prevailed.

Ms. Hartman highlighted some of the great work of the various departments within the Division of Operations. The Information Technology Department, led by Cesar Trevino, continues to provide technical support in unique ways as employees who traditionally provided onsite

assistance found that travel was limited. The IT Department rose to the occasion completing 6,443 help tickets in school year 2020-2021. They have also been working hard on WSD's approved three-year technology plan, which includes increased access to technology-based instructional resources for the district's student population.

Ms. Hartman said that the Operational Support Department, led by Department Director Charlie Bell, continues to ensure that student attendance tracking, monitoring and compliance are met with precision required for legislative reporting. For school year 2020-2021, the department accounted for a total of 12,439,163 student contact hours. The Annual Performance Report and Biennial Evaluation Report deadlines remained eminent during the pandemic. As the result of a great deal of hard work, both reports were successfully completed at the end of January.

Superintendent Hartman stated that the Department of Business Services, led by Department Director Michelle Owen, continues to manage the district's almost \$70 million budget. Processing vendor payments as well as financial accounting and reporting persists. The department has ensured that payroll continues as scheduled and is processed each month without interruption. W2s, 1099s and 1095s are being processed and distributed timely. The Purchasing Office worked to obtain supplies, materials and equipment in the face of the pandemic, overcoming shortages and shipping challenges. The office processed 4,903 open market and credit card purchase orders last school year.

Ms. Hartman said that at the onset of the pandemic, Warehouse Operations, led by Jason Martinez, in conjunction with Operational Support, sprang into action to provide supplies and equipment to campuses across the state. Warehouse Operations has continued to meet delivery needs for educators and staff through significant coordination efforts, processing approximately 5,000 shipments to campuses last school year. When the Texas Education Agency and the Department of State Health Services partnered to provide districts with rapid COVID tests, staff quickly mobilized to distribute the tests to Windham campus-based leadership.

Ms. Hartman stated that the district's most significant and valuable resource is its employees. The Human Resources Department, led by Stephine Crabb, provides superb and meaningful support to all staff. Employee leave, time reporting and available benefits have all undergone challenges this past year and changes to support better accountability. The Human Resources Department is the focal point for staff related COVID communications. Questions from staff regarding required quarantines, available leave and other benefits have significantly increased throughout the pandemic and WSD staff has successfully managed through this department. Additionally, Human Resources has continued monthly hiring processes for new staff via Zoom. Virtual interviews were implemented and the new online application process, which was in place before the pandemic, has been a very valuable resource.

Superintendent Hartman concluded that the Division of Operations consists of an outstanding team of dedicated staff, who work behind the scenes and is not always spoken about, but Ms. Hartman stated that she was proud to talk about them today, and they, in partnership with the Division of Instruction, share the district's vision to empower students and transform lives through excellence in education. The hard work of these team members certainly makes a difference to the district's students and staff.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN, WSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Civics Course Development

Chairman O'Daniel stated that beginning in 2021, the Windham School District will implement a civics course, that will be embedded in academic and life skills programs, with the goal of providing students with the knowledge and tools needed to become successful citizens within their communities. Studies show that when residents are offered educational opportunities while incarcerated, the likelihood of recidivism decreases. Further, the addition of a civics education will enable participants to obtain a better understanding of the rights and responsibilities that will be restored to them upon re-entry, and those that will require documentation and approval for consideration.

The Chairman said that with the introduction of Civics coursework in academic and life skills classes, Windham will continue to build upon the opportunities it provides to students to gain knowledge, skills, and self-confidence. The curriculum coursework is divided into units that cover a range of topics, with each area to be taught over the course of a month. At the beginning of each month, campus principals will be provided with all materials needed for classroom instruction. The course, which will follow patterns of civics curriculum taught in public education, will be enhanced with additional topics of instruction as social, political, and cultural needs merit.

Mr. Chairman reported that in February 2021, Windham initiated a pilot program in the Southeast, North, and Panhandle regions. Upon full implementation in the Spring of 2021, academic and life skills will begin instructing participants on topics ranging from voting and the political process to community responsibility. The first topic of instruction will be, "Why Should We Study Civics?" This lesson will provide students with the foundation of a civics-based education, introducing the importance of community awareness and participation.

Chairman O'Daniel concluded that in addition to civics instruction, students will receive information on the restoration of their rights as citizens. Residents will be provided with guidance and resources that details the processes and procedures that must be followed to have a specific right restored. Mr. O'Daniel stated that he looks forward to providing the Board with an update following the pilot and full implementation of the civics course within Windham.

SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION PRESENTATION

Luann Pickett, WSD Regional Principal, stated that she is honored to present today via videoconference as the district celebrates School Board Appreciation month.

Mrs. Pickett said she would like to take a moment to share with her history and experience with Windham School District and TDCJ. She began her career with TDCJ as a mailroom clerk at the Skyview Unit in 1988. Her work has included a variety of positions to include In-cell Study Aide, Testing Specialist, Teacher, Assistant Principal, and College Coordinator. Currently she works with a wonderful group of professionals at the Goree and Wynne campuses as their WSD Principal and recently she was designated as the Tri-County Regional Principal.

Luann stated that during her years with the district, she has seen and experienced both smooth sailing and stormy seas. However, she said that 2020 was the most unique and challenging year thus far! On the other hand, she also stated that she believes it has been one of the district's finest hours! This success is due in great part to the Windham School District Board of Trustees. The Board's steady support and wisdom at the helm allows WSD to continue to experience success in meeting the district's mission.

Mrs. Pickett said that WSD has tackled the challenges presented as new ways have been learned and new ways to serve the students through distance learning and unique scheduling for an on-site hybrid model of instruction--all the while keeping safety at the forefront.

Mrs. Pickett stated that WSD's success through these high seas has been a team effort that includes the amazing WSD Board. Today, it is the district's pleasure and privilege to share a video tribute honoring the esteemed Windham School District Board of Trustees.

Following the video, Chairman O'Daniel expressed thanks and stated the Board's appreciation for WSD's hard work of the staff and teachers who've gone over and beyond given the pandemic and the unique challenges that no one else has faced. He said how much WSD is appreciated and valued as team members, teachers and staff that make the Windham School District such a special place to work and such a special community.

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REVISION OF WSD BOARD POLICY 07.51, "REDUCTION IN FORCE"

Michael Mondville, WSD General Counsel, said that Windham Board Policy WBP-07.51, "Reduction in Force" is updated in part of the normal review process and contains updated language but no substantial changes. He asked that the Board approve the revised policy as presented. Mr. Mondville paused for questions. There were none.

Chairman O'Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Sichan Siv moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the revision of WSD Board Policy WBP-07.51, "Reduction in Force" as presented.

Molly Francis seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REVISION OF WSD BOARD POLICY 07.45, "DRUG FREE WORKPLACE"

Michael Mondville said that Windham Board Policy WBP-07.45, "Drug Free Workplace" received a major update moving it to the current format that the district uses and aligning WSD's

drug free processes with those of TDCJ. He asked that the Board approve the revised policy as presented. Mr. Mondville paused for questions. There were none.

Chairman O’Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Faith Johnson moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the revision of the WSD Board Policy WBP-07.45, “Drug Free Workplace” as presented.

Dr. Rodney Burrow seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Chairman O’Daniel thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The next meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees will be Friday, April 16th, 2021 via video conference.

ADJOURNED

There being no further business for the regular session, Chairman O’Daniel adjourned the 322nd meeting of the Windham School District Board of Trustees at 11:32 a.m.

Chairman*

Secretary*

*Signature on File

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.