

Wayside Board Meeting
August 26, 2021 at 6:00 PM.
Meeting ID: 826 8051 1968
Passcode: Wayside

Board Members Present: David Dunn, Stacy Erb, Glenda Ballard, Katie Herbek, Jesus Becerra

Staff Members Present: Matt Abbott, Francisco Garcia, Halley Cade, Susan Pommerening, Marcia Molinar, Kierstin Howard, Maria Zimmerle, Maritza Gladyn, Hope Astor, Tammy Underwood, Jennifer Gonzalez

Guests: Karen Emery

David Dunn called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. Roll called to establish a quorum, and a quorum of board members were present and accounted for.

David Dunn called for a moment of reflection of world events.

Public Comments: None

Meeting Minutes

Receive and approve Minutes from June 17, 2021

Stacy Erb moved to approve the minutes from June 17, 2021 Glenda Ballard seconded, roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda Items

- a. Request from Real Estate Developer for Planning Variance (4 story building) to build housing for 55+ community at Nelms and Bluff Springs, next door to the William Cannon Location.
- b. Approval and Receipt of Public Comment on District Improvement Plan
- c. Approval of all contracts as of 8/26/21
- d. Recognition of End-of-Term and Resignation from Board: Noah Wittman, Lillian Diaz-Gray and Melinda Smith

David Dunn asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Katie Herbeck moved to approve the consent agenda, Jesus Becerra seconded, roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Chief Executive Officer Update

a. Discussion and possible action on changes to School Operations for SY 20-21 and 21-22 due to COVID-19 including Waiver(s) and Resolution(s) for TEA and Local Policy Operations

Matthew Abbott stated the school year started under the provision that all classes are in person with the Governor's mandate against mask requirements. This has changed legally with the city and county. We have had a mask mandate in place for two weeks, with approximately 98% compliance.

Our team sits on two calls each week with the city and Austin Public Health. They state the most important thing we can do to keep scholars safe is masking. We are currently not seeing spread in our schools. Cases largely come from home. In several of our cases, the scholar was never on campus while

positive. We have 13 cases so far, which is higher than last year. Some days we see 1 case per day. However, we do not have the number of cases other districts have seen.

Currently our staff is 93% vaccinated. We hosted a vaccine clinic for scholars and families and may host a second based on demand.

We perform 5-10 COVID tests per day for scholars and staff who feel unwell, or who have been a close contact. Most cases we see are asymptomatic. We have a new set of testing kits coming soon, along with more masks. We update our safety plan regularly based on CDC and TEA protocols.

Though we perform contact tracing, we cannot force anyone to quarantine unless they are asked by the health authority.

David Dunn asked how we expect legal proceedings to change in the upcoming weeks in regards to masking. Matt Abbott stated that it is difficult to know, and the only thing keeping our mask mandate in place is an appellate court. There may be upcoming legislation regarding remote learning and masking. Matt Abbott stated that it may be difficult for us to add remote learning due to staffing and funding.

Glenda Ballard asked how teachers are dealing with added stress from COVID. Matt stated that while we have had escalations, we haven't seen issues other districts in the region have seen. Maria Zimmerle, principal of AMA, stated some teachers are scared to come to work due to the pandemic. Mask-wearing and hand washing are very important for them to feel safe. Matt Abbott stated that of our cases this year, only two are from staff members.

b. Fundraising and Enrollment Update

Matt Abbott stated that Jessica Santos will be out for medical reasons. We are applying for a Junior League grant in her absence. There is no dashboard this month.

For enrollment, we had 1500 scholars on the first day of school and a significant number of no-shows. We now have about 1650 scholars. We still see a reduced enrollment due to COVID. In addition, our 8th to 9th grade retention was lower than expected. 6th grade was also lower than expected. We've also seen Pre-K, K and 1st grade enrollment smaller at AMA and EPA, but larger at REAL.

The Enrollment Team is working daily to call families and follow up with applications. We've had a steady flow of new applications but it is now slowing down. We do not expect to hit our budget target this year. This means we will need to tighten expenditures and forgo additional hiring. We do not expect to have any layoffs. We have some federal funding from COVID that will help us during this time.

Some families do not come to Wayside due to lack of remote learning. Others say transportation is an issue. We are exploring the idea of focus groups to better understand what brings families to Wayside.

David Dunn asked how we are using federal funding. Matt stated that we have added staffing and tutoring to help scholars catch up from the 2020-21 school year. We also have smaller class sizes which give scholars more teacher interaction.

Stacy Erb added that we should put emphasis on building relationships with our community to increase retention.

c. Discussion and possible action on Superintendent Performance Review

Tabled for Executive Session

Chief Academic Officer Update

a. August Academic Report and Action Plan (Informational)

Susan Pommerening started her report with New Teacher Academy. We have 35 teachers in the program. Focus on NTA is lesson planning and classroom management. Turnover in the past year was spread throughout the network and not specific to one campus.

Wayside was approved to implement the TIA. Susan stated qualifications for a teacher to be considered for designation. With a designation, teachers can raise their salary by \$5k-\$18k per year.

Next steps will determine who is eligible and run the teacher and scholar appraisal systems effectively.

This year we will watch data closely to achieve our goals for this year. Every teacher will meet with a leader each week.

We've begun Texas Instructional Leadership training to build a pipeline of leaders. We hoped to cover this with a TEA grant, but didn't receive it. We are using ESSER funds instead.

Reading Academy starts in September, which is required for anyone who teaches reading, K-4. Marcia Molinar will oversee this program.

b. Discussion and possible action on Teacher Incentive Allotment (Actionable)

Discussion included in the August Academic Report

c. Discussion and possible action on Special Education Services concerning specific student(s)

Nothing to present at Executive Session at this time

Sr. Director of Operations Update

a. Review Statement of Activities as of 6/30/2021 and 7/31/21 (Informational)

Fran Garcia presented that we finished net positive for the fiscal year. The report does not include PPP however. Our debt service was higher but we paid off our Horizon Bank loan. Our depreciation was higher due to facilities projects at William Cannon Campus. We are still working with the auditor in regards to PPP.

Fran stated that our budget was approved based on 1950 scholars, so we will need to tighten expenses. We will have a budget amendment soon to reduce expenses. PPP should be recognized this fiscal year which will help, and we will forgo some new hires.

This month we had large purchases for Raptor system and IT expenses, along with recruitment-related marketing expenses.

Francisco stated 300 students under budget means a loss of \$3M from the budget.

b. Discussion and possible action on ESSER II and III

Fran Garcia presented there are no actions right now regarding ESSER. We are working on our application currently. We will use half of our ESSER II funds to repay hold harmless that we received last year that was in excess of what we should have received, approximately \$900,000.

c. Discussion and possible action on Amendment to FY21 Budget (Actionable)

Fran Garcia presented final budget amendment for last fiscal year in order to finish within 10% variance of expenditures. There could possibly be another amendment if PPP is added into FY21 budget.

David Dunn motioned to approve the budget amendment. Stacy Erb moved to approve, Jesus Becerra seconded the motion. Roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously.

d. Discussion and possible action on FY22 Budget

Fran Garcia stated he will not bring a budget amendment for this fiscal year this month.

e. Discussion and possible action on updated COVID paid leave policy (Actionable)

Fran Garcia stated we would like to offer up to 10 days of paid sick leave to all employees who test positive for COVID-19. This will allow them to not use their personal sick leave. There is no requirement to be vaccinated to receive this sick leave.

David Dunn motioned to approve the paid leave policy. Glenda Ballard moved to approve, Jesus Becerra seconded the motion. Roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously.

f. Financial Updates including but not limited to the 21 Audit, and Preliminary 2021 FIRST Rating (Actionable)

Fran Garcia stated we are gathering all documents needed for our audit. We plan to bring the final audit by November's board meeting, ahead of TEA deadlines. We are also reviewing Preliminary Charter FIRST Rating. We plan to appeal for a better grade as there was a discrepancy in our score. He believes we should receive an "A", but will present more information soon.

g. Discussion and possible action concerning specific personnel issues

Tabled for Executive Session

Closed Session:

David Dunn asked for a motion to exit public session and enter into Executive Session

Katie Herbeck motioned to exit the public session and enter into Executive Session and seconded by Stacy Erb, roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously.

At 8:40 Katie Herbek motioned to exit the executive session and enter into Public Session. Glenda Ballard seconded, roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

David Dunn asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting

Glenda Ballard motioned to adjourn, Jesus Becerra seconded, roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously

David Dunn adjourned the meeting at 8:43 pm.