

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

Meeting No. 328

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Friday, February 25, 2022 at the Overton Hotel in Lubbock, Texas.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Patrick L. O’Daniel, Chairman  
Derrelynn Perryman, Vice Chairman  
Pastor Larry D. Miles, Secretary  
Hon. Molly Francis  
Hon. Faith Johnson  
Eric Nichols

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mano DeAyala  
Ambassador Sichan Siv  
Rodney Burrow, M.D.

**WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Kristina Hartman, Superintendent  
Erika Moore  
Jon Lilley  
Varghese Panachakunnil  
Erik Brown  
Robert O’Banion  
Dr. Henry Linley  
Kimberly Calhoun  
Jennifer Williams  
Luann Pickett

**CONVENED**

Chairman Patrick L. O’Daniel convened the meeting of the 328<sup>th</sup> Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Friday, February 25, 2022, at 8:31 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

Mr. Jon Lilley, Division Director of Instruction, introduced Ms. Erika Moore, who is the Panhandle Regional Principal.

Mr. Lilley indicated that it was his honor to introduce Panhandle Regional Principal, Erika Moore. Erika is the assigned campus principal at the Roach campus and Regional Principal for the Allred, Clements, Dalhart, Formby, Jordan, Mechler, Montford, and Wheeler campuses. Ms. Moore has worked for the district for 11 years and has acted as regional principal for six of those years. In her role, she supports the principals, teachers and staff at all Panhandle campuses, ensuring that they have the tools they need to achieve the common goal of empowering students through education.

Mr. Lilley stated that Ms. Moor has a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Principal Certification from Stephen F. Austin University as well as a Master of Science from A&M Commerce. Prior to joining Windham, she worked in public schools as a teacher and counselor for approximately 15 years. According to Erika, her favorite part of her job is watching students succeed.

Mr. Lilley asked the Board to please join him in recognizing Erika on her outstanding dedication and contribution to the district.

The Chairman congratulated Ms. Moore.

Pastor Miles stated that he is in region 5 in the Texas Panhandle, and he relies on Ms. Moore. He said that they are working to expand the Reading is Freedom Program throughout the state, and Principal Moore is always there and always engaged. Pastor Miles stated that he can ask Ms. Moore any question he has and if she doesn't know the answer, she gets him the answer. Pastor Miles expressed his appreciation for Ms. Moore.

Mr. Jon Lilley then introduced Mr. Varghese Panachakunnil, who is the Smith Campus Principal.

Mr. Lilley stated that in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, Mr. Panachakunnil immigrated to the United States from India as an English as a Second Language Student to pursue better educational opportunities. Mr. Panachakunnil has his bachelor's degree in World History from University of Houston, master's degree in Education Administration from Lamar University and holds teaching, principal and superintendent certifications.

Mr. Lilley said that prior to joining Windham in 2020, Mr. Panachakunnil worked in public schools as a teacher, principal, administrator and superintendent. He was born to be a teacher and has even taught martial arts and yoga. His motto is to "Help all his students be college and career ready!"

Mr. Lilley asked the Board to please join him in thanking Mr. Panachakunnil for his dedication and service to the Windham students and staff.

The Chairman congratulated Mr. Panachakunnil.

### **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 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting, appraisers for the 2021-2022 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**

#### **District Improvement Plan**

Superintendent Hartman stated that Windham School District develops and implements an annual District Improvement Plan to assist district and campus staff in improve student performance. In accordance with Texas Education Agency requirements, the purpose of this plan is to ensure students receive high-quality education and close the achievement gap between predetermined standards and those students not meeting the standards. The district improvement plan is developed by key district administrators and myself.

Ms. Hartman said that this year, Windham identified 11 areas for improvement and set goals to enhance those areas. Subsequently, strategies and metrics were established to track achievement of the objectives.

Ms. Hartman stated that the first goal is to provide students with Adult Basic and Secondary Education to improve their academic skills, prepare them to earn a high school equivalency certificate, and increase their potential to obtain employment upon release to their communities. Based on previous data, the district hopes to increase the academic level of completion and high school equivalency pass rates. To meet this goal of increasing academic achievement, instructors and staff will utilize standardized curriculum, education plans, and supplemental materials that align with academic target skills and standards.

Superintendent Hartman reported that the second goal is to provide students with career and technical education in high-demand occupations that results in students receiving an industry certification. This goal will be supported through continual professional development for district staff. WSD is implementing a new strategy that involves new hires shadowing the district's top instructors to provide additional hands-on training to WSD's teachers, ultimately improving student success. Additionally, WSD will continue CTE-specific trainings to student advisors on enrolling students in courses appropriate to their interests, eligibility and employment outlook in their region of community reentry to include careers that require occupational licensing. This year, the district developed a needs assessment and will use staff responses to provide professional development in the identified areas of growth.

The Superintendent said that the third goal is to provide life skills programming that is designed to change student thinking patterns and develop communication skills essential for success in all areas of their lives. The district will increase CHANGES and Cognitive Intervention Program completion rates. The district will continue new hire training and ongoing professional development on the curriculum and effective teaching methods to provide students with a high-quality education. This year, WSD will also identify a more efficient method for measuring the effectiveness of the life skills curriculum. This will allow WSD to ensure students are receiving the best program content, improving overall student success.

Ms. Hartman stated that the fourth goal of the District Improvement Plan is to use technology to enhance student educational achievement. Currently, the district uses computer-assisted instruction to individualize lessons. As part of the Information Technology plan, the IT department will continue to update computer labs with new technology and provide ongoing support to guarantee equipment is operating effectively. Campus principals have developed a schedule that allows all eligible students to receive access to the computer labs on a rotating basis.

Ms. Hartman indicated that WSD has already implemented two strategies for this goal this year. The first is that all academic teachers received a laptop to provide enhanced instruction to students. Campuses also received a new device, called a study buddy, that provides students with supplemental instruction. Similar to a Game Boy, this device allows students to receive individualized, multimedia instruction and take exams. Teachers can then record the information using their new laptops. Additionally, the district will continue to implement computer-based testing for the Test of Adult Basic Education. The district has a goal this year that 75% of all campuses will use the computer-based version of the test. This will increase result time and provide faster feedback to students and teachers in the district.

Superintendent Hartman stated that to improve student achievement, the district will continue to implement strategies, programs, and models related to behavior and learning supports for students under the age of 22. For example, this year, the district will implement the music appreciation course curriculum on three new WSD campuses. Programs such as this will increase enrollment and success of students under the age of 22.

Ms. Hartman reported that the sixth goal is to provide career pathways for students that lead to training and employment opportunities. Students will attend an orientation and take a career interest inventory to determine the career cluster they wish to pursue. Based off this information and their other relevant factors, students will be advised and enrolled in eligible programs. Students who are within five years of release will receive priority enrollment for career and technical education (CTE) programs. This year, the district will pilot standardized career readiness curriculum. This curriculum will teach students the soft skills needed to maintain employment and succeed in their career. Additionally, the district is increasing the number of courses utilizing integrated education and training. This model teaches students career and technical education and related academic education simultaneously to improve retention and understanding of material.

The Superintendent stated that the district also will improve and implement processes to increase employment of former students. WSD will establish new and expand existing partnerships with outside businesses, agencies and employers to assist with pre- and post-release, in collaboration with TDCJ's Reentry division. Through committees and surveys, the district will evaluate current programs and processes to develop improvements to curriculum and services provided to students.

Superintendent Hartman said that the seventh goal is to provide instruction for students to improve academic skills and prepare them for successful completion of the high school diploma program for the younger students. In compliance with House Bill 30, the district will provide standardized instruction to qualified students to help them meet their graduation requirements and earn their high school diploma. The first graduation of WSD's high school program has been scheduled.

Ms. Hartman reported that the eighth goal is to increase instructional services provided to students by filling vacant staff and teacher positions through appropriate recruitment and retention efforts. WSD will expand recruiting through social media and community-based efforts.

The Superintendent stated that the ninth goal is to provide programming employing varied instructional strategies to serve all students. To achieve this goal, WSD will develop processes to provide holistic education to effectively serve various populations. For example, the district will provide a civics lesson to each campus every month to increase student knowledge about their civil rights and responsibilities. WSD will continually assess and expand existing programs such as Family Literacy, Restrictive Housing, and English as a Second Language.

Ms. Hartman said that the tenth goal is to support the high school program through technology needs. To meet this goal, WSD will assess, implement and maintain computer labs, equipment and connectivity for students. Students need this technology to achieve their high school credits to obtain their high school diploma. WSD just signed a contract with the University of Texas for online learning for the district's high school students.

Ms. Hartman stated that the final goal is to improve district operations through the acquisition of goods and services through sound fiscal management and compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and internal policies and procedures. This will be accomplished by requiring all campuses and departments to utilize the appropriate options to purchase goods and services while being financially responsible with district funds. This year, the district is in the process of developing, implementing, and training staff on a procurement card policy. Additionally, the district is evaluating bulk purchases and warehouse options to save the district money on frequently purchased items. Ms. Hartman thanked Robert O'Banion, WSD Chief Financial Officer, for bringing together the focus group. She indicated that positive feedback has been received.

Superintendent Hartman concluded that through these goals, the district will develop new and improve existing processes, procedures, and programs to increase student success.

Ms. Hartman paused for any questions. There were none.

Eric Nichols indicated that a number of the goals were related to vocational and technical training and certification. Mr. Nichols asked Ms. Hartman how the WSD goals dovetail into the efforts being made within the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation to ensure that the students going into these programs have genuine opportunities out in the communities once they rejoin the free world.

Superintendent Hartman stated that one of the goals mentioned was related to professional development for WSD student advisors to ensure that the appropriate students are being enrolled in programs that require occupational licensing. WSD will examine the student's histories, and TDLR has been gracious in providing the district with solid training through their attorneys on areas that may be of concern.

Ms. Hartman said that WSD will have those discussions with students and ensure that they are being steered in the correct direction for an area of training that is of interest to them that is of high growth in their community of return, and also that they will be eligible in.

Mr. Nichols thanked Ms. Hartman.

## **REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN, WSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **Academic Teacher Focus Group**

Chairman O'Daniel stated that this school year, Windham School District is establishing subject-area focus groups to increase communication for staff, boost employee morale and improve operations across the district. One of the newly developed teams is the Academic Teacher Focus Group. Specifically, this group will collaborate to assess challenges and develop potential solutions to promote positive changes within the district as it relates to academic instruction.

The Chairman said that the focus group will consist of ten teachers, one representing each region, and will be led by the district's Academic Teacher of the Year. All teachers in the district had the chance to apply for the focus group. Currently, applications are being reviewed to select a team of academic teachers with diverse backgrounds and expertise. Even if not selected for the focus group, teachers will have the opportunity to discuss ideas and opinions with their regional representative, providing teachers a new forum to voice any thoughts, concerns and suggestions to improve the district.

Chairman O'Daniel said that the Academic Teacher Focus Group will meet multiple times a year by Zoom and in different geographical regions. During these meetings, the team will focus on improving existing processes and procedures, developing new concepts and executing suggestions to enhance the district. Additionally, the focus group will have the opportunity to review, discuss and provide suggestions on new district priorities and projects prior to implementation. This allows experts in the field to provide feedback prior to administration rolling out new endeavors.

The Chairman reported that Academic Teacher of the Year, Teresa Cairo, will lead the team. Ms. Cairo, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, is the lead literacy teacher at the Dominguez State Jail in San Antonio. An esteemed instructor, her teaching model is to accommodate the diversity of learning styles in her classroom. To make the lessons more meaningful, Ms. Cairo connects the students to the content by relating it to their personal lives. She has proven that clarifying materials in unique ways ensures her students not only understand the information, but achieve higher retention levels. Because of her teaching and leadership skills, Ms. Cairo was selected to lead the focus group.

The Chairman concluded that Windham teachers and staff are a wealth of knowledge with diverse experiences and ideas. The Academic Teacher Focus Group is designed to provide more opportunities for instructor feedback, improve new and existing processes and procedures, and increase communication throughout the district. Ultimately, through these focus groups, Windham can capitalize on teachers' expertise to improve the district and increase student success.

### **SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION PRESENTATION**

Erika Moore, WSD Panhandle Regional Principal, stated that eleven years ago, she applied to Windham School District after her friends told her it was the "best kept secret in Texas school districts." On her initial visit to the Roach Campus in 2010, everyone was so friendly and welcoming, that she immediately accepted the Counseling position when it was offered to me. Ms. Moore has worked for the district ever since, eventually promoting to Principal and Regional Principal.

Ms. Moore said that one of the first students she met was an older gentleman, who was supported through Special Education. He desperately wanted to earn his High School Equivalency, and in 2016, he finally earned his High School Equivalency. Not only was this exciting for him, but for Ms. Moore as well as she had the pleasure of supporting him as both his Student Advisor and his Principal. This was an exciting day to be a Windham Principal, and she was honored to hand him his High School Equivalency certificate. He has since transferred to the Clements campus where he completed Diesel Mechanics in January 2019. During this time, he wrote Ms. Moore a letter thanking me for believing in him and supporting him through the process. He was able to return home in November 2020.

Ms. Moore said that it is moments like this that truly highlight the importance of Windham School District. And, although the pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges to the district over these past two years, WSD has continuously worked together to rise above these obstacles and propel the district's students to success. For Ms. Moore's region, specifically, she's had numerous exciting moments this year. They established the family literacy program at the Clements Campus, with one cohort completing the program and another class close to completion. At the Roach Campus, they graduated the first pipefitting class where students successfully learned Trigonometry along with basic welding skills. At the Formby/Wheeler campus, they established a student of the month for each class where these well-deserving students get a picture as recognition for their hard work.

Ms. Moore stated that these achievements, to name a few, are in great part to the Windham School District Board of Trustees. The unwavering support and infinite wisdom allow the district to rise above any challenge, empower WSD students and provide excellence in education.

Ms. Moore said that in celebration of School Board Appreciation Month, WSD would like to share a video tribute honoring the esteemed Windham School District Board of Trustees.

#### SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION VIDEO PLAYED

The Chairman thanked Ms. Moore for the kind remarks and the wonderful video presentation.

The Chairman asked the Board if there were any questions.

Mr. Nichols stated that the Board can do what they can do provide support, but it is truly the women and men on the front lines who are doing the work. He said that in a recent tour, it really struck him to see a teacher in a classroom express an appropriate amount of emotion when the Chair asked her why she is committed to the work that she does and the level of engagement that you could visibly see and feel between that teacher and her students. Mr. Nicholes said that the Board appreciates the appreciation, but they recognize where the real work is being done.

#### **DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REVISION OF WSD BOARD POLICY 07.11, “LEAVES AND ABSENCES”**

Erik Brown, General Counsel, said that although there are a large amount of revisions, the only substantive policy change is the removal of number of state personal leave days an employee may take consecutively. This revision provides principals the discretion to allow employees to enjoy earned leave, as appropriate, while considering the affect of the employees absence on campus operations. The remainder of the revisions were made for conciseness, clarity, organization, and to resolve contextual errors. Mr. Brown paused for questions. There were none.

Chairman O’Daniel asked the board for a motion.

*Derrelynn Perryman moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the revision of the WSD Board Policy WBP-07.11, “Leaves and Absences” as presented.*

*Pastor Larry D. Miles seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.*

#### **DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REVISION OF WSD BOARD POLICY 07.12, “COMPENSATORY TIME AND OVERTIME”**

Erik Brown, General Counsel, stated that this policy is being revised without a substantive policy change. Instead, all revisions were made for conciseness, clarity, organization, and to resolve any



contextual errors. Mr. Brown 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-07.12, “Compensatory Time and Overtime” as presented.*

*Molly Francis 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 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 in Austin, Texas.

**ADJOURNED**

There being no further business for the regular session, Chairman O’Daniel adjourned the 328<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Windham School District Board of Trustees at 9:05 a.m.

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Chairman

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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.*