

Wayside Board Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Wayside: Eden Park Academy, 6215 Menchaca Road, Austin, TX 78745

Board Members Physically Present: Elaine Candelas (arrive 6:09), David Dunn, Meredith Sembello

Board Members Virtually Present: Cynthia Gonzalez, Nicole Trevino

Staff Members Physically Present: Matt Abbott, Dawn Fair, Marcia Molinar Susan Pommerening, Melinda Gardner, Francisco Garcia, Haylee Lavender, Maritza Gladyn

Staff Members/Public Virtually Present: Stephanie Soliz, Katie Nelson, Halley Cade, Luis Sosa, Clint Wise, Mary Rodriguez, Martha Rodriguez, Kierstin Howard, Miranda Regalado, Choi Hicks, Jason Engel, Alfredo Garcia

Public Physically Present: None

David Dunn called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm. Roll called to establish a quorum, and a quorum of board members were present and accounted for.

Scholar and School Feature – Science Fair

Dawn Fair shared a video interview with Jeffrey Rodriguez, an STHS scholar, on his experience in the State Science Fair hosted at Texas A&M. Scholar stated that participation in the science fair made him rethink his future college and career plans, and now wants to go into the medical industry. Dawn also shared about elementary participation in the Regional Science Fair.

Public Comments:

Jason Engel: Jason shared that he is unhappy that public comment is before agenda discussion. While the agenda is posted in advance, it is difficult to know what the board will say about each item, which makes it difficult to structure public comments to give relevant feedback.

Meeting Minutes

Receive and approve Minutes from February 22, 2024.

David Dunn asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Elaine Candelas moved to approve the minutes from February 22, 2024. Meredith Sembello seconded the motion, roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda Items

a. Consent Items:

- Updated Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Free Workplace Policy
- TEA EMAT Certification
- Wayside Schools: HR Employee Handbook for FY 24-25
- Annual SLHA compliance-based Board Policy Updates from last Legislative Session

b. Contracts since the last board meeting:

- Byrne Rock kMobile DJ- STHS
- Miriam Spiller, Independent Contractor-AMA
- Region 13- STHS
- Soliant Health, LLC-NST SPED

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

Meredith Sembello made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Elaine Candelas seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

David Dunn pulled conversation regarding 4-Way Instructional Rotation cover first due to public interest.

Susan Pommerening presented about this plan currently being used at AMA that includes MCLs and Teacher Fellows. She shared that a large driver of this decision was to ensure scholars receive instructional time with experienced teachers, as Wayside has many new teachers. Under this plan, scholars rotate throughout the day. While it felt clunky at first, Susan shared that it seems to be working well now and appears effective, with substantial reading and math growth based on common assessments and benchmark tests.

During re-enrollment process, only one parent mentioned 4-way rotation as a concern. The model will be rolled out to other campuses next year and will be learning from AMA.

Melinda Gardner shared that this model also helps Teacher Fellows receive coaching so that they can become teachers of record and be retained at Wayside.

David Dunn and Cynthia Gonzalez shared that they visited AMA to assess the program, and found it to work well and appear efficient for scholar transitions.

No board action was taken on this item.

Meeting then continued to regular agenda items in order as published.

Chief Executive Officer Update

a. Fundraising and Enrollment Update for FY 24

Maritza Gladyn presented about Enrollment. Currently enrollment is stable, with steady, but slow flow of enrollments and withdrawals as typical of this time of year. There are 249 applications for 24-25 school year, with heavy focus on Pre-K & Kinder. Maritza shared that re-enrollment process just finished, and her team will begin following up with families who are not coming back or unsure about coming back. She shared that Enrollment Day will be in early May, which is an opportunity for applicants to complete registration paperwork.

Matt Abbott shared the Fundraising report. Currently have two grants submitted and several upcoming grant opportunities. He shared that the Wayside Schools Foundation Gala is in two weeks, with a goal of raising money for pre-college experiences. For Amplify Austin, Wayside raised \$8,365 through 49 donors.

b. School Safety Updates and Possible Actions and Resolution(s) for HB 3 Compliance/School Safety

Matt Abbott shared that all facility audits have been completed. Wayside has been invited to participate in a school vulnerability pilot program. Clint Wise stated that all schools passed TEA's audit, with most receiving a 100% score.

c. 23/24 Superintendent Performance Review and Monitoring (Executive Session)

This item was tabled for the executive session.

Chief Academic Officer Update

a. April Academic Report and Action Plan

Susan Pommerening said Wayside is entering into testing season, including STAAR, IB, ACT/SAT, etc.

Susan shared testing data from a recent common assessment. There is movement both ways - many grade levels making improvements, but some making small steps backwards or stalled, particularly at the middle school level. She stated that it's her belief that MCL teachers are helping the elementary schools improve, but there are fewer MCL roles at Secondary, so that same benefit is not being seen in the data at this time.

b. 4 Way Instructional Rotation - Discussed earlier in meeting (see minutes above)

c. Special Education Services concerning specific student(s) (Executive Session)

Nothing to be discussed at this time.

Chief Talent Officer Update

a. April Talent Report

Marcia Molinar shared the April talent report. Her team is attending only one job fair this year, which was at Texas State University. This is because Wayside is focusing on hiring experienced teachers instead of new graduates. In addition, the talent and marketing team created a new recruiting video this month that features current employees sharing their experiences. They are also working on a refer-a-friend campaign for the fall semester.

For 24-25 hiring, her team is looking to fill about 60 positions. They are screening candidates now. For retention, she is seeing a 20% better retention rate than this time last year.

b. Concerning specific personnel issues (Executive Session)

Nothing to be discussed at this time.

Chief Operating Officer Update

a. Statement of Activities as of 2/29/2024

Francisco Garcia presented the Statement of Activities. He said he will have a better picture of expenses next month after gala funds have been received, but that our budget for FY 24 continues to track as expected..

b. Amendment #2 for FY 24 Budget

Francisco presented a second budget amendment for FY 24 that increases revenue based on an additional safety grant for security cameras and additional state allotment. David Dunn stated that the Finance Committee spent significant time exploring the budget amendment and he recommended approving it.

David Dunn asked for a motion to approve the budget.

Elaine Candelas moved to approve the budget, Meredith Sembello seconded, a roll call vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

c. Staff Pay and Teacher Pay Scale for 2024-25

Francisco proposed a salary payscale for the 24-25 school year, which is a 3% increase for teachers. He stated that payroll is a significant portion of the annual budget, and he will be able to complete the budget once all salaries are finalized.

David Dunn asked for a motion to approve the salary pay scale.

Meredith Sembello moved to approve the budget, Elaine Candelas seconded, a roll call vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

d. 24-25 Internal Bus Service Transition Update

Francisco shared that he and Maritza Gladyn are phone screening for a transportation manager to run this new program. He has two solid candidates at this time, and is hoping to make a hire soon and begin building a team.

c. Concerning specific personnel issues (Executive Session)

Closed Session:

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

Elaine Candelas motioned to exit the public session and enter into Executive Session and seconded by Meredith Sembello seconds, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously at 7:59 p.m.

At 8:55 pm David Dunn asked for a motion to exit the Executive Session.

Meredith Sembello motioned to exit the executive session and enter into Public Session. Elaine Candelas seconded, a roll call vote is taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Return to Public Session:

The board re-entered public session. No action was taken as of a result of the deliberations in Executive Session.

Adjourn

David Dunn asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m.

Jesus Becrrca motioned to adjourn, Elaine Candelas seconded, a roll call vote is taken, the motion passed unanimously.

David Dunn adjourned the meeting at 8:58 pm