

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

Meeting No. 325

The Windham School District Board of Trustees met in session on Friday, August 27, 2021 at the Sheraton Hotel in Austin Texas.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

WINDHAM STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kristina Hartman, Superintendent
Robert O’Banion
Erik Brown
Michael Mondville
Jon Lilley

CONVENED

Chairman Patrick O’Daniel convened the meeting of the 325th Windham School District (WSD) Board of Trustees (Board) to order on Friday, August 27, 2021, at 8:35 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.

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 June 25th, 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.

RECOGNITIONS

Superintendent Hartman recognized Mr. Michael P. Mondville, who was retiring from WSD as General Counsel. Ms. Hartman said that Mr. Mondville started working for the district 15 years

ago as the district's General Counsel. During his tenure for the district, he worked under four Superintendents as well as acted as the interim Superintendent.

Ms. Hartman explained that Mr. Mondville was a wonderful General Counsel and he will be greatly missed. His plan for retirement is to relax; read Harry Potter in Hebrew, a language he does not yet know how to read; and do a Split S in a stunt plane. Michael has been married to his wife, Debbie, for almost 50 years. Together, they have two children and five grandchildren.

Ms. Hartman asked the Board to join her in thanking Mr. Mondville for his dedication and service to the district and wishing him a wonderful retirement.

Mr. Mondville thanked the Board for supporting him and the Windham School District.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Mondville and congratulated him on his retirement.

Ms. Hartman recognized Mr. Erik Brown as WSD's new General Counsel. Mr. Brown started in the role this month and Ms. Hartman said he has over 14 years of experience in the legal field, serving 12 of those years in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Office of the General Counsel. Ms. Hartman explained that throughout his tenure, Mr. Brown held multiple roles including Director of Legal Affairs and Supervising Attorney. He graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Texas State University – San Marcos and earned his Juris Doctorate from South Texas College of Law. Ms. Hartman said he is an avid musician and plays the guitar.

Ms. Hartman asked the Board to welcome Mr. Brown to the district.

Mr. Brown thanked Ms. Hartman for her confidence in him fulfilling his new position and said he looked forward to working with the Board as General Counsel.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Hartman and congratulated Mr. Brown on his becoming the district's General Counsel.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Impact of Instructional Models During COVID on Staff Recruitment and Retention

Superintendent Hartman stated that the provision of instruction to Windham students across the 86 TDCJ-based campuses continued throughout the pandemic due to the hard work and dedication by teachers, administrators, support staff and correctional officers. Beginning in March of 2020, Windham shifted to a fully distance learning, paper-pencil model with 15 hours of instructional materials per week delivered to students thanks to the support of the amazing correctional officers assigned to education departments across the state. In June of 2020, campus-based staff returned to classrooms with reduced class sizes and a hybrid instruction model. This model did not reduce enrollment, but required half of the class capacity to attend on a rotating schedule and complete three hours of instructional packets in their housing areas each day they were not in class. In May of 2021, Windham provided services to an increased number

of students by establishing a third section of the academic program with attendance on Fridays and 12 hours of instructional packets for remote work days. Students placed in this section demonstrated the ability to self-study with minimal assistance from an instructor. Based on the guidance at the time from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Ms. Hartman and her team anticipated that this model would likely continue through July of 2021; however, currently, the end date and return to normal operations is indeterminate.

Ms. Hartman said the hybrid instruction model, which includes in-class instruction and distance-learning packets, was a good short-term model that ensured student enrollments and contact hours were met along with continued engagement by students when they were unable to attend class due to social distancing requirements. Unlike public school teachers, Ms. Hartman explained that Windham teachers do not have a distance learning planning period or section of students, but prepared materials before or after a full day of instruction with reduced classroom capacity. Teachers and support staff worked additional hours to support this model.

Ms. Hartman noted that this hybrid model is not sustainable. The hybrid workload was intended to be short term and it is no longer manageable when taking into consideration the time it takes to develop an individualized lesson, copy the materials and grade the incoming packet in addition to managing a full day in-person class schedule. Program fidelity is also of concern in life skills courses as cognitive behavioral programs are not designed for self-study. Since it is clear that the pandemic and reduced class sizes will continue into the upcoming school year at many campuses, a model change is necessary to meet the needs of the student population and the realistic and reasonable workload of Windham staff.

Ms. Hartman said one of the impacts associated with COVID-19 instructional models and workloads in both public schools and Windham is related to an increase in staff retirements and resignations. In July of 2020, 10 staff members resigned or retired and in July of 2021, the number increased to 38. Windham leaders are in the process of reviewing exit survey results to determine reasons for leaving, and anticipate that workload from instructional packets will be a contributing factor. The number of individuals coming to the district has also increased. In August of 2020, 13 staff were hired and in August of 2021 this number increased to 30. WSD has proactively added a recruiter position to assist with attracting and securing teachers.

Ms. Hartman recently met with Executive Director Bryan Collier to discuss potential instructional models and with the Legislative Budget Board employees to discuss the impact on contact hours and enrollments that may occur as a result of an instructional model change that does not include packets. She assured them that WSD would continue to prioritize the most in-need, including parole-voted students. Mr. Collier provided some suggestions to potentially minimize the impact to enrollments without overburdening teachers.

Ms. Hartman explained that 16 campuses are at 70% vaccination rate or higher. These classes have resumed normal operations and class sizes. She stated that beginning in the new school year, September 1, 2021, life skills classes will resume with in-class instruction five days per week. Due to social distancing measures still in place, this will decrease the number of students served, but will target those most in need beginning with parole-voted residents. WSD will still meet the obligation to all parole-voted students within the necessary timeframes. Career and

technical education classes will continue to operate at full capacity five days a week where social distancing permits in vocational bays, and will meet on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday or Tuesday/Thursday schedule for those areas where social distancing is not possible. Homework will be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. This model will extend the number of hours it takes to complete courses, but will ensure program fidelity and continued hands-on learning. Academic programs will meet on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday or Tuesday/Thursday schedule with the most in-need students attending three days per week. This model will be updated to support additional student enrollment as guidance from health authorities' changes.

Ms. Hartman said she is proud of the great work of Windham educators, district staff, and correctional officers assigned to education departments across the 86 campuses as well as WSD students for their flexibility and diligence when implementing and engaging in the various instructional models that have been utilized during the COVID-19 pandemic. Windham will continue to remain informed regarding best practices for instructional models, recruitment and retention of our valuable staff.

Ms. Hartman thanked the Board for their ongoing support of the Windham School District and paused for questions. There were none.

Board Member Nichols acknowledged that Ms. Hartman recently received some significant peer recognition. Ms. Hartman added that she was recently elected as President for the Correctional Education Association's Council of State Directors. Chairman O'Daniel congratulated her on the recent appointment.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN, WSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

WSD Graduates First-Ever RV Service Technicians

Chairman O'Daniel stated RV Service Technician was the third-fastest growing job in the United States. Predicting this workforce gap, Windham School District partnered with RV Technical Institute (RVTI) to establish the first RV Service Technician program in a correctional facility in the country.

Chairman O'Daniel said Windham started the program at the Woodman Campus, an all-women's facility in Gatesville, with the goal of expanding to additional campuses in the future. This summer, the program reached a monumental milestone as the first cohort of students graduated and earned their Level 1 RV Service Technician Certificates. This was the first graduating class of incarcerated individuals in the country and the first class of all women for RVTI. In this program, students learned the skills needed to conduct a pre-delivery inspection of RVs with detailed knowledge about the body, appliances, chassis, generator, electrical, propane, and water systems of the vehicles.

Chairman O'Daniel noted that RV technician is a growing field with employment opportunities across Texas. As all 10 graduates are all within approximately one year of being released to their Texas communities, Chairman O'Daniel said they will soon be able to fill vacant positions

across the state and contribute to the success of the industry and the Texas economy.

Chairman O'Daniel elaborated on the recent commencement ceremony and that Curtis Hemmeler, Executive Director of RVTI and Senior Vice President of the RV Industry Association served as the keynote speaker. He traveled from Indiana to attend the event and assured graduates that he would work closely with Windham to provide employment referrals and placements to those who completed the program. Mr. Hemmeler spoke about the abundance of positions, career advancement opportunities and potential earnings for the graduates across the state.

Chairman O'Daniel concluded that by monitoring workforce gaps and establishing programs to meet industry demands, Windham is able to not only contribute to the Texas workforce, but provide stable, high-demand career paths for their students. Through courses such as RV Service Technician, WSD strives to prepare students with the necessary education and skills to successfully obtain these in-demand jobs within their communities.

Chairman O'Daniel thanked Ms. Hartman for implementing the program.

OVERVIEW OF THE WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Jon Lilley, Divisional Director of Instruction, presented an overview of Windham's accountability system. Windham Board Policy, 3.02 addresses the Accountability System and standards to promote effective educational programs. Windham School Districts accountability system uses factual evaluation procedures and places a significant focus on highlighting the achievements of all faculty, staff and students at each campus level. Most importantly, the accountability system recognizes, values and empowers all stakeholders, including school leadership, teachers, support staff, students, and Texas Department of Criminal Justice facility administrative and correctional staff.

Mr. Lilley explained that under direction from the Texas Education Agency, school districts were not rated in School Year 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although WSD was not rated, district leadership continued to track and monitor accountability ratings for each school to strategically plan and deliver resources and support. Currently, WSD is monitoring campus progress for school year 2021 and is due to close on August 31st. Data and accomplishments will come to the board at a later date.

Mr. Lilley stated all measures in the accountability system are weighted and averaged together to arrive at a final accomplishment level and grade for each campus. A campus score is based on a 0 – 100-point scale and is consistent with the Texas Education Agency K-12 scale and grading system. These ratings examine student achievement as well as campus progress.

Mr. Lilley showed an example of the data dashboard that Windham School District personnel see when they access their account. The data dashboard is a user-friendly application used to analyze and review campus status.

Mr. Lilley explained WSD's Accountability System assists school employees in comparing

campus data, tracking key unit activities, supporting the district and campus improvement plans recognizing campuses and personnel. He added that each measure is weighted based on program availability at each campus. Along with the previous measures mentioned, WSD will be adding the two new measures to strengthen the effectiveness of programs. The first is the classroom capacity versus the percent of enrollment measure. This measure will enable campus and district administrators to monitor course enrollments related to classroom capacity by course type within the accountability dashboard. This will ensure that campuses are enrolling students at maximum capacity for each class type. The second measure is college readiness. This measure accounts for all students who complete a GED subtest and score at least a 165. Mr. Lilley proposed that each subtest with a score of 165 or greater will receive bonus for their campus.

Mr. Lilley concluded that the accountability system incorporates measures that examine student achievement and school progress in academic, career and technical education and life skills programs. He paused for questions. There were none.

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REVISION OF WSD BOARD POLICY 08.01, “STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR WINDHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS”

Michael Mondville, WSD General Counsel, said Windham Board Policy WBP-08.01, “Student Eligibility for Windham School District Programs” was updated to align terminology with current Windham School District terms. He asked that the Board approve the revised policy as presented. Mr. Mondville paused for questions. There were none.

Chairman O’Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Eric Nichols moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve the revision of WSD Board Policy WBP-08.01, “Student Eligibility for Windham School District Programs” as presented.

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

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE WSD BUDGET AND SALARY SCHEDULE FOR 2021-2022

Robert O’Banion, WSD Chief Financial Officer, presented the budget and salary schedule for the 2021-2022 school year. He thanked his team for their hard work in preparing the budget. He explained WSD had several positive financial changes that were incorporated into the upcoming school year. For example, the *all fund* revenues increased for fiscal year 2022 by 10.3% to \$69,831,691. This significant \$6.5 million increase in revenue can be broken down into a couple components. The first is a \$2.8 million appropriation increase as a result of receiving the requested legislative exceptional item that reinstated WSD’s 5% reduction from the current

biennium. The second is \$735,000 received from the legislature to support the implementation of House Bill 30 and WSD's new High School Diploma program. Finally, the district received \$1.5 million from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund Grant to assist students in mitigating the effects of COVID-19 during Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022.

Mr. O'Banion explained the *all funds* budgeted expenditures increased for Fiscal Year 2022 by 9.2%, or \$6.4 million, to \$76,349,466. This increased expenditures from the legislative exceptional item resulted in the reinstatement of 41 classroom positions, including seven family literacy positions, 11 testing specialists and 10 other support staff for a total increase of \$2.8 million.

Mr. O'Banion elaborated that Windham leaders also included funds in this budget for the expansion of several program areas. The budget includes funding for a high school diploma program in the amount of \$735,455 for 9.5 total positions including eight high school teachers to provide the standard diploma option for eligible young students. Expenditures also will provide for purchases of \$1.5 million to expand technology and utilize one-time committed funds. With these funds, improvements will be made to student computer labs to support computer-based testing and other initiatives, including virtual reality software for our Life Skills and Career and Technical Education programs.

Mr. O'Banion said budgeted expenditures will continue to support new curriculum, including the Reading is Freedom program, as well as a pilot program that will provide services to students in restrictive housing who are nearing release. Expenditures also will assist former students with post-release education referrals to complete their occupational licensing applications in regulated fields such as electrical, HVAC and plumbing.

Mr. O'Banion concluded that the district's overall total Full Time Employees (FTE) increased from last year's budget by 74.6 to 1,141.5 total FTE's for Fiscal Year 2022. He requested the Board approve the 2021-2022 budget for the Windham School District as presented and the salary schedule per Board Policy.

Mr. O'Banion 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 WSD Budget and Salary Schedule for 2021-2022 and authorize the Superintendent to make transfers as necessary as authorized by Board Policy.

Derrelynn Perryman seconded the motion, which prevailed unanimously when called to a vote.

DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE WSD SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT

Chairman O’Daniel stated the board met in June in Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent’s performance evaluation and recommendation regarding her contract. Chairman O’Daniel asked if the board had any questions. There were none.

Chairman O’Daniel asked the board for a motion.

Faith Johnson moved that WSD Board of Trustees approve a contract for the Superintendent of WSD, effective September 1, 2021 and ending August 31, 2024, to include an annual salary of \$160,000.

Molly Frances 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, October 29th, 2021 in Austin, Texas.

ADJOURNED

There being no further business, Chairman O’Daniel adjourned the 325th meeting of the Windham School District Board of Trustees at 9:05 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.