

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

Meeting No. 336

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Friday, June 23rd, 2023 at the Plaza Hotel Pioneer Park in El Paso, Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kristina Hartman, Superintendent
Robert O’Banion
Erik Brown
Danielle Nicholes
Mario Cotton
Ofelia Jimenez
Norma Castañon
Yvonne Vasquez
Efren Navarro
Ruben Sambrano
Martha Estrada
John Noriz
Rita Rosales
Christa Madera
Lizzeth Medina
Juan Blanco
Maria Diaz
Wendy Dorado
Estela Ibarra
Raymond Arias
Joshua Coppock

CONVENED

Chairman Patrick L. O’Daniel convened the meeting of the 336th Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Friday, June 23rd, 2023, at 8:18 a.m. in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the *Open Meetings Act*. A quorum was present and

the meeting was declared open. 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

Mrs. Ofelia Jimenez, Sanchez campus principal, recognized four Windham employees for their outstanding performances.

Mrs. Jimenez began the recognitions with Norma Castañon. She said that Mrs. Castañon has always attributed her work ethic and values to the environment in which she was raised. A Native El Pasoan, she said Mrs. Castañon mirrors her community in the way that she values unity and hard work. She is the proud eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Aguilar and is supported and loved by her husband of 30 years, as well as her three amazing children.

Mrs. Jimenez said previously a certified optician for over 11 years, in 1997, Mrs. Castañon carried these skills with her to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, serving the agency for over five years. Mrs. Jimenez stated while others may have shied away from such a 360-career turn, Mrs. Castañon dove headfirst. During her tenure, she has consistently gone above and beyond each of her roles. Mrs. Jimenez said Mrs. Castañon not only gets the job done, but also uses her exceptional creativity to figure out how to improve a position for the next person, always keeping in mind the success of the team.

Mrs. Jimenez said Mrs. Castañon has served the state for over 26 years in multiple roles. In 2002, she joined Windham School District where she served as a Testing Clerk, a Testing Specialist, and now as an Assistant Librarian. Notably, Mrs. Castañon was recognized as a Spanish Interpreter for over 20 years as she served in each of these roles. Mrs. Castañon accomplished this all while simultaneously obtaining her Bachelors of Science in Business and raising a family full-time.

Mrs. Jimenez stated as you look along the library walls, you will see inspirational quotes and poems that are just small examples of the intentionality Mrs. Castañon puts into her work. Mrs. Jimenez said their campus, department, and state are better because of all the gifts she has dedicated to her work.

Mrs. Jimenez asked the Board to please join her in congratulating Mrs. Castañon for her hard work and dedication to Windham School District.

Mrs. Castañon thanked the Board for allowing her to speak. She stated she is very grateful to be within her career. She said she encourages everyone to take and reinvent themselves constantly, which she attributes to getting her where she is today. She thanked the Board and Superintendent Hartman for providing their support.

Chairman O'Daniel congratulated Mrs. Castañon on an outstanding performance and career with Windham.

Superintendent Hartman commented that much like public school systems, Windham School District has an accountability rating system, A through F like a school grade. Ms. Hartman stated that it is very hard to become an A campus, and that the Sanchez campus achieved A campus status. She said that Mrs. Castañon's recognition would be the inaugural photograph in front of the new Windham seal, developed by students at Windham's Hilltop campus.

Next, Mrs. Jimenez recognized Yvonne Vasquez, the Sanchez campus Academic Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Jimenez said Ms. Vasquez was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. She is the eighth child of 10, and the first in her family to earn a college degree. Ms. Vasquez has been married for 35 years, has four children and eight grandchildren.

Mrs. Jimenez said in 2013, Ms. Vasquez earned her bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Phoenix. She said employed with TDCJ for nearly two years as an assistant mailroom supervisor, Ms. Vasquez then went on to earn her EC-6 Generalist Teaching certification. In 2014, Ms. Vasquez joined the Windham School District. While working with Windham, Ms. Vasquez has taught Literacy I reading, Literacy I-II reading, the Cognitive Intervention Program and CHANGES. She is currently a Title 1 teacher at the Sanchez campus.

Mrs. Jimenez asked the Board to please join her in thanking Ms. Vasquez for her dedication to Windham.

Ms. Vasquez said she would like to thank Windham for taking a chance and hiring a non-educator nine years ago. She said she has appreciated the opportunity to allow herself to grow and accept others for what they've gone through. She said Windham is giving chances, and that her job has improved her family's life and herself on a personal level. Once again, she thanked Windham.

Chairman O'Daniel congratulated Mrs. Vasquez on an outstanding job. He commented that working for Windham is a nontraditional career to serve as an example to others.

Next, Mrs. Jimenez recognized Efren Navarro, the Sanchez campus Life Skills Teacher of the Year. She said Mr. Navarro began his career with Windham in 2022 as the Literacy I/II teacher for GED Prep. He then transitioned to teach the Cognitive Intervention Program at the Sanchez Campus in El Paso.

Mrs. Jimenez said this is Mr. Navarro's 30th year in education. Prior to joining Windham, he taught in various school districts in Texas to include El Paso ISD, Clint ISD, Socorro ISD and Seguin ISD. He has experience in all levels of education from elementary to high school. Mr. Navarro is married, a proud father, and an even prouder grandfather of four.

Mrs. Jimenez asked the Board to please join her in thanking Mr. Navarro for his dedication to Windham School District and to the Sanchez campus.

Mr. Navarro said Windham has been the best teaching experience he's ever had. He said he appreciates his team, his wife, his family and friends, as well as his students. Mr. Navarro said they are what makes him do what he does, and he loves his job. He thanked the Board and Superintendent Hartman for giving him the opportunity.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Navarro for a great job.

Finally, Mrs. Jimenez recognized Ruben Sambrano, Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year. She stated that Mr. Sambrano was born and raised in El Paso, Texas and is the youngest of five children. Mr. Sambrano is married and has two beautiful daughters, ages 17 and 23. He earned his bachelor's degree in accounting and a Master of Business Association with a minor in Human Resources from the University of Phoenix. In addition, Mr. Sambrano has completed coursework in adult education.

Mrs. Jimenez said Mr. Sambrano has been an educator for over 19 years. He previously worked as a job coach specializing in vocational training serving special needs children with the Ysleta Independent School District. Mrs. Jimenez said Mr. Sambrano also held roles as an instructor for both the trades and business departments for Anamarc College, Park University at El Paso and Vista College.

Mrs. Jimenez stated Mr. Sambrano joined the Windham School District as the Electrical Trades Teacher for the Sanchez campus in December 2021.

Mrs. Jimenez asked the Board to please join her in congratulating Mr. Sambrano on all of his accomplishments.

Mr. Sambrano thanked the Board and Superintendent Hartman for allowing him to work within the district. He said he has enjoyed it and has learned how to guide his students to begin their careers and discover another route. He stated he has been inspired to teach his students how to work in the electrical field, do basic construction skills and see them grow. Once again, he thanked the Board.

Chairman O'Daniel congratulated Mr. Sambrano.

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 21st, 2023 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

Windham's Intern Program

Superintendent Hartman said over the last several years, Windham School District has helped college and university students create a starting point in their careers as they prepare to enter the workforce. Through Windham's Intern program, these individuals are given the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in their fields of training and provide extensive support to the district and staff. Several Windham departments, including Communications, Information Technology (IT) and Library Services, utilize intern positions to further their department's outreach and support.

Ms. Hartman said Windham is proud to welcome current or recently graduated students studying from various universities and colleges as they begin exploring potential career options. These students must be studying within or have knowledge of the field in which they are applying. Ms. Hartman said this year-long internship is a wonderful opportunity for these individuals to apply what they have learned in the classroom, obtain hands-on job experience and establish a foundation with Windham that could potentially lead to a full-time position.

Superintendent Hartman stated that interns within the Communications department are given knowledge and experience in areas such as graphic design, marketing, social media, writing and interview tactics. Communications interns provide extensive support in completing projects, including the district's Annual Performance Report, regular press releases and covering district functions for photo and video graphics. They also support staff with the task of creating eye-catching and innovative social media graphics, to further Windham's message across all district social media platforms. The most recent Communications intern, Shelby McVey, Texas A&M University graduate, accepted a full-time position with Windham in January of 2023 as a Communications Coordinator after completing her internship with Windham.

Ms. Hartman said the Library Services department gives interns the opportunity to become familiar with the categorization and cataloging of the district's library records. The interns learn and sharpen their cataloging skills, which could then aid them to become eligible for a permanent library position with Windham or in the community.

Superintendent Hartman stated that the IT department links practical work within the field to what interns are learning in the classroom by assigning tasks such as maintaining computers, inventory and installing software. Windham works closely with associated universities to allow IT interns to earn coursework credit through their daily job functions in order to meet graduation requirements. By introducing the interns to important fundamentals such as work-place ethics and employee responsibility, the program helps establish the interns as a professional foundation. The district's IT department currently has four interns, with two recently graduating and beginning the job-search and potential selection process with Windham. Encouraged by his supervisors and peers to apply for a full-time position after completing his internship with the district, Mario Zavala, Help Desk Technician, credits Windham for giving him the confidence needed to enter the workforce after becoming familiar with the work environment and job responsibilities. Ms. Hartman added that the staff from across the campuses often comment that

Mario Zavala is the Employee of the Year among the administration building for all the help that he provides.

Superintendent Hartman said Windham's Intern program has been an overall reliable source for helping fill staffing shortages and introducing a new world of career opportunities to prospective students and recent graduates. Many interns, including Library Services and IT, are students or recent graduates of Sam Houston State University located in Huntsville. Interns often bring fresh insight and ideas to Windham, helping the district grow and incorporate progressive strategies, and we look forward to expanding this program to other departments to further elevate future projects. Ms. Hartman said for example, it was just approved to create some intern positions within Windham's High School program and an administrative assistant intern program. Through the district's efforts, interns are gaining the confidence to enter the workforce successfully as well-rounded and educated individuals within their fields of training. The Intern program allows Windham's mission to be spread through innovative minds, furthering the message of the work the district is doing to support the district's students and Texas communities. Ms. Hartman said she knows that she can speak for all of the departments when she says that Windham's interns are incredibly valued, and the work that they do daily does not go unnoticed.

This concluded her report, and Ms. Hartman paused for questions.

Judge Molly Francis asked Ms. Hartman if Windham is only utilizing interns in one location, or if they are utilized across the district. Ms. Hartman said that the IT, Library Services and Communications interns are located in Huntsville. She stated the current open Communications intern position is telework eligible. The high school teacher intern positions will be located at the Ferguson campus located in Midway and the Woodman campus located in Gatesville.

Mr. Nichols said that it appears most of the interns are coming from Sam Houston State University, and asked if there was thought to recruit to others, such as the Houston area schools. Ms. Hartman said that Windham's intern program is fairly new, and the district wanted to ensure a well-established program. She stated that at this point, principals will be speaking at a number of colleges and classes to bring the opportunity of Windham to other universities. She stated that the district welcomes participation from any colleges or universities that may be interested. Ms. Hartman concluded by stating that interns have really helped fulfill some staff shortages, particularly within the IT department.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN, WSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Student Ambassador Program

Chairman O'Daniel said that thorough coordination and planning by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's (TDCJ) Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Logistics (MAL) Division, led to the implementation of Skills Demonstration and Career Expo events, with three having been held to date. Organization and support of these events is supported by various TDCJ Divisions: Reentry and Integration, Facilities, Correctional Institutions, Rehabilitation Programs in

collaboration with postsecondary education institutions, Parole and Windham School District.

Chairman O'Daniel said the first event occurred in October of 2022 at the Wynne unit, the second in April of 2023 at the Hilltop unit and the most recent event in May at the Dominguez unit. At these events, hosted by TDCJ, employers were invited to witness talented students as they showcased their skills learned in Windham Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, college certificate programs and on-the-job within apprenticeship programs. Featured areas of training include welding, culinary, electrical, fiber optics and construction carpentry.

The Chairman stated these events are full of opportunity for both the students and the employers. The employers are able to see and speak with skilled, qualified students that will soon be seeking employment, and the students are given the chance to show that they are educated, trained individuals that are capable of holding meaningful employment. The Skills Demonstration events also allow students to practice interaction and conversation with outside stakeholders. Following these interactive opportunities, employers provided insightful feedback to Windham. They were impressed with the students' skill set and knowledge but expressed that the students were lacking confidence when speaking with them. The industry experts suggested focusing on skills such as a firm hand shake, maintaining eye contact and speaking with a purpose.

Chairman O'Daniel said there have historically been limited opportunities for students to practice communication and confidence with internal and external stakeholders in the prison environment. To address the recommendation of employers, Windham developed the Student Ambassador Program. Each class has a designated student ambassador. When a visitor enters the classroom, the student ambassador is responsible for greeting them at the door, introducing themselves and the teacher, and explaining the class purpose, including the lesson objectives for the day. By implementing the Student Ambassador Program, students are given the opportunity to practice having confident conversations, so they are prepared for interactions in their community upon reentry, including job interviews. Jon Lilley, Division Director of Instruction, said, "The Student Ambassador Program has been a powerful, effective addition to the Windham School District. Giving students the chance to practice the soft skills is essential in preparing them to hold conversations with confidence."

Chairman O'Daniel said that he has gotten to experience the student ambassadors himself, and said it is a game changer to see the confidence that the students have when they're presenting to visitors. The Chairman asked the Board to please enjoy a video demonstrating the program in action.

STUDENT AMBASSADOR VIDEO PLAYED.

The Chairman said he knows that he can speak on behalf of Windham when he says that he is thrilled with the growth in student confidence and said he looks forward to what is yet to come from the Student Ambassador Program. He encouraged his fellow Board members to visit the Windham classrooms and see this program for themselves. He said it changes the environment of the classroom to see students speaking in such confidence.

This concluded his report.

SANCHEZ CAMPUS OVERVIEW

Mrs. Ofelia Jimenez, principal of the Sanchez campus, gave an overview of the Sanchez campus, located in El Paso. Mrs. Jimenez said as Principal of the Rogelio Sanchez State Jail, it was her privilege to provide an overview of their campus. Located in El Paso, they provide academic, life skills and career and technical education, as well as specialty programs to more than 1,100 male students a year to prepare them to reenter Texas communities.

Mrs. Jimenez said specifically, for adult basic education, they teach academics, English as a Second Language, and prepare students to take their High School Equivalency. Their life skills program consists of CHANGES and Cognitive Intervention courses designed to help students change their thinking patterns and develop skills essential for success in all areas of life. Windham also provides specialty services to the campus in the form of Title I support to help students under the age of 22 and assist in their journey of obtaining a High School Equivalency certification or High School Diploma. The Sanchez campus offers special education, as well as the family literacy program, which allows incarcerated parents the opportunities to become active partners in their children's education through parenting curriculum, interactive activities and parent-teacher conferences. Their staff operates a library at the campus to serve residents and provide them with education, fiction and non-fiction books.

Mrs. Jimenez said additionally, they offer Culinary Arts, Electrical Trades, and Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning, or HVAC. With these programs, students have an opportunity to earn third-party industry certifications and learn the occupational skills needed to gain employment upon release to their communities. The Sanchez campus provides On-the-Job Training and Apprenticeship opportunities as well. Through the Apprenticeship program, students gain invaluable experience working in their field, allowing them to earn a Department of Labor certification following completion.

Mrs. Jimenez stated their team consists of 13 teachers and five administrative staff members, who work diligently to help their students and campus succeed. Their campus received an "A" on the accountability rating for the last past two school years and currently maintains a 93 rating for the current school year. Mrs. Jimenez said it is through the hard work of their students and staff that they were able to achieve this distinguished metric. She said personally, she believes their campus success comes from effective and constant communication, a strong and cohesive team and clear and high expectations set for all students and staff members. She said she is proud of the success they have achieved at the Sanchez campus, and she is honored to be leading this team of wonderful educators.

Mrs. Jimenez had her staff stand in the audience to be recognized.

This concluded her report and Mrs. Jimenez paused for any questions.

Chairman O'Daniel stated that he believes it to be the first time to have all members of a campus' staff attend the Board meeting. He thanked the Sanchez staff for attending.

Judge Faith Johnson asked Mrs. Jimenez how her campus compares to others, with their 93% accountability rating. Mrs. Jimenez stated they are ranked number two, and they are working toward ranking at the top.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Mario Cotton, Professional Development Administrator, said the Windham School District Professional Development department works diligently to plan, organize and execute conferences and trainings for Windham staff throughout the year. Within the Professional Development department are education specialists with various areas of focus that work hard to support campuses and curriculum development. The education specialists' areas of focus include academic, life skills, technology, restrictive housing and family literacy. Six additional education specialist positions will be added to the Professional Development team in the future to provide specific, regional technology support. Mr. Cotton said it is because of the dedication and commitment of these individuals that Windham is able to hold innovative, informative professional development opportunities for staff.

Mr. Cotton said these events are coordinated with the purpose of delivering important updates and information, training on best and innovative practices and policies and procedures, and providing opportunities for networking to share ideas, challenges and solutions. With Windham educators and staff spread across the state, Mr. Cotton said these essential events are excellent opportunities for staff to achieve professional growth, collaborate and share best practices in-person. Recently, Windham has held numerous professional development events including the Academic Teacher Conference, trade-specific Career and Technical Education (CTE) forums, Testing Specialists and Clerks training, Special Education training and the Principals' Leadership Academy.

Mr. Cotton stated after thorough planning and preparation, the Academic Teacher Conference was held in May in Waco, Texas for all Windham academic teachers. The three-day conference, spearheaded by Dena Abernathy, Jodi Christie and special support from Sharee Straughter, included leadership updates, guest and keynote speakers and break-out sessions addressing multiple high-interest areas. Dr. Manny Scott, an original Freedom Writer, was the keynote speaker and delivered an inspiring presentation about his life and the impact that educators had on his journey and success today. Break-out sessions included various informational sessions hosted by Windham's education specialists, a small-group instruction workshop focusing on individualized student instruction, a session on teacher self-care hosted by Windham's Recreation and Wellness department, and other outside presenters that offered resourceful tips and tools to Windham educators. Paul Gathright, Instructional Technology Education Specialist, hosted a laptop updates session to ensure all academic teachers' laptops were updated and delivered training on the new resources. Teachers use laptops in the classroom to enhance instruction for students through programs such as the Office Suite for presentations and student assignment management, GED® Test Tutorials to allow students an opportunity to become familiar with the testing format and Kolibri, an online learning platform, to implement instructional videos. Following the event, a survey was distributed to obtain feedback from all attendees including areas of success and potential areas of improvement. Staff expressed immense satisfaction with the keynote speaker and provided suggestions for break-out session

topics for the next conference, which is the Life Skills conference to be spearheaded by Jane Pavelka, Liz Morris and Jerry Brown.

Mr. Cotton said the Professional Development department has also been busy collaborating with the CTE department, arranging trade-specific staff development for Windham CTE instructors. In order to provide training that is geared toward specific industry trades, CTE staff development events were coordinated based on their industry of expertise. This approach allowed the agendas to focus on specific information and resources that will directly benefit the instructors in attendance. Recently, construction trades instructors gathered for three days of informative, collaborative learning. Windham leadership and administrators provided department related updates and training including shop safety, careers in construction and the power of soft skills. The conference concluded with a resounding presentation on Staff Wellness by Todd Whitthorne, Motivational Speaker, and panel-style conversation with former Windham construction students, speaking about their experiences in Windham programming and their journeys since reentering their communities including securing jobs in their field of training and advancing within their respective companies of employment.

Mr. Cotton stated a second trade-specific CTE training was held in May for Windham's automotive instructors. Staff convened to build upon their knowledge and skills through hands-on training. This advantageous opportunity included training by Lab Resources Tech-Lab on technology and equipment that is utilized by the instructors in their classrooms every day in order to prepare their students for success in the automotive industry. In addition, a staff development was held this month for culinary and urban farming instructors. Staff met in Marble Falls, Texas to tour organizations directly related to their area of expertise. Culinary teachers toured the San Antonio Food Bank, and urban farming teachers toured Lone Star farms. All instructors then toured the Horseshoe Bay Resort. Horseshoe Bay is a second chance employer that is interested in hiring qualified Windham alumni upon reentry. Touring the resort allowed instructors to witness first-hand the potential career opportunities available to students upon successful course completion and reentry.

Testing specialists and clerks recently met to receive district and department updates, guidelines on testing procedures, and information on GED® test security presented by the GED® testing service. A representative from the Data Recognition Corporation, vendor for the Test of Adult Basic Education, or TABE®, was also in attendance to speak with staff about adult education assessments and testing. Mr. Cotton said by bringing staff together from across the state, collaborative opportunities are enhanced allowing staff to communicate and connect on job-specific items.

Mr. Cotton said the Professional Development department coordinated with Dr. Stephanie Dominique, Special Education and Federal Programs Administrator, to conduct a Special Education training. All special education and Title 1 teachers were in attendance, as well as Priority Place Unit principals who currently have a filled special education or Title 1 position on their campus. Regional principals and the department director of instruction also attended the training. Staff attended training sessions offered by the Region 12 Education Service Center including Individualized Education Plan writing and training, and inclusion support guidance. Title 1 teachers received their zSpace augmented reality technology and were trained on proper

usage. Mr. Cotton said zSpace is an excellent way to enhance instruction and get students excited about learning.

Mr. Cotton stated in March, 19 Windham principals new to their roles came together to review various district processes and procedures. On the first day, each regional principal presented on an important, relevant topic including positive school climate, building a team mentality, and special education programs. Day two consisted of presentations covering campus audits, accountability and a Q&A session with the Division Director of Instruction, Jon Lilley. The Principals' Leadership Academy proved to be a resounding success, and we are looking forward to additional sessions in the future.

Mr. Cotton said finally, the Windham administration staff recently participated in a team building event. The agenda included guest speakers such as Windham Board of Trustees Vice-Chairman, Ms. Derrelynn Perryman, who spoke with staff about different types of mindsets and how to best communicate with each other, and Health and Wellness speaker, Mr. Todd Whitthorne, who educated staff on the importance of taking care of yourself. Throughout the agenda were also team walking opportunities to honor Melinda Cobb, a Windham administrative assistant who was lost to a domestic violence homicide incident in March.

Ms. Hartman stated by the end of the day, the Windham administration building team had collectively walked 3.14 miles, which is Melinda's birthday. It was a great day full of growth, wellness and collaboration.

Mr. Cotton concluded by saying it is a goal of the Professional Development department to bring together staff, deliver insightful resources and training, and provide chances for networking. Mr. Cotton said there is power in teamwork and collaboration, and Windham strives to enhance that power through meaningful staff development events, conferences and trainings.

This concluded his report and Mr. Cotton paused for questions.

Chairman O'Daniel thanked Mr. Cotton for his report, and asked to take a moment of silence in recognition of Ms. Cobb, as mentioned in the report.

CELEBRATING TEXAS HISTORY: JUNETEENTH

Mario Cotton said on January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation was passed, granting freedom to enslaved African Americans across the United States. However, turmoil and conflict were still prevalent. As a result, these individuals would not be proclaimed free until June 19, 1865, when approximately 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas to announce that more than 250,000 people enslaved throughout the state were officially free by executive decree.

Mr. Cotton stated since then, June 19 has been known as "Juneteenth," and became a day of celebration declared by the newly free people in Texas. Large celebrations began the following year, with events such as prayer services, inspirational speakers, games, rodeos and dances taking place in commemoration. In many areas of Texas, freed men and women purchased land, known as "emancipation grounds," for Juneteenth gatherings. Such examples include

Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas, purchased in 1872, as well as Booker T. Washington Park in Mexia, Texas.

Mr. Cotton said Juneteenth celebrations decreased during World War II, but returned in 1950, with large events taking place at the Texas State Fair Grounds in Dallas, Texas. During the late 1950s and 1960s, as the focus shifted to the expansion of freedom for African Americans, participation in Juneteenth was limited. It was not until the 1970s that celebrations were revived, and in 1979, the 66th Texas State Legislature passed House Bill 1016, declaring June 19 “Emancipation Day in Texas,” cementing this monumental day as a legal state holiday. Since then, the celebration of Juneteenth continues across Texas, with parades and programs, among many other events.

Mr. Cotton stated on June 17, 2021, President Biden signed a bill making Juneteenth a federal holiday, further bookmarking June 19 as a day of celebration for not only those in Texas, but across the entire United States.

Mr. Cotton said Windham School District is proud to recognize this honorable day of celebration. Staff and students across the district recognize this day throughout the month of June through course instruction, special projects and highlighted literature. Happy Juneteenth, everyone.

This concluded his report, and Mr. Cotton paused for questions.

Pastor Larry Miles said he has the opportunity to work with Mr. Cotton relating to Windham business. He complimented Mr. Cotton on his presentation. Pastor Miles said he appreciated the opportunity to work with Mr. Cotton.

Mr. Cotton thanked Pastor Miles for his passion for Windham and allowing the district to speak on the importance of Texas history. He thanked all of the Board members for the opportunity.

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING DEPOSITORY CONTRACT FOR 2024-25 BIENNIUM

Robert O’Banion, Director of Operations and Chief Financial Officer, stated a summary of the bids for the contract is provided in the Board agenda packet. Windham received three bids from the five bid solicitation packets sent to local banks. Windham School District followed the Texas Education Agency guidelines and selection process in evaluating each bank response based on the interest rates, fees charged and services offered.

Mr. O’Banion said Windham selected the First Financial Bank to perform the district’s depository services. First Financial Bank has been Windham’s bank depository for the past eight years. Board approval is being requested to award First Financial Bank the Windham School District depository services for September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025.

Mr. O’Banion paused for any questions. There were none.

Chairman O’Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Judge Faith Johnson moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the depository contract for the 2024-25 biennium as presented.

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

**DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING
PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS OVER \$500,000**

Robert O’Banion, Chief Financial Officer, said he is requesting approval for two purchases over \$500,000. The first is for student instructional software and Windham recommends this purchase to the Aztec Software company. The contract total is \$3,376,258.20 and will renew licensing at 80 computer lab sites across the district to support student academic achievement. The contract also includes 13 license renewals at Title I sites that support Windham students who are under the age 21. This purchase is being made through the Education Service Center Region 19 – Allied States Cooperative in El Paso, Texas. Consistent with all of Windham’s purchasing cooperatives, the contract is bid and negotiated through the Education Service Center without any fees to the Windham School District. This license agreement is for a total of three years beginning in September 2023 and ending August 2026. This multiyear agreement will secure current pricing and ensure the continuity of instruction for three years. This software provides diagnostic, prescriptive, computer-based instruction to support and enhance the academic and Title I programs.

The second purchase is for software licensing for student testing and Windham recommends this purchase to Data Recognition Corporation also known as DRC. This contract total is \$641,980 for a license subscription to use DRC online and offline Tests of Adult Basic Education to assess educational functioning levels of Windham adult students. The assessment is approved by the US Department of Education National Reporting System for Adult education and follows the Texas Workforce Commission Adult Education and Literacy Testing Guidelines. The agreement is for a total of three years beginning in September 2023 and ending August 2026.

Funding for both of these purchases is included in the recommended Fiscal Year 2024 budget.

Mr. O’Banion paused for any questions.

Mr. Nichols asked if the footnote included in their packet is typical for these types of purchases. Mr. O’Banion said yes, that the district has added the 15% variance particularly for the Aztec software for expansion to additional campuses. Mr. O’Banion stated that Windham will be expanding to provide educational services to 11 private facilities operated by TDCJ. He said Windham is currently building and expanding that program. That 15% will allow Windham to provide this educational software, not in the current contract because they are in the startup process currently.

Chairman O’Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Judge Molly Francis moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the purchases and contracts over \$500,000 as presented.

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

**DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING
PROPOSED REPEAL OF WSD BOARD POLICY 07.05, “PROFESSIONAL
EDUCATOR CONTRACTS”**

Erik Brown, General Counsel, stated that the Board would find the proposed revisions clarify the duration of probationary contract periods. The revisions also allow the superintendent to extend an educator’s probationary period one time, for one year, and allows the superintendent to offer an educator the option of returning to a probationary contract. The remaining revisions generally address organization and grammar. Mr. Brown paused for any questions. There were none.

Chairman O’Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Dr. Rodney Burrow moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the proposed repeal of the WSD Board Policy WBP-07.05, “Professional Educator Contracts.”

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

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

Erik Brown, General Counsel, stated that the Board would find the proposed revisions incorporate basic hours of duty and timekeeping procedures from superintendent directive 7.9, “Hours of Duty.” Basic policy regarding break time for nursing is also incorporated from superintendent directive 7.9. Accordingly, the policy will be retitled “Employee Timekeeping.” The remaining revisions address clarity, style and the elimination of redundancy. Mr. Brown paused for any questions. There were none.

Chairman O’Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Ambassador Sichan Siv moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the proposed repeal of the WSD Board Policy WBP-07.12, “Compensatory Time and Overtime.”

Judge Faith Johnson seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

Derrelynn Perryman said that every time she hears updates or new projects presented by Windham School District, she is astonished. She said she knows that Superintendent Hartman allows the individuals she supports to use their creativity to come up with great ideas and to move them forward. She commemorated Superintendent Hartman as a great leader. She thanked Ms. Hartman, and said she is so proud to be apart of Windham's Board. Ms. Hartman thanked Ms. Perryman.

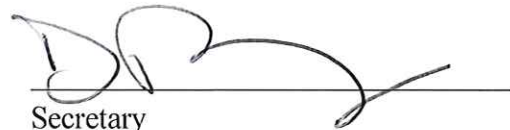
Chairman O'Daniel thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The next meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees will be Friday, August 25th, 2023 in Galveston, Texas.

ADJOURNED

There being no further business for the regular session, Chairman O'Daniel adjourned the 336th meeting of the Windham School District Board of Trustees at 9:17 a.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.