

The Ector County ISD Board of Trustees held its May board meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>. A recap of the agenda is below.

1. Roll Call.
2. Verification of compliance with open meetings requirements.
3. Juliana Gonzales and Rafael Guerrero from Lamar Early Education Center led the pledges of allegiance.



4. Reverend Steve Moss from First Methodist Church gave the invocation.
5. In the special presentations, the New Tech Odessa Academic Decathlon team was recognized for placing third in the national Decathlon competition – the first ECISD team to earn a spot at nationals; 72 state qualifiers in VASE, UIL Academics, Speech & Debate, athletic training, powerlifting, boys gymnastics, track, student council, and culinary arts were [introduced by video](#); 9 students were announced as this year's Memorial Scholarship winners; and high school principals introduced the valedictorians and salutatorians from their graduating classes.
6. In his opening comments, Superintendent Dr. Scott Muri reminded Trustees the end of school is upon us with just two days remaining. He showed off a recent article from USA Today that featured Pease Elementary and its use of technology to advance student learning. As a bonus, the article included a picture of one of our students. Lastly, he let Trustees know ECISD has just received word the district was one of

25 semi-finalists for H-E-B's Excellence in Education Award (out of 1,900 entries) and was awarded a \$1,000 prize.

7. There was no public comment.

## 8. Bond 2023 Update

**A. Update:** Last week, the school district took possession of the land that will become the site of the new Career & Technical Education high school. The 37-acre parcel valued at more than \$2.8 million was donated by Grow Odessa. The CTE high school planning committee has now met four times, the most recent on April 23, and has made site visits to CTE Centers in Abilene and Hobbs, New Mexico. Trustees then received a report on the site visit made by our middle school planning committee. A group of 10 traveled to Lewisville to see Griffin Middle School, designed by PBK, the same architecture firm that will be designing ECISD's new middle school. On April 19, representatives from Parkhill visited Odessa to see the Transportation Center (both the existing bus barn and the property for the new facility) and the auditorium at Permian High School which will be completely renovated. In the first completed portion of the bond, all of the middle school tennis courts have been resurfaced and are ready for the fall tennis season. Looking at the budget, a little more than \$4.3 million has been spent (1% of the total bond) and about \$22.7 million is encumbered (meaning purchase orders have been issued; 5% of the total bond). The first round of bonds was offered to investors on May 14. All bonds were sold with an average interest rate of 3.77% which is below the estimated (3.84) rate presented to the board in the preliminary financing plan in March. Due to the lower interest rate than anticipated, the payments are expected to be nearly \$3 million less over the life of the bonds. Good news for local taxpayers. A second bond sale will take place on June 5. A Request for Qualifications for a Third-Party Oversight firm has now closed and a recommendation is expected in June. ECISD Operations is also working with Gordian on contract language for Priority I and Priority II items, with Gordian performing a skilled trade vendor outreach.

**B.** Trustees voted 7-0 to approve purchases over \$50,000 related to the bond. The three items on this list are \$4.8 million for geotechnical and materials testing services for the current and future builds ECISD may have for Bond 2023 projects, and \$800,000 for the purchase of property on South Tripp Avenue for the new middle school. The district is purchasing two additional acres for the middle school project. And, \$5.9 million for Construction Manager at Risk to manage the construction projects, and to act as consultant during the design and planning phase.

**C.** Trustees voted 7-0 to approve switching banks from The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. as the paying agent/registrar for two outstanding series of bonds to UMB Bank, N.A.

**D.** This item was pulled from the agenda as the contract is not yet complete.

**E.** Trustees voted 7-0 to approve the DLR Group as the architect for the new Transition Learning Center.

9. Action items

**A.** Trustees voted 7-0 to approve purchases over \$50,000. In preparing for next year, there are a number of items on this list this month such as School Nutrition food contracts, a cooler-to-freezer conversion,

and other items; supplemental digital literacy tools for grades K-8; extension of the agreement with Acceleration Academies for dropout recovery; and expansion of the agreement with New Tech Network to add Gale Pond Alamo Elementary.

- B. Trustees voted 7-0 to approve budget amendment #8.
- C. **Trustees voted 7-0 to approve the 2024-25 Compensation Plan. Facing a significant budget shortfall for next year, Trustees chose not to give a raise, however, they approved a 3% one-time retention incentive to be paid to full-time employees who return for the 2024-25 school year. The remaining ESSER 3 federal funds will help allow ECISD to do this for its employees by freeing up fund balance for this incentive next year. The incentive will be 3% of base pay and will be paid in the fall semester. The average teacher amount will be \$1,950; the average hourly amount will be \$930; and the minimum retention incentive will be \$500. This retention incentive will not count toward the Teacher Retirement System benefits.** On a quick historical note, the governor formed the Texas Teacher Vacancy Task Force before the last legislative session to study why teachers were leaving the profession and to develop ideas for retaining them. ECISD had a seat at that table and many of the ideas that came from the state's task force were already in place in our school district. Things like stackable incentives. For instance, in ECISD teachers can earn up to \$32,000 through the Teacher Incentive Allotment, up to \$17,000 through Opportunity Culture, and \$15,000 via the LEAP/TSL grant. *ECISD is now the home to several \$100,000 teachers.* Stackable incentives are now also in place for principals. **A highlight of this year's compensation plan is an innovative, new Teacher Resident Salary Schedule based on the state's new Resident Enhanced Certification which goes into effect in September 2024. This is an effort to attract highly trained, highly skilled and highly effective teachers into the profession by offering an accelerated salary schedule (higher pay in fewer years) for teachers who have come through residency programs and achieve the Resident Enhanced Certification. This is the first salary schedule of its kind in Texas.**
- D. Trustees voted 7-0 to approve the adoption of the textbook for Economics/Personal Financial Literacy. In the process of creating the ECISD Portrait of a Graduate parents asked for a priority on teaching financial literacy. This new textbook will make personal finance a larger part of the required Economics course, meaning every high school senior will take it.
- E. Trustees voted 7-0 to approve a change to this year's academic calendar. The change eliminates July 1 and July 2 from the summer school calendar due to the district's administrative offices being closed on those two days.
- F. Trustees voted 7-0 to approve the 2024-25 Gifted and Talented plan. Trustees also heard a presentation from the Advanced Academic Services Department. Advanced Academics coordinates the Gifted/Talented (G/T) services kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, and the department is working to increase access for students in all grade levels. In addition to G/T, middle school students have open enrollment access to Honors classes, and once in high school, students have Advanced Placement classes that can lead to earning college credit. Odessa High School also offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. In the fall, Crockett Middle School will become an IB Middle Years Candidate school and ECISD plans to expand IB even further by implementing the IB Primary Years Program at Pease Elementary. Academic Decathlon and Academic Octathlon teams, Chess for Champions tournaments, G/T Super Saturday, and Camp SIP for both elementary and secondary schools are other services from ECISD's Advanced Academics.
- G. Trustees voted 7-0 to endorse Trustees Dr. Steve Brown to fill a position on the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Board of Directors.

- H. Trustees voted 7-0 to approve the non-renewal of multi-year service contracts with vendors due to lack of funding.
10. Trustees voted 7-0 to approve the Consent Agenda. The consent agenda is a group of routine, or previously discussed items presented together for a single approval vote. This month's Consent Agenda included minutes of meetings; bills for payment; acceptance of donations over \$10,000\*; the quarterly investment report; out-of-state travel to Des Moines, Iowa, for Permian High School debate students; and out-of-state travel to Italy, Spain, and France for Culinary Arts students.

## 11. Reports

- A. Trustees heard its quarterly update on three strategic plan initiatives. First, *Strategic Staffing* which is creating the best ways to utilize our people and our resources to serve our students. ECISD has many first-of-its-kind talent development pipelines (for teachers, principals, counselors, and diagnosticians) to go along with stackable incentives that help recruit, retain, and reward our staff. Second, *Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)* are teachers deeply discussing students and their data to learn strategies from each other to reach students, support their learning gaps, and increase achievement. PLCs are how ECISD does business. Third, *High Dosage Tutoring* gives identified students access to a personal, online tutor throughout the year. The partnerships use outcomes-based contracts, meaning the tutoring companies earn more when students achieve more.
- B. Trustees continued their discussion of the budget for the 2024-25 school year. ECISD is in the same position as school districts across Texas, cutting budgets due to the Texas Legislature's inaction regarding school funding during the last legislative session. The state has not increased the basic allotment for public education since 2019 while costs have risen dramatically. Money is available and set aside for public education, but it has not been distributed. Legislators will not meet again until January 2025, so Trustees must consider that it looks like schools will wait until next summer to learn if public education will receive new funding. At this time, the proposed revenues for 2024-25 are some \$337,050,000. The district is estimating the same student enrollment and the same tax rate (\$1.014). Leaders have anticipated a deficit of \$12 million and have been reviewing all aspects of district operations to reduce the expenses for next year. The required budgets will be adopted next month.
12. Trustees moved to closed session to discuss personnel matters.
- A. Trustees voted 7-0 to approve Christina Salinas as the new principal for Murry Fly Elementary School. She is currently the assistant principal at Cameron Dual Language Elementary. She has three years of experience as an assistant principal. In her 22 years with ECISD she has been a teacher, campus curriculum facilitator/instructional specialist, dual language specialist, and Bilingual Summer School principal.**
- B. Trustees voted 7-0 to approve Hector Limon as the new principal at Odessa High School. He is currently the principal at Crane High School. He has 11 years of administrative experience including three years as the associate/assistant principal at OHS from 2019 through 2022. He taught for seven years as a history and CTE teacher and coached several sports.**
13. Information Items – <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Agenda/1406?meeting=631057>
14. There were no closing remarks.
15. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

\*\$2,843,00 from Grow Odessa for land for the new Career & Technical Education high school

\$1,700,557 from the Permian Strategic Partnership and Scarborough for 10 ECISD employees to take part in the Holdsworth 18-month leadership program

\$15,000 from Conoco Phillips for the Transition Learning Center outdoor learning area

\$13,500 from Diamondback Energy for the Super Saturday Chess Tournament