

Minutes
Monday, August 12, 2024
Regular Board meeting at 5:30 P.M.
Location of Meeting: GISD Administrative Board Room, 1615 St Lawrence St.
Gonzales, Texas 78629

Board Members Present: Ross Hendershot, III, President
Justin Schwausch, Vice President
Josie Smith-Wright, Secretary
D'Anna Robinson
Ashley Molina
Gloria Torres
Naomi Brown

Board Member Absent:

Item #1. Call to Order

The Board of Trustees of the Gonzales Independent School District met Monday, August 12, 2024, at the Administrative Office Board Room, Gonzales, Texas. President, Ross Hendershot, III called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

A quorum was declared with 7 members present.

Invocation, Pledge, Mission Statement

Gloria Torres gave the Invocation, Justin Schwausch led the Pledge to the Flag, and Ashley Molina read the Mission Statement.

Item #2: Public Comments: There were two public comments.

Curt Metzler and Jake Pringle both spoke on the possibility of renaming the high school gym after a previous Gonzales ISD basketball coach, Vic Salazar.

Item #3: New Business/Action Items:

A. Discuss and Consider Action to Approve the Consent Agenda

1. Budget Amendments: No budget amendments were presented
2. Minutes: July 8, 2024- Regular Meeting
July 22, 2024-Special Meeting

Justin Schwausch made a motion, with a second from Josie Smith-Wright, to approve the consent agenda, as presented.

The motion carried 7/0.

B. Discuss and Consider Action on the GASB 54 Resolution

Amanda Smith, Gonzales ISD Chief Financial Officer, recommended the board approve a GASB 54 resolution to set aside or earmark the \$125,000 donation the district received this year for the construction and/or furnishing of the new CTE facility that is associated with the 2023 bond program. Ms. Smith clarified that since this is done at the school board level it can not be utilized for any purpose without the school board's approval. She also stated that the donor desired to remain anonymous.

Ashely Molina made a motion, with a second from Justin Schwausch, to approve and adopt the resolution, as presented.

The motion carried 7/0.

C. **Discuss and Consider Action on Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Budget and Proposed Tax Rate**

Amanda Smith went before the board to seek approval of the data for the Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Budget and the Proposed Tax Rate. This is the annual notice that must be legally published no less than ten days and no greater than thirty days prior to the public meeting. Administration recommends the Notice be published in the Gonzales Inquirer on August 15, 2024. The format of the notice is created by the Texas Comptroller.

Ms. Smith explained that GISD received the local property values from Gonzales and Caldwell Counties at the end of July. Overall, values were up over 16% from last year. These certified values are what drove some of the information in the notice provided. Specifically, the Average Taxable Average of Residence has increased from last year as well as the proposed tax rate. The tax rate will be increased just shy of 4 pennies from last year as a result of the successful bond election we had in November 2023. Ms. Smith reminded the board that, during the community presentations that GISD had during the election season, the administration shared that the overall tax rate over the past 5 years has decreased by over 35 ½ pennies.

GISD told the voters that with a successful passage on Proposition, A which is the proposition that passed and is allowing us to move forward with maintenance projects and the CTE building, the tax rate was projected to increase by 8.13 pennies. Because of the additional tax compression and the increase in property value the tax rate is only projected to increase 3.87 pennies, which is over 4 cents below what voters thought their tax rate would increase to.

Ms. Smith also pointed out on the form received from the tax accessor collector which was published by the comptroller states “Under state law, the dollar amount of school taxes imposed on the residence homestead of a person 65 years of age or older or of the surviving spouse of such a person, if the surviving spouse was 55 years of age or older when the person died, may not be increased above the amount paid in the first year after the person turned 65, regardless of changes in tax rate or property value.”

Justin Schwausch made a motion, with a second from D’Anna Robinson to approve the notice, as presented.

The motion carried 7/0

D. **Discuss and Consider Action on the Agreement for the Purchase of Attendance Credits (Option 3 Agreement) and to Delegate Contractual Authority to the Superintendent**

Amanda Smith, Chief Financial Officer, went before the board seeking approval on the Agreement to Purchase Attendance Credits (Option 3 Agreement) and to Delegate Contractual Authority to the Superintendent.

The district has received preliminary notification that its local revenue will exceed its entitlement for the 2024-25 school year (previously referred to as a “Chapter 41 district”). At this time GISD is obligated to inform the Texas Education Agency (TEA) how it intends to reduce its local revenue.

Due to the district’s Chapter 48 state funding estimated to exceed its Chapter 49 (local revenue) recapture costs, the administration recommends offsetting/reducing state aid by the amount owed for recapture in lieu of making payments to the state from February to August 2025.

The contract submission process is now completed electronically through a module on TEA’s website. Therefore, contractual authority must be granted to the superintendent so that he can submit the data through the TEA module on behalf of the district.

Five options in total are given to choose from. However, Option 3 is the option that the administration recommends, which is to purchase attendance credits from the state. With Option 3A, GISD gives the money to the state and they determine where it’s supposed to go.

For the 2024–2025 school year, we delegated contractual authority to obligate the school district under Texas Education Code (TEC) §11.1511(c)(4) to the superintendent, solely for the purpose of obligating the district under TEC, §48.257 and TEC, Chapter 49, Subchapters A and D, and the rules adopted by the commissioner of education as authorized under TEC, 49.006. This included approval of the Agreement for the Purchase of Attendance Credit or the Agreement for the Purchase of Attendance Credit (Netting Chapter 48 Funding).

Naomi Brown made a motion, with a second from Josie Smith-Wright to approve the agreement and delegate contractual authority to the superintendent as presented.

The motion carried 7/0.

E. **Discuss and Consider Action to Authorize the Superintendent to Sign the Legal Services Retainer Agreement with Walsh Gallegos Trevino Russo & Kyle P.C.**

Amanda Smith recommended the board authorize the Superintendent to sign the Legal Services Retainer Agreement with Walsh Gallegos Trevino Russo & Kyle P.C.

****Take note that a mistake was made the Attorney's name should be Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & Roalson P.C.****
It is the same firm, but they underwent a name change.

The district uses this law firm for our general legal counsel.

Board Policy BDD (Local) authorizes the Board to retain an attorney or attorneys, as necessary, to serve as the District's legal counsel and representative in matters requiring legal services. The district is asking authorization from the board to allow the Superintendent to sign the Legal Service Retainer Agreement with Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & Roalson P.C. legal services for the 2024-2025 school year.

The cost for the retainer agreement is \$1,000 per year which includes:

- No-charge telephone consultation on day-to-day general and special education matters with attorneys in any of our offices.
- District access to reduce rates on training provided by the law firm.
- Template handbooks provided to GISD which include fill in the blank to make them personal for GISD
- Free Subscriptions to their newsletter

Josie Smith-Wright asked if GISD wanted to use another law firm would that need to be taken before the board? Ms. Smith's response was yes. Board Policy states that only the board may hire attorneys.

Josie Smith-Wright made a motion, with a second from Gloria Torres to authorize the Superintendent to sign the legal Services Retainer Agreement with Walsh Gallegos Kyle Robinson & Roalson P.C. for the 2024-2025 school year, as presented.

The motion carried 7/0.

F. **Discuss and Consider Action on Resolution/Settlement Agreement in Administrative Hearing Cause No.24-0146-K; Gonzales Independent School District vs Texas Department of Health & Human Services, Including Possible Resolution**

Amanda Smith recommended the board approve the Settlement Agreement with the Health and Human Services or HHSC. This agreement is related to the SHARS audit that has been discussed in previous meetings during the monthly financial report. This is the result of the Federal Government auditing the State. The findings at the State level resulted in HHSC telling school districts that they would not be receiving all the money that they thought they would be getting this year. Mid-year, districts were informed that they would be cutting the federal revenue that hits our general fund. At that time the effect was estimated to be worth about \$300,000. GISD responded to that notice with an informal appeal with HHSC which was denied. With the support of legal counsel, a formal appeal was filed.

Board action is needed to move forward with accepting the settlement that has been proposed on the formal appeal. Legal advised there is no further revenue expected to come from continuing the appeal process so it is prudent to accept the settlement.

Ms. Smith stated that, at this time, there is no deadline to move forward but the sooner action is taken the sooner we should receive the funds.

The settlement is valued at \$251,822.04.

Justin Schwausch made a motion, with a second from Josie Smith-Wright to approve the proposed settlement agreement as presented by the administration and authorize the superintendent to execute the agreement.

The motion carried 7/0.

G. **Discuss and Consider Action to Approve the Appraisal Calendar and Appraisers for the 2024-2025 school year**

Brandi Bell, Executive Director of Recruitment, Leadership, and Professional Development, went before the board seeking the approval of the 2024-2025 Appraisal Calendar and Appraisers. The list and calendar were uploaded to BoardBook.

Josie Smith-Wright made a motion, with a second from Ashley Molina to approve the List of Teacher Appraisers and the Teacher Appraisal Calendar for the 2024-2025 school year, as presented.

The motion carried 7/0

H. **Discuss and Consider Action to Approve 3 MOUs with Victoria College to bridge instructional services for Plumbing II, Electrical II, and Welding I**

Wendy Cox, Gonzales ISD Director of CCMR and CTE, along with Dwayne Mally a representative from Victoria College, presented three memorandum of understandings (MOU) to the board and recommended they be approved.

These MOUs are needed for students to extend their learning by receiving a higher-level certification. This would fall under business and industry as an endorsement but it's under manufacturing for welding

Dr. A gave a formal thank you to Mr. Mally for all of his hard work to bridge Victoria College with GISD.

Justin Schwausch made a motion, with a second from Josie Smith-Wright.

The motion carried 7/0.

I. **Discuss and Consider Action to Approve changes to Gonzales ISD Adult Breakfast and Lunch meal Price**

Mr. Edward Wayner, Gonzales ISD Director of Food Services, recommended the board adopt a legally required increase to the adult meal prices.

He explained that each year school districts participating in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs are required to set minimum student and adult meal pricing. Since all our students receive FREE breakfast and lunch under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) we only have to update adult meal prices.

Adult meal prices are calculated by adding the free reimbursement rate for student meals, any additional severe need reimbursement, additional performance-based supplement (lunch only) and the per-meal commodity value received. Since we use USDA commodities at breakfast and lunch, the commodity value is included in both calculations.

USDA's intention of districts reviewing and updating adult meal prices (as necessary) is to ensure districts charge enough for adult meals so that they are not subsidized by funds received for student meals. This year the base breakfast and lunch reimbursement rate reset to the inflation-adjusted rate after a couple of years of temporary legislative increases. We have included the pricing worksheet to calculate the required minimum adult meal pricing. To stay compliant with minimal adult meal pricing, for 2024-2025 we recommend increasing the adult breakfast price from \$3.10 to \$3.30 and adult lunch price from \$4.75 to \$5.00.

D'Anna Robinson made a motion, with a second from Naomi Brown, to set the 2024-2025 Gonzales ISD adult breakfast meal price at \$3.30 and the adult lunch price at \$5.00.

The motion carried 7/0.

Item#5 Reports:

A. **Report Updates to the Gonzales ISD District Curriculum Updates**

Dr. Rachelle Ysquierdo, Gonzales ISD Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, gave the board an update on state and district data and curriculum.

B. **Financial Report**

The Financial Report was presented by Amanda Smith, Chief Financial Officer.

C. **2023 Bond Program Monthly Update**

Casey Sledge from ESC 13/ Sledge Engineering provided the board with a monthly update for the 2023 Bond Program.

E. **Superintendent Reports**

Dr. A provided the monthly superintendent report. He reported that every student at every campus will walk into their classroom with a teacher. There are still several supplemental positions available.

GPA potentially might need another teacher if enrollment increases. Enrollment as of 8/12/24 is 136 which is down from previous years.

Item#6 Board Business:


Board Correspondence: No Correspondence

Item #7 Adjourn

There being no further business, President Hendershot adjourned the meeting at 6:55 P.M.



Ross Hendershot, III, President
Board of Trustees



Josie Smith-Wright, Secretary
Board of Trustees