

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

Meeting No. 330

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Friday, June 24, 2022 at the DoubleTree Hotel in McAllen, Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Pastor Larry D. Miles, Secretary

WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kristina Hartman, Superintendent
Maria LaTorre
Ted Watts
Jon Lilley
Erik Brown

CONVENED

Chairman Patrick L. O’Daniel convened the meeting of the 330th Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Friday, June 24, 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, indicated that it was his honor to introduce Ms. Maria LaTorre, who is the principal of the Lopez and Segovia Campuses. Ms. LaTorre initiated her career as an administrative assistant with the Windham School District. Passionate about the

goals and mission of the district, Ms. LaTorre decided to pursue a degree in education. Ms. LaTorre achieved her teaching degree and began her instructional career as an Elementary Generalist. She is also certified in Bilingual / ESL (Spanish).

Mr. Lilley said Ms. LaTorre taught 4th grade at Los Fresnos ISD and Sinton ISD. During her time with Sinton ISD, she continued her professional development and earned her certification as a speech and language therapist. This allowed her to provide therapy to Autistic and Behavioral Unit students. Ms. LaTorre then returned to TDCJ as a Parole Instructor. Acknowledging that her passion was in education, she secured a position with Windham School District teaching at the McConnell Campus, and then transferred to Garza East. After obtaining her Masters as Instructional Leader, she was promoted to Lead Teacher at the Beeville Campuses.

Mr. Lilley said that in 2013, Ms. LaTorre was selected as the Principal of the Lopez and Segovia campuses in Edinburg. She has also served the district as a Regional Principal. Ms. LaTorre's goal is to encourage her teachers in professional growth. The continual achievement from their students is the driving force. The goal is to empower Windham students with employable techniques and certifications, in an effort to reintegrate them successfully into society.

Mr. Lilley asked the Board to please join him in recognizing Ms. LaTorre for her hard work.

The Chairman congratulated Ms. LaTorre.

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 April 22, 2022 meeting, 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

High School Program Updates

Superintendent Hartman said that in the 87th session, the Texas Legislature passed and provided funding for House Bill 30 (HB30), which requires WSD to offer a high school diploma program to eligible students. The interim charges for the legislation relate to overseeing program implementation. Ms. Hartman said that she is happy to announce the district reached new milestones in its high school program this school year. The district expanded the program, established dual enrollment with local colleges and graduated its first class of students. With these updates, the district is able to better serve young learners on their journey to a high school diploma (HSD).

Superintendent Hartman stated the district expanded the high school program to the Woodman Campus, an all-women's facility in Gatesville. Previously, Windham partnered with Mullin

Independent School District, a local school district, to provide high school services to eligible students at a campus for women. With the launch of this new program at Woodman, the district will absorb students from the Mullin ISD program. Therefore, in the fall, students from San Saba who were attending the Mullin ISD will be transferred to Woodman to continue toward their high school diploma with Windham. The district had a similar partnership with Lometa ISD providing high school services to male students at Hughes. Starting in the fall, these students will transfer to the Matthew Gaines High School at the Ferguson campus to continue their educational journey. WSD thanks their partner districts for serving students while WSD was in the process of developing the program. Students will now have greater access to technology and dedicated resources through the established WSD programs. The fall semester for both campuses will begin on August 8th.

Ms. Hartman said to increase educational services, the district partners with two local colleges to provide dual enrollment opportunities for high school students. With these agreements, students take college level academic courses and earn both high school and college credits. The district established a partnership with Lee College to provide dual credit to the Matthew Gaines High School students and is developing a partnership with Central Texas College to provide dual credit to the students located at Woodman.

The Superintendent said in April, the district hosted its inaugural commencement ceremony for the first graduates of the Matthew Gaines High School at the Ferguson Campus. These students earned their required credits and passed their end of course exams to graduate with their high school diploma. The ceremony honored the high school graduates, to include one who was in attendance via Zoom, as well as approximately 60 other students who earned their high school equivalency or a career and technical education certification. The district was honored to have Chairman O'Daniel, Vice Chairman Perryman, TDCJ Executive Director Bryan Collier and State Representative James Talarico address the graduates and congratulate them on their success.

Ms. Hartman said before she concludes her report, she would like to show a video highlighting the Matthew Gaines High School program and graduation.

VIDEO PLAYED

The Chairman thanked Ms. Hartman and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN, WSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

College Collaboration

Chairman O'Daniel said recognizing the importance of serving students within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) through effective partnerships and programs, Windham School District, TDCJ's Rehabilitation Programs Division (RPD), colleges across Texas, Texas Appleseed and agencies collaborated to improve opportunities for incarcerated students. On May 18, 2022, approximately 100 representatives from these entities met to discuss successes,

challenges, solutions and high-interest topics related to postsecondary education. The theme of the meeting, “Let’s Talk About the Possibilities,” centered around innovative practices and ideas to enhance students’ educational experiences and futures.

The Chairman said the meeting featured guest presentations from state agencies focused on workforce. Dr. Tina Jackson, Assistant Commissioner of Workforce for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, presented on the shifting postsecondary workforce education landscape in Texas. She explained to participants the importance of attaining postsecondary credentials of value that will propel graduates into successful careers, with great earning potential, and low debt. The Coordinating Board is also focusing on ensuring equity and that all Texans have opportunities to succeed.

Chairman O’Daniel said Dr. Kerry Ballast, Deputy Division Director of Workforce Education for the Texas Workforce Commission, discussed the future of the labor market. She explained 10-year projections, including the fastest growing occupations in Texas. She provided participants resources on labor market for them to use to ensure program alignment to workforce trends.

The Chairman stated leaders from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation, including Executive Director Mike Arismendez, spoke to participants about occupational licensing. During their presentation, they explained the process for graduates to obtain occupational licenses. TDLR representatives used the agreement with Windham School District and TDCJ to highlight current processes in place to ensure that potential students are screened for suitability in regulated occupations prior to enrolling in and completing training.

Chairman O’Daniel said Windham School District Superintendent Kristina Hartman discussed key topics in correctional education including terminology, integrated education and training (IET), services for students with disabilities and those in restrictive housing, articulation agreements, dual enrollment and prior learning credits. She highlighted collaborations WSD established with colleges to provide students innovative educational services, and the desire for Windham School District students to pursue postsecondary training.

The Chairman reported that Oscar Mendoza, TDCJ’s Deputy Executive Director, provided participants with a motivational presentation on innovation, progress and his journey with the agency along with the positive impacts of education for staff, students and community. He thanked all attendees on behalf of TDCJ and was a crowd favorite!

Chairman O’Daniel said Dr. Brandon Warren, Director of Reentry Services at Lee College Huntsville Center, elaborated on the college’s reentry services. During his presentation, he explained the resources offered to both current students and alumni, and shared his personal story of success.

The Chairman stated Vera Institute of Justice representative, Allen Wachendorfer, updated participants on the changes related to the reinstatement of Pell eligibility for incarcerated students that will take effect in July of 2023. He explained negotiated rulemaking and best practices for postsecondary education processes. Noteworthy points included the removal of

barriers such as the length of sentence requirements, ineligibility for specific convictions and defaulted loans. Mr. Wachendorfer's expertise gave participants a unique insight into the future of Pell.

The Chairman said prior to the meeting, a survey was distributed to attendees to gain feedback on current efforts, challenges, and suggested improvements. The meeting ended with facilitated discussion about the survey results. This session, led by Dr. Amanda Hernandez, Communications Administrator, provided attendees a forum to explore possibilities for the future of postsecondary education in corrections. Pennie Kempt and Tim Jones of RPD supported and interacted with participants and took note of audience suggestions for postsecondary process improvements.

The Chairman Concluded the meeting was well-received by participants. A second meeting will be held in September 2022 to continue collaboration amongst the entities and advancing postsecondary opportunities for students.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION PRESENTATION

Ted Watts, Career and Technical Education (CTE) Administrator, stated that Windham School District hosted its second annual CTE conference in May. CTE teachers, principals and student advisors were in attendance. Held in Waco, the theme of the conference was "Piecing the Puzzle Together: Education, Employment, Empowerment."

Mr. Watts stated that the conference kicked off with a welcome by WSD Superintendent Kristina J. Hartman. In her opening statement, Superintendent Hartman highlighted successes from the previous year and opportunities for the future. She provided statistics on the impact CTE courses have on recidivism and briefed attendees on the district's expansion of workforce initiatives to further enhance employment opportunities for students. As the CTE Administrator, Mr. Watts indicated that he also welcomed participants to the conference and thanked them for their hard work and dedication to the district's students.

Mr. Watts said that the district was excited to have two state agencies address participants. Dr. Lacy Freeman, Texas Education Agency Statewide CTE Coordinator, discussed best practices and aligning CTE programs with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, also known as TEKS. Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation representative Art Arevalo provided an overview of occupational licenses. This information is valuable to CTE teachers, principals and student advisors as it guides staff on enrolling eligible students in appropriate classes that meet occupational licenses criteria.

Mr. Watts said that Brandon Chrostowski, founder, president and CEO of Edwins Leadership & Restaurant Institute, was the keynote speaker on the first day. Mr. Chrostowski, a renowned chef, is dedicated to providing second chance opportunities for those impacted by the criminal justice system. In his talk, he told participants stories of hope, second chances and encouragement. Jeremy Anderson, author and motivational speaker, was the keynote speaker of the second day. Mr. Anderson discussed the important role teachers play in students' lives and how to take their

teaching to the “next level.”

Mr. Watts said that the conference also hosted guest speakers. Daron Shiflet, representative from Horseshoe Bay, detailed job opportunities and unique benefits related to the company, including housing opportunities for former students. National Center for Construction Education and Research representative Matt Clark spoke about standards, expectations and online testing.

Mr. Watts said on the second day, participants attended designated tracks related to their field. CTE teachers attended special tracks hosted by industry specialists. Additionally, one breakout session featured a tour of Texas State Technical College, a public technical college offering associate degrees and certificates in technical skills and trades.

Mr. Watts concluded the last day featured a panel discussion with four former Windham CTE students and an employer partner. These students all took CTE courses and obtained employment in their trained field. During the panel, students answered questions related to their second chance journey. They detailed the impact of their education, explained the process of finding a job post release, and noted the challenges and successes they’ve experienced since returning to their communities. As the ending session, the panel left attendees feeling hopeful and ready to continue empowering students.

Mr. Watts paused for questions. Mr. DeAyala thanked Mr. Watts for the presentation and said hats off to Windham for the CTE program that has been built over the years. He indicated that the Board hears nothing but good things, great results, and reduction in recidivism. Mr. DeAyala indicated the local school boards want to expand their CTE programs. He said he gives them Superintendent Hartman’s phone number for guidance.

OVERVIEW OF THE WSD ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Jon Lilley, Division Director Instruction, stated it was his privilege to share with the Board the WSD annual report highlighting last school year from September 1, 2020-August 31, 2021.

Highlights included:

- The Windham School District serves a population of incarcerated students who have not completed their basic education in the past and others who need technical training and soft skills to better equip them for the future.
- The annual report indicated that many of WSD students dropped out in the 9th or 10th grade, have an average academic functioning level of 5th grade when they join Windham classes.
- More than 55,000 students with varying educational backgrounds received educational services from the district in SY21.

- At WSD, prospective students begin their educational journey through an evaluation and placement process to guide students on the best programming to fit their needs.
- As part of the evaluation process, students' complete assessments to determine their educational level.
- Last school year, the district provided academic courses to 23, 368 students. WSD implemented new software and curriculum that better aligns to the current Adult Education Standards. These tools help students successfully obtain their high school equivalency (HSE) certificates.
- Specifically this school year, 77% of the students tested achieved their HSE.
- The district offers a wide variety of services to meet the various needs of students to ensure they receive proper education and training. Specifically, the district employs measures to effectively teach students with disabilities, individuals who receive special education services, youth and young adults, and students who are in restrictive housing.
- In the 20-21 school year, WSD launched a pilot to serve new populations of students. The finding, understanding through using resources and education (FUTURE) program provides educational services to students in restrictive housing.
- Students in this program have the opportunity to earn an HSE certificate and prepare themselves for future opportunities.
- In its inaugural year, Windham School District's Matthew Gaines High School opened to success as eligible students passed their End of Course exams and earned their High School Diploma.
- WSD offers three life skills programs, with at least one program offered at all campuses.
- CHANGES is a 180-hour life skills program for students who are within two years of projected release. In SY 2020-2021, over 20,000 students participated in the program.
- Cognitive Intervention Program, also known as CIP, is a 150-hour program that teaches students to examine and change thinking that leads to criminal behavior. The report noted that over 16,000 students participated in the program.
- The district's communication-based, interactive parenting program is designed to help students develop healthy family relationships. This school year, 1,366 students participated in the program.
- In SY20-21, Windham School District established a Family Literacy Program focused on breaking the cycle of generational incarceration by providing incarcerated parents opportunities to become active partners in their children's lives and education.
- Windham School District's accountability system tracks campus and district performance on critical measures and provides administrators and educators with vital data to ensure effective performance.
- The district used seven metrics to determine accountability ratings in the 2020-2021 school year. All measures are weighted and averaged together to determine the final grade for each campus.

- Industry training and soft skills are two vital factors to obtaining and maintaining a job. Windham School District's career and technical education programs provide these services to graduates so they have the necessary skills and experience to succeed in today's workforce. In the 2020-2021 school year, 19,534 industry-certifications were awarded.
- The district offers more than 40 programs with curriculum that provides graduates with a well-rounded education. The district added seven new courses last school year to meet industry needs.
- WSD established an Urban Farming program to teach students the necessary skills to obtain future employment and meet increasing demands. In 2021, the program achieved a new milestone becoming the first program to receive an endorsement from the Aquaponics Association, an international non-profit organization dedicated to expanding the practice of aquaponics through education, advocacy and connections.
- Due to COVID-19, RV technician was the third fastest growing job in the United States in 2020. Recognizing this demand, Windham School District established a new RV service technician program through our partnership with the RV Technical Institute (RVTI) in 2020.
- During the school year, students graduated with the RV Technician Level One certificate. This was the first RVTI cohort of all women to graduate and the first cohort in a correctional setting to graduate in the country.
- Windham School District is giving students a chance to create beautiful lives for themselves through its new cosmetology program. In the 2020-2021 school year, the district started the new program at Mountain View, an all-women's campus in Gatesville, Texas to prepare students for a gainful career in cosmetology upon release to their communities.
- Windham School District offers eligible students opportunities to earn job experience through a workforce partnership with the TDCJ Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Logistics Division.
- In school year 2020-2021, 464 registered apprentices across 26 occupations were registered with the Department of Labor.
- Last school year, the district hosted two conferences and multiple professional development opportunities across the state.
- WSD also hosted the annual Correctional Education Association's (CEA) International Conference. Approximately 200 Windham educators and administrators attended the conference along with educators across the country to discuss innovative ideas and best practices in correctional education.
- The administration staff at the Windham School District works diligently behind the scenes to help campuses across the state. These key staff members provide the necessary support and resources for educators to help students reach their full potential. The

districts' divisions of Instruction and Operations collaborate consistently to ensure district success.

- Additionally, the district partners with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and other state agencies and external partners to create new opportunities for WSD students.
- This year, the district was honored to recognize Teresa Cairo from the Dominguez State Jail as the Academic Teacher of the Year and Ronnie Tanner from the Boyd Campus as the Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year.
- Additionally, the district awarded Felicia Johnson from the Coffield Campus as Principal of the Year, Cindy Young from the Gist Campus as Support Staff of the Year, and Daryl McEwen from the Middleton Campus as Student Advisor of the Year.

Mr. Lilley concluded that the district is pleased to highlight the progress and efforts detailed in this report. It is through these innovative services the district is able to empower students and transform lives through education. By spearheading new opportunities and evolving existing programs, the district provides students with high-quality education that will better their future and inspire students to achieve their educational, professional and personal goals.

Mr. Lilley paused for questions.

Ambassador Siv requested more information regarding the Family Literacy Program. Mr. Lilley indicated that he will provide this information to the Board and that the program has been very successful.

Honorable Faith Johnson indicated that the information provided is very vital.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Lilley for the update.

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REVISION OF WSD BOARD POLICY 07.39, "AT WILL EMPLOYMENT"

Erik Brown, General Counsel, stated that this policy was reviewed in the regular course of policy reviews and proposed revisions contain no change to Windham's operations. Instead, the revisions were made to update language, reorganize text, and provide clarity. Mr. Brown paused for questions. There were none.

Chairman O'Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Mano DeAyala moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the revision of the WSD Board Policy WBP-07.39, "At Will Employment".

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

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REVISION OF WSD BOARD POLICY 07.57, “DISTRICT TECHNICAL EDUCATION TEACHING PERMIT”

Erik Brown, General Counsel, stated that the title was changed to correspond with the title of our career and technical education program. All other revisions were made for organization, clarity, and conciseness. Mr. Brown paused for questions. There were none.

Derrellynn Perryman moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the revision of the WSD Board Policy WBP-07.57, “District Technical Education Teaching Permit”.

Eric Nichols 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, August 26, 2022 in Galveston, Texas.

ADJOURNED

There being no further business for the regular session, Chairman O’Daniel adjourned the 330th meeting of the Windham School District Board of Trustees at 9:09 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.