

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

238th MEETING

The Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees met in session on Thursday, October 26, 2006, at the Texas Prison Museum in Huntsville, Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Christina Melton Crain, Chairman
Pierce Miller, Vice Chairman
Patricia A. Day, Secretary
Adrian Arriaga
Greg Coleman
Pastor C. L. Jackson
Tom Mechler
Leopoldo (Leo) Vasquez, III

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Oliver Bell

WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Debbie Roberts, Superintendent
David McNutt
Marjie Haynes

**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL
JUSTICE STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Brad Livingston, TDCJ Executive Director
Ed Owens
Melinda Bozarth

CONVENED

Christina Melton Crain, Chairman, called the meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Thursday, October 26, 2006, at 4:11 p.m. in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, the Open Meetings Act.

Chairman Crain stated that during the meeting, the Board would be conducting business from the agenda posted in the Texas Register. A quorum of the Board was present and the 238th meeting of the Board was declared open.

RECOGNITIONS

Debbie Roberts, WSD Superintendent, stated that in May 2005, KBTX-TV in Bryan-College Station aired a two (2) part series featuring WSD's CHANGES program. In recognition of their fair and balanced reporting of that story, in April 2006 the WSD Board adopted a resolution recognizing anchors Joe Brown and Michelle Peltier, reporter Jennifer Cavazos and photographer Craig Weaver by placing their names on the Texas Association of School Board's Media Honor

Roll. Media Honor Roll recipients were recognized in the August-September 2006 issue of the TASB magazine *The Texas Lone Star*. Unfortunately, none of the recipients were able to attend this meeting for recognition; but Ms. Roberts noted that WSD staff will ensure that they receive the TASB Media Honor Roll certificates.

Regarding WSD's Teacher of the Year, Ms. Roberts explained the rigorous process that the finalists had to go through to compete for this honor. She introduced Timothy Simon, the recipient of the 2006 Teacher of the Year. He teaches Cognitive Intervention in the Gang Renunciation and Disassociation (GRAD) program at Ramsey I. She introduced the remaining 2006 Teacher of the Year Finalists which included: Shelly Carter, Beto Unit; Alton Farris, Eastham Unit; Dusty Morgan, Neal Unit; Karen Rhothe, Ney Unit; James "Jack" Simpson, Clements Unit; and Donna Sitterding, Pack Unit. Ms. Roberts congratulated each of them. She also recognized the families, regional administrators and principals.

Chairman Crain presented each teacher with a framed certificate and congratulated them for their hard work and dedication.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Crain called the Board's attention to the Consent Items on the agenda (Attachment A), which consisted of the minutes of the July 6, 2006, and August 18, 2006, meetings, multiple employment requests, personal property donations and approval of excused absences

Chairman Crain asked if there were any amendments or corrections to the Consent Items. Noting there were none, she stated the Consent Items were approved as presented.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Annual Review of WSD Investment Policy, 11.12 (rev. 2), and Approval of a Resolution Adopting the Investment Policy

Melinda Bozarth, TDCJ General Counsel, stated that WSD Policy 11.12, WSD Investment Policy, was due for its annual review, which is required by law. The policy was presented to the Board for review and approval.

Chairman Crain asked if there was a motion on this agenda item.

Adrian Arriaga moved that the Windham School District Board of Trustees approve the revisions to WSD Policy 11.12, Windham School District Investment Policy and approve the resolution adopting the investment policy as presented and that the Chairman and Secretary sign the resolution adopting the policy.

Patsy Day seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Roberts introduced Veronica Casanova, Director of Human Resources, and informed the Board that Ms. Casanova formally served as the Administrator of Counseling and Testing for WSD. In September, Ms. Casanova received the Cathy Erwin Award as the Outstanding Chief GED Examiner in the State of Texas. This is the second time that she has received this award. Ms. Roberts also introduced Latreace Craig, Assistant Human Resources Director, and Charlotte Morton, Regional Administrator for the North Texas Region.

Ms. Roberts provided an update on the reviews that WSD has been participating in during the past month. She discussed the rider that was attached to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) appropriations bill that requires TEA to conduct a review of the WSD operations, management structure, as well as the impact of programs. TEA has contracted with the consultant group, McConnell, Jones, Lanier & Murphy, to conduct the review, which began in the middle of September and is scheduled to be completed by December 1st. In an effort to collect data, the consultants have interviewed administrative staff and are currently in the process of visiting nine (9) campuses to interview staff on the units. They have also sent surveys out to wardens, principals and teachers throughout the district, as well as to a sampling of offenders. In addition, the consultants want to complete a recidivism study by December 1st, which Ms. Roberts noted was a very aggressive schedule to set. Windham is anxious to get the results of the review to see what suggestions are recommended to improve District operations.

The Legislative Budget Board (LBB) has also been conducting a review of Project RIO and Windham has been involved in the TDCJ Sunset Review. In addition, Windham is required by legislation to conduct an effectiveness study on its vocational training programs. This review is scheduled for completion by November 15th and will look at employment after release. It will focus on whether that employment is related to the training the offender received while incarcerated and whether the offenders' pay increased after one (1) year from securing that employment. An analysis is also being conducted on retention factors that contribute to continued employment.

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Overview of the WSD Program Planning Process

Marjie Haynes, Director of the Division of Instruction, shared information about the systematic process that is used, in the District, to plan the programming at each facility. Each summer a review is conducted on the academic and life skills programs that are offered at each campus. Principals complete a program survey which reviews ITP data and other unit characteristics, considers any policy or procedural changes and indicates any projected changes in class offerings that should be considered for the upcoming school year. The completed surveys are reviewed and approved by the regional administrators and forwarded to the Division of Instruction. Teleconferences are then conducted with each unit between the Superintendent, the Regional Administrator, the Division Directors from Operational Support, Instruction and Human Resources, and the Principal. If no issues arise from any of the program recommendations, the programs are approved to begin on September 1st or as soon as practical.

With respect to vocational programs, a different approach is used since vocational training cannot be easily, quickly or inexpensively changed, and program changes are very complex and time-consuming. For these programs, the Division of Instruction continually monitors labor market information, as well as, legislative changes and/or industry changes regarding certification or licensure that may have a negative impact with respect to employment for ex-offenders, and recommends changes as appropriate.

Ms. Haynes concluded by stating this was a very brief synopsis of the program planning process. It is a collaborative shared-decision making type of process.

2. Bi-Monthly Investment Report

David McNutt, WSD Chief Financial Officer, explained that the investment reports covered the period beginning July 1, 2006, through August 31, 2006. In July, WSD earned \$40,558 in interest and in the month of August, \$40,640 was earned. It was noted that a check was not received from TEA during August, and as such funds had to be withdrawn in order to make payroll. The interest rates have continually gone up and have ranged from 5.23 to 5.28%

3. Miscellaneous Reports

Ms. Roberts called the Board's attention to page 37 of the agenda which listed the total contact hours earned for the 2005-2006 school year. She stated that approximately one (1) year ago, with schools closed due to Hurricane Rita, staff was concerned that WSD would not earn enough contact hours to support its budget. That was not the case; WSD exceeded the contact hours needed to support the budget and that was due in part to the TDCJ and WSD staff who worked so hard to make it possible. Ms. Roberts thanked all parties involved.

Ms. Roberts did not have a presentation on the following reports, which were included in the Board packets, but offered to answer any questions from the members; none were received.

- a. Division Report, July – August 2006
- b. Budget Activity Update
- c. WSD Programs by Unit

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the 238th meeting of the WSD Board of Trustees adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Chairman

Secretary