

Wayside Board Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2025 at 6:00 PM.

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

Board Members Physically Present: Elaine Candelas, Jesus Becerra, Meredith Sembello, Dr. Ruth Reinhart, Dr. Nicole Trevino and Paul Duchene

Board Members Virtually Present: None

Board Members Absent: Cynthia Gonzalez

Public Physically or Virtually Present: None

Elaine Candelas called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. Roll called to establish a quorum, and a quorum of board members were present and accounted for.

Scholar and School Feature

Alejandra Mayne presented to the board an overview of the newly launched “game changer” program for college completion and gave an update on the early lessons learned and status of the class of 2025. Currently, Wayside is on track to meet 100% of the class of 2025 being accepted to 2/4 year colleges and universities.

Public Comments:

None

Meeting Minutes

Receive and approve Minutes from October and March regular board meetings.

- March minutes were presented for approval, October minutes were tabled.

Elaine Candelas asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Dr. Nicole Trevino made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Paul Duchene seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda Items, discussion and possible action on:

Consent Items:

- E-Rate funding Award to Solid IT
- Wayside Schools Employee Handbook for FY26
- Scholar Handbook for 2025-2026
- Allied Security Services Contract Proposal for SY25-26

b. Consent contracts since the last board meeting:

- None at this time

Elaine Candelas asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda items.

Jesus Becerra made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, Dr. Nicole Trevino seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Chief Executive Officer Update

Chief Executive Officer Update, Discussion, and Possible Action on:

Board Members, Term Update and Transitions (Sembello and Bacerra)

Meredith Sembello and Jesus Becerra intend to roll off the board at the end of the fiscal year at the end of their term. The board recognized Meredith and Jesus for their service and wished them all the best in the future.

Legislative Update

Matt Abbott provided an update to the board on legislation concerning school finance naming that there were multiple bills focused on increasing school funding that seem promising. At this time nothing is passed and the board will continue to get updates each month as the session concludes.

Fundraising Update

Liz Wrona gave a presentation to the board on fundraising year to date providing a report on the impact of the gala. At this time, Wayside has now raised over \$300K towards its fundraising goals for the year with a target of \$750k which is currently behind. There are a number of asks and grants out and the team is hopeful that some will close prior to the end of the fiscal year.

School Safety Updates and Possible Actions and Resolution(s) for HB 3 Compliance and School Safety: Clint Wise provided further clarity on the Good Cause Exception Statement for Private Security in Lieu of Peace Officer, this is a revisiting of the statement from the prior month. He ask for the board to consider revising their previous statement to clarify that the school will use the good cause exemption and will hire a private security firm in lieu of starting a police force.

Elaine Candelas asked for a motion to approve the Good Cause Exception Statement.

Jesus Becerra made a motion to approve the Good Cause Exception Statement as presented, Dr. Ruth Reinhart seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Performance Review, Monitoring and Contracting for 25-26 (Executive Session):

This item was tabled for executive session.

Chief Academic Officer Update

Update on Academic Accountability for SY23 and SY24 based on recent court decision

Susan Pommerening provided an update on the impact of the recent legal decisions concerning 22-23 and 23-24. Through legal decision TEA is now free to release the 22-23 Accountability ratings, and as a result it is expected that they will also soon be able to release the 23-24 ratings.

While Wayside has been transparent on our internal rating expectations in our community, ratings would now be made publicly available.

April Academic Update on Student Performance and Programs

Susan Pommerening provided an update on academic performance on common assessments. She shared concerns in targeted areas at Middle school and High School, while more general concerns at Altamira Academy. Despite these concerns, at this time Wayside still looks to be in a position to increase its accountability for the network.

Special Education Services concerning specific student(s):

Item not discussed and no action taken on this item.

Chief Talent Officer Update

Chief Talent Officer Update, Discussion, and Possible Action on:

April Talent Report

Marcia Molinar shared a presentation on the current status of hiring, staff retention and turnover and special programs as of April. She also shared that we have yet to hear anything concerning our TIA application, we are hopeful to hear something in the month of May and to be able to report back out to the board no later than June of 2025.

Concerning specific personnel issues (Executive Session)

- No action taken on this item

Chief Operating Officer Update

Chief Operations Officer Update, Discussion, and Possible Action on:

24-25 Enrollment:

Similar to last month, Karlie Ramirez presented on current enrollment trends and activities stating that enrollment is hovering around 1,800 scholars. Enrollment continues to backfill openings and enrollment. There are also about 360 applications for the 2025-26 school year in process now

Statement of Activities as of 4.30.25:

Francisco Garcia reviewed the statement of activities as provided in the board materials. Like in last month's presentation, Wayside continues to operate in a deficit due to serving fewer students than originally budgeted for as presented in previous meetings, but shared that budget reduction strategies continue. Wayside continues to be on track to pass FIRST and meet all bond covenants.

Teacher Pay Scale and Stipends for SY 2025-2026

Francisco Garcia presented an unchanged teacher pay scale for SY 25-26, calling for a pay freeze for all Wayside staff until there is further clarity from the legislative session budget bill, not expected until June, with further clarity coming in the month of July from TEA. The board supported revisiting this pay freeze, while also adopting limited changes to stipends for special education teachers.

Elaine Candelas asked for a motion to approve the Teacher Pay Scale and Stipends for SY 2025-2026 as presented by staff.

Paul Duchene made a motion to approve the Teacher Pay Scale and Stipends for SY 2025-2026 as presented by staff, Meredith Sembellow seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Concerning specific personnel issues (Executive Session):

No action taken on this item.

Closed Session:

Elaine Candelas asked for a motion to enter executive session.

Jesus Becerra made a motion to enter executive session, Dr. Nicole Trevino seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Deliberations were taken in executive session.

Elaine Candelas asked for a motion to exit executive session.

Dr. Nicole Trevino made a motion to exit executive session, Meredith Sembello seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Return to public session.

Elaine Candelas shared that the board had determined that the Superintendent had met standard on his annual appraisal and it is the will of the board to renew his contract, effective July 1st, 2025 for an additional one year term at the same rate of pay as the 24-25 school year for the 25-26 school year, honoring the current pay freeze enacted for all other staff earlier in the meeting.

Elaine Candelas asked for a motion to renew the contract for the 25-26 SY with the superintendent with the stipulations she listed, with the superintendent having met standard on his appraisal.

Dr. Nicole Trevino made a motion to renew the contract for the 25-26 SY with the superintendent with the stipulations provided by Eliane Candelas, pending final legal review from counsel, Meredith Sembello seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Elaine Candelas asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Paul Duchene motioned to adjourn, Dr. Ruth Reinhart seconded, a roll call vote was taken, the motion passed unanimously.

Elaine Candelas adjourned the meeting at 8:46 pm