



# BOARD NOTES

## **A Summary of the November 14, 2016 Palestine ISD Board of Trustees Meeting**

Southside Elementary students led pledges of allegiance to the American and Texas flags.

### **Spotlight**

#### **GEM Award**

Gabino Gonzalez was presented the GEM of the Year award by Timothy Lane of SSC Custodial Services for providing outstanding custodial services at the Northside Primary campus.

#### **PHS Band**

Daniel Curry, PHS Band Director, introduced members of the PHS Band, and assistant band directors; Steven Reiss, Jennifer Joslin, and David Jones. Mr. Curry shared accomplishments from the 2016 marching band season. Mr. Curry informed that 2016 is a “state” year for 4A bands, therefore all 4A bands in the state are competing for the UIL State Marching Contest. In preparation for the 2016 UIL marching test, the Wildcat Marching Band competed at the Sunnyvale Marching Invitational and the Mineola Marching Festival during the month of October. The band qualified for finals at Sunnyvale, placing 8<sup>th</sup> out of 22 bands. The band placed 8<sup>th</sup> of 23 bands at the Mineola contest. The Wildcat Band went on to earn the Superior rating at Region 21 UIL Marching Contest, qualifying the band for UIL Area Marching Contest. Though the band did not advance to state in 2016, many improvements were made.

#### **Cross Country**

Robby Clark, PISD Athletic Director, introduced John Absalom, Boys’ Soccer coach, and Luis Hernandez, Girls’ Soccer coach, who shared information from the Girls’ and Boys’ 2016 Cross Country seasons and introduced the Cross Country team members who were present. Accomplishments from the season include: The girls’ team placed third in district and the Boys’ won their eleventh District Championship in a row. Michael Guzman, freshman, advanced to the UIL State Cross Country Meet in Round Rock on Saturday, November 12, 2016.

#### **Fall Tennis**

Robby Clark, PISD Athletic Director, introduced Scott Tyler, the PHS Tennis coach, and Courtney Johnson, the PHS Assistant Tennis coach. Coach Tyler shared information from PISD’s first Fall Tennis season and introduced Tennis team members. Accomplishments from the Tennis season include: The Fall Tennis Team was undefeated in district play and placed third in area. All-District Tennis accomplishments include: Stevie Ybarra and Annalise Meyers (Co-MVP Girls), Camryn Lupo (Girls Newcomer of the Year), Jorge Giron (Boys Newcomer of the Year), 3<sup>rd</sup> doubles team of Hunter Haroff and Jorge Giron (1<sup>st</sup> Team All-District), mixed doubles team of Stevie Ybarra and Lucas Sheeley (1<sup>st</sup> Team All-District).

### **Junior Rotarians of the Month**

PHS students, Kristi Klauser and Nickolas Williamson were recognized for being named Junior Rotarians for the month of November. Dr. William Stewart, PHS Principal, introduced Rachel Nolan, PHS Math Teacher, who introduced each student and shared their individual accomplishments.

### **Students of the Month**

Jackie Rubalcava and Aaron Jackson were recognized as PHS Students of the Month for November. Janice Magee, PHS Math Teacher, introduced each student and shared their individual accomplishments.

### **Financial Report**

David Atkeisson, Chief Financial Officer, reported that tax collections and state payments were coming in strong. Mr. Atkeisson informed the Board that the district's 2015-2016 preliminary financial audit looked favorable and that a formal audit report was expected to be available by January, 2017.

### **Consent Items Approved**

- Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 24, 2016
- Bills paid for October, 2016
- Financial Report
- Monthly Investment Report
- Tax Collection Report
- Donations
  - Washington Early Childhood Center  
\$500.00 from Keyshuna Fletcher to be used to purchase books for the WECC Library.
  - PHS Athletics Department  
Gatorade valued at \$700.00 from Walmart for the PHS Athletics Department.
- 2016-2017 Legal Services Retainer Agreement with Walsh, Gallegos, Russo and Kyle, P.C., Attorneys at Law

### **Campus Presentation**

Melissa Molandes, Southside Elementary Principal, shared that the main goal and vision of Southside is to build positive independent learners, and to help students recognize their strengths and qualities so that they are enabled to overcome obstacles. Recognizing good character traits and teaching students to put others first is very important at Southside. The campus also focuses on teaching students to set goals and to prepare them for fourth grade. Mr. Marshall commended Mrs. Molandes for helping ensure students are prepared for transitioning to the Story campus, and for assisting staff in establishing appropriate goals in the new TTESS appraisal system. A video was shown featuring Southside Elementary students and staff.

### **Review of 2017 Anderson County & Freestone County Legislative Priorities**

The Board of Trustees reviewed the following Draft list of suggested priorities that was developed by Anderson County and Freestone County Public School Districts for the 2017 Texas Legislative Session at a legislative planning meeting on Monday, November 7, 2016:

1. Funding – We support additional state funding for public school students to ensure an appropriate, modern-day education for all students. Additionally, we do not support a reduction in funding for some schools in order to provide extra money for other schools. Specific needs include:
  - a. An increase in the Basic Allotment.
  - b. The removal of the Small-Schools Penalty (increase in small schools formula).
  - c. Assistance for those schools who are currently receiving ASATR funding.

2. Testing and Accountability – We support the reduction of state assessments to align with the number of federal tests students must take, and we support the complete elimination of the A-F Rating System. Specifics include:
  - a. Test students in grades 3-8 in alignment with federal test schedule.
  - b. Remove all high school tests with the exception of the TSI at 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - c. Eliminate the upcoming A-F School Rating System and continue with the Met Standard System.
3. Teacher Recruitment and Retention – We support an increase in pay and benefits for teachers in order to improve the quality and longevity of Texas teachers. Specifics include:
  - a. Raising the state’s portion of each employee’s monthly insurance contribution.
  - b. Maintaining the defined benefit Teacher Retirement System plan.
4. Vouchers, Student Savings Scholarships, Etc – We do not support vouchers or any form of public/taxpayer dollars being redistributed to private schools/education.
5. Full Day PreK – We support complete funding for full-day PreK.

Note: In addition to the five legislative priorities listed above, schools in Anderson County support the components of HB 2610 which provides local control and reasonable flexibility of our yearly school calendars.

#### Other Organizational Platforms Supported

Texas Association of School Boards	Texas Association of School Administrators
Texas Association of Community Schools	Texas Rural Education Association
Texas Association of Mid-Size Schools	Texas Association of Rural Schools
Friends of Texas Public Schools	Texas Parent PAC

The 2017 Legislative Priorities will be presented for PISD Board approval at the regular Board meeting on Monday, December 12, 2016. Superintendent Marshall expressed appreciation to the Board for their work on the development of the legislative platform, and noted that it makes it easier for elected officials to support the public school districts when districts bring a united focus to the attention of the elected officials. Trustee Sheeley stated that it was good to see the school districts of different sizes working together to bring change. Trustee Sokolowski felt it was not just important for the Board to communicate with elected officials, but also for parents, teachers, and the entire community to become involved in the legislative process.

#### **District of Innovation Plan**

Superintendent Marshall, and Tammy Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, reviewed the PISD proposed District of Innovation Plan. Superintendent Marshall stated that the purpose of pursuing the DOI Plan was to return more local control to the district. Superintendent Marshall stated that all requirements for DOI status acceptance by the Texas Education Agency had been followed.

The following actions have been taken in the PISD DOI process:

- 1) PISD utilized informational meetings for administration to inform staff of DOI process.
- 2) Additional meetings held by campus principals to provide information for staff.
- 3) A DOI committee was formed. The committee made up of parents, teachers, campus administrators, and community members; met two times to discuss DOI options.
- 4) A parent meeting was held to inform parents and solicit their input.
- 5) PISD District Action Team meetings held regarding DOI process.

- 6) Superintendent officially notified the Commissioner of Education of PISD's intent to apply for DOI status.
- 7) DOI Plan public posting for 30 days prior to acceptance by Commissioner of Education.

Superintendent Marshall informed the Board that the plan was required to be posted publicly for 30 days as required by the Texas Education Agency in order for the Commissioner of Education to accept the plan. Therefore it was recommended by Superintendent Marshall that the Board approve the public posting of the PISD District of Innovation plan for 30 days. The final DOI Plan will be presented for Board approval at the December 12, 2016 regular Board meeting.

The Board of Trustees approved the public posting of PISD's District of Innovation Plan for the 30 required days.

### **Federal Charter School Grant**

Superintendent Marshall, and Tammy Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services, provided the Board information regarding the district's intent to apply for a Federal Charter School Grant that if awarded would provide a non-traditional High School for PISD. The District plans to request Board approval to submit an application to the Texas Education Agency for a Federal Charter School Grant at the December 12, 2016 regular Board meeting.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Jason Marshall reported on the following:

- District student enrollment as of November 14, 2016 was 3,454.
- Board members were given a calendar of events for the remainder of November through January 2017.
- The second of four Flex days to provide intensive academic assistance for students in the four core academic disciplines will be held on Friday, November 18, 2016.
- Board members and administrators will distribute turkeys to PISD staff on Wednesday, November 16, 2016 from 2-4 pm in the PISD Administration Office parking area.
- Board members and administrators will deliver Thanksgiving baskets to twelve PISD families on Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at 4 pm.
- District administrators will distribute retention incentives to PISD staff on Friday, December 2, 2016.

**Next Regular Board Meeting  
December 12, 2016 – 7:00 p.m.**