

Minutes of Meeting of Board of Trustees
El Paso Independent School District
May 7, 2002
5:00 p.m.
Education Center-Boeing

Present: Mr. Dan Wever, President
Dr. Gene Finke, Vice President
Miss Leonor Garcia, Secretary
Mr. Sal Mena, Jr.
Dr. Charles Roark
Mr. Joe Rosales
Mr. Richard Telles
Dr. Gilberto Anzaldua, Superintendent
Mr. Anthony Safi, School District Attorney

The meeting was called to order at 5:18 p.m. by Mr. Wever. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. William Goodman, Associate Superintendent, Finance.

Recognition of Coronado Boys and Girls Golf Teams (Item #1)

Members of the Coronado High School golf team were recognized by the Board of Trustees for having qualified for the state meet. The Lady "T" Birds Girls Team members recognized were as follows: Janet DeGroat, Lindsay Anderson, and Amanda Finnigan – All District, All Regional; and Alix Lee and Kari Torres – All District. The Coronado Boys Golf Team members recognized were as follows: Chas Birk and Craig Boone – All District, All Regional; and Moises Valdes, Kevan Boone, Eric Haddad, Kevin Stull, Chris Farah, and Ernest Eisenberg – All District. Each student was presented with an engraved plaque and congratulated individually by Dr. Anzaldua and the Board of Trustees.

Presentation of Promotional Recruiting CD (Compact Disc) (Item #2)

Mr. Charles Tafoya, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources, and Ms. Marcia Brown, Director, Personnel Administration, commended the personnel and staff members that assisted in the development of the promotional recruiting CD (compact disc). They acknowledged Mr. Luis Villalobos, Executive Director, Community and Business Partnerships, and his staff; Mr. Jack Johnston, Executive Director, Technology and Information Systems, and his staff; staff in the EPISD Production Studio; Human Resources staff; and Mr. Leo Arroyo, the consultant hired to work with Human Resources on developing the CD. The CD was presented for the Board of Trustees' viewing.

Ms. Brown reviewed the information provided on the CD, advised that the CD will be updated each year, and reported that the cost of the CD was minimal to the paper materials that were used previously. Mr. Tafoya stated that photographs of the District's schools will be digitized and included on the next CD.

Discussion of Compliance Issues Related to Least Restrictive Environment for EPISD Special Education Students (Item #3)

It was moved by Mr. Wever, seconded by Miss Garcia, and carried unanimously that item no. 3, Discussion of Compliance Issues Related to Least Restrictive Environment for EPISD Special Education Students, be postponed until a future Board meeting.

Communication Procedures for Conveying Information to the Board of Trustees from the Administration on Issues Related to EPISD (Item #4)

Mr. Mena, who placed this item on the agenda, referenced incidents at Richardson Middle School and Bowie High School and commented on the need for improved communication with the Board of Trustees on issues involving the campuses. He suggested setting up a "hot line" and requested that an organizational chart be provided to the Board members as soon as possible, that principals provide Board members ample notification of events at the schools which they are being invited to attend, and that protocol with Board members at the schools be improved.

Mr. Luis Villalobos, Executive Director, Communications and Business Partnerships, provided information on the situation referenced at Richardson Middle School and reviewed procedures that had been followed in the Communications Unit as they relate to communicating with the Trustees. He advised that procedures were being instituted whereby Board members are notified as soon as the Communications Unit is contacted regarding a problem on a campus and that detailed updates will then be provided to the Board members by facsimile.

There was discussion on the communication with parents following an incident; principals contacting the El Paso Police Department rather than EPISD Police Services to handle situations at the campuses; and improved communication among the Board members.

Approval of Proposed School Attendance Zone Boundary Changes (Item #5)

Dr. William Wachtel, Senior Researcher, Finance, presented recommended boundary changes for the 2002-03 school year. He advised that the 2002-03 priority areas for Northeast and West El Paso include rezoning Dr. Nixon and Bradley Elementary Schools and Charles and Richardson Middle Schools; creating the attendance zone for Barron Elementary School; and adjusting the boundaries between Vilas and Mesita Elementary Schools, Coronado and El Paso High Schools, and Morehead and Wiggs Middle Schools. He reviewed the criteria for determining attendance zones which includes building capacities; demographic data, such as ethnic balance among schools, at-risk students, and socioeconomic status; and transportation and barriers.

Dr. Wachtel reviewed the current Northeast elementary boundaries, enrollments, and school capacities based on a 17-to-1 ratio and using December 20, 2001, data for Bradley, Collins, Fannin, Newman, and Dr. Nixon Elementary Schools and the recommended boundaries and capacities using projected 2002 data. He advised that the implementation plans are for fourth graders during 2001-02 to remain at their present elementary school to complete the fifth grade. Students in the lower grades will be required to attend the designated school under the new zones but will have first consideration for transfers, as space permits.

Dr. Wachtel reviewed the current Northeast middle school boundaries, enrollments, and capacities based on an 18-to-1 ratio and using December 20, 2001, data for Charles, Richardson, and Terrace Hills Middle Schools and the recommended boundaries, enrollments, and capacities using projected 2002 data. He advised that the implementation plans are for students in sixth or seventh grade during 2001-02 to remain at their current schools. Students who will be sixth graders for the 2002-03 school year will attend newly designated schools and transfers will be considered on a space available basis.

Dr. Wachtel advised that the recommendation for West El Paso is to clarify the boundaries for Coronado and El Paso High Schools and Morehead and Wiggs Middle Schools. He stated that students residing off the northern portion of Stanton Street whose southern most access to Mesa is Festival Drive will attend Coronado High School and Morehead Middle School. He advised that this clarification affects future residents and that no immediate student movement should occur. Dr. Wachtel stated that adjustments to the boundaries for Vilas and Mesita Elementary Schools include students that live next to each other but go to different schools and that transportation will be improved because these student will now attend the same school. He stated that students who live south of the 2000 block of West Paisano and west of I-10 will be included in the Vilas Elementary School attendance zone. Dr. Wachtel advised that this clarification affects students who live at the Rescue Mission of El Paso, which is accessible off Ruhlen.

There was discussion on the average number of children at the Rescue Mission of El Paso who attend Mesita Elementary School; whether children in the Mesita attendance zone are being moved to Dr. Green Elementary School; how including the whole area south of Highway 54 in the attendance zone for Charles Middle School will affect the school's enrollment; parents wanting their children to attend Charles; the supply of portable classrooms; concerns with transfers being made on a space-available basis; and keeping siblings in the same school.

It was moved by Dr. Roark and seconded by Mr. Mena that the Board establish the boundary of the North-South Freeway (Highway 54) for Charles Middle School and that space be provided at Charles for students whose parents prefer that they attend Charles.

Discussion continued on the cost per portable classroom; the number of additional portables that will be needed if the boundary is expanded for Charles Middle School; the boundary recommendations being acceptable to the Board, except for Charles Middle School; the revision of the boundary recommendation for Charles Middle School setting a precedent for parents in other attendance zones; children attending school in their neighborhoods; the number of additional students at Charles Middle School if the attendance zone encompasses the area south of Highway 54; how approving the motion on the floor will result in requiring 17 additional portables at Charles; and postponing action on the boundaries for the middle schools in Northeast El Paso until further information can be provided on the number of students that will be involved.

Dr. Roark withdrew his motion. Mr. Mena withdrew his second.

It was moved by Mr. Wever, seconded by Dr. Roark, and carried unanimously that the attendance zone boundaries for Barron, Bradley, and Dr. Nixon Elementary Schools in Northeast El Paso; and the attendance zone boundaries for Vilas and Mesita Elementary Schools; Morehead and Wiggs Middle Schools; and Coronado and El Paso High Schools in West El Paso be approved effective the 2002-03 school year as recommended and presented by the Boundary Review Committee and the administration (copy of boundary line details attached to the permanent file of these minutes) and that the proposed school attendance zone boundaries for Charles and Richardson Middle Schools in Northeast El Paso be postponed until May 14, 2002.

Approval of Audit Firm to Provide Audit Services for 2001-02 Fiscal Year (Item #6)

Mr. William Goodman, Associate Superintendent, Finance, provided a brief report on the RFP (request for proposals) process and the rationale for the administration's recommendation. He provided information on the base cost for the audit and the unknown costs associated with the School Leaver audit and the State Compensatory Education (SCE) audit, which were not included in last year's audit.

It was moved by Dr. Finke, seconded by Mr. Rosales, and carried unanimously that the Board approve the firm of Dunbar Broadus Gibson, LLP to serve as the District's audit firm for the 2001-02 fiscal year at a cost negotiated by the administration, with the option to renew for up to three more years subject to satisfactory service and the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Construction Contract Award – 2002 Portable Classrooms, Phase 2, #02.342 (\$792,400.00) (Item #7)

It was moved by Mr. Mena, seconded by Mr. Rosales, and carried unanimously that the Board reject the low bid submitted by U S Modular Group, Inc., which was not in accordance with the plans and specifications, and approve the award of Construction Contract #02.342, 2002 Portable Classrooms, Phase 2, subject to the review and approval of the District's attorney, to Banes General Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$792,400.00.

Meeting Closed (Item #8)

The meeting was recessed at 6:45 p.m. to a closed meeting by Mr. Wever under Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code as follows:

A. Consultation with School District Attorney

1. Arlene Sonnen v. El Paso Independent School District; TEA Docket No. 075-R10-601
2. David d. b/n/f Elizabeth D., Petitioner, v. El Paso Independent School District, Respondent; Before a special Education Hearing Officer for the State of Texas; Docket No. 214-SE-0202

The closed meeting was started at 6:50 p.m. The closed meeting ended at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Opened

The meeting was reassembled in Open Session at 7:02 p.m.

Consultation with School District Attorney – David D. b/n/f Elizabeth D., Petitioner, v. El Paso Independent School District, Respondent; Before a Special Education Hearing Officer for the State of Texas; Docket No. 214-SE-0202 (Item #8, A., 2.)

It was moved by Mr. Mena, seconded by Dr. Roark, and carried unanimously that the Board approve the payment of the petitioner's attorney's fees in the amount of \$8,500.00 as negotiated as part of the mediated settlement agreement of this case.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Date Approved: August 27, 2002