



# BOARD NOTES

## **A Summary of the October 21, 2019 Palestine ISD Board of Trustees Meeting**

### **Pledges**

Sheila Bradley, Washington Early Childhood Center Principal, introduced WECC students who led pledges to the American and Texas flags.

### **Spotlight – Principals**

Palestine ISD principals were recognized in support of Principals Month which Texas Governor Greg Abbott proclaimed for the month of October. Superintendent Marshall and President Bennett thanked principals for their hard work and dedication to students.

### **Spotlight - Palestine High School Junior Rotarians**

Rachel Fulgham and McClellan “Tre” Calhoun were recognized for being selected to serve as Junior Rotarians for the month of September. Each student was presented a certificate.

### **Spotlight - Palestine High School Students of the Month**

Dr. William Stewart, PHS Principal; introduced Emma Bennett and Noah Alexander, who were recognized for being chosen as Students of the Month for September. Each student was presented a plaque.

### **Public Comment**

There were no requests for public comment.

### **Campus Report**

Barbara Dutton, Northside Primary Principal, provided an update for each of the district’s campuses.

Highlights included:

- Washington ECC: Campus held a Fall Fest, students visited the Pumpkin Patch in October, the campus held Community Helper Day in which a helicopter landed at the campus.
- Southside Elementary: Students attended a Fire Prevention Show, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are having a Reading Competition, UPS gave a presentation at the campus, campus is holding a canned food drive.
- A.M. Story Intermediate: Campus held Fall Fest, campus participating in MyOn Reading Competition.
- Palestine Junior High School: Boys Cross Country placed 1<sup>st</sup> in District, Girls Cross Country placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in District, Football undefeated in District, Junior High Band playing at all home football games.
- Palestine High School: Boys & Girls Cross Country are both District Champions.
- Northside Primary: Campus held RTI Meetings and students placed in appropriate intervention, Campus attended Fire Prevention Show, Pumpkin Patch at Grace United Methodist Church, Trick-or-Treat at Greenbrier Nursing Home. Campus participated in Drug Free Schools Week. Campus

held book sale, hamburger cookout, Skating Unit. Mrs. Barbara Dutton, Northside Principal, thanked the Gonzalez family for painting all of the Northside Primary playground equipment.

### **Public Hearing: FIRST Report for 2018-2019**

President Bennett announced a Public Hearing for discussion of the 2018-2019 FIRST Report. David Atkeisson, Chief Financial Officer, presented a report on the district's FIRST Rating. As has been the case for several years, PISD received the highest rating of A or Superior. Mr. Atkeisson informed that PISD scored 96 of 100 points, and that although the score reflected a loss of 4 points; the district was satisfied with the score because the reduced score was based on the district's debt to student ratio due to the district's many facility improvements. President Bennett offered an opportunity for public comment. There were no questions or concerns.

### **Tax Collection Update**

Robert Myers of McCreary, Veselka, Bragg & Allen, P.C., Attorneys at Law reviewed current and delinquent property tax collections. Mr. Myers informed that a high percentage of the district's tax payers paid their taxes on time, and that the total annual tax collections exceeded the amount of taxes levied. (As of October 2019, the District collected 100.56% to 101.37% of the taxes levied for each of the last five years).

### **Financial Report**

David Atkeisson, Chief Financial Officer, presented a brief financial report. Mr. Atkeisson informed that the district was beginning to receive current year tax collections, the budget was on track for that point in the school year, and that many employees had expressed gratitude for salary increases they had received.

### **Consent Items Approved**

- Minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 16, 2019
- Minutes of the Called Meeting of September 30, 2019
- Bills paid for September, 2019
- Financial Report
- Monthly Investment Report
- Tax Collection Report
- Donations
  - Palestine High School (Choir Trip to Carnegie Hall/New York City)
    - Items valued at \$95 from Lowe's
    - \$200 from Frances Ann Dear
    - \$2,300 from Chicken Express
    - \$50 from Judge Jim & Karen Parsons
  - Palestine Athletic Department (Football Game Rally Towels)
    - \$500 from Jessica Walker
    - \$350 from Jeff Atkinson Texas Farm Bureau
    - \$350 from Palestine Regional Medical Center
- 2019-2020 Bilingual/ESL District Compliance Report
- 2019-2020 Targeted Improvement Plan for Southside Elementary
- 2019-2020 Targeted Improvement Plan for A.M. Story Intermediate
- 2019-2020 District Action Team Committee Members
  - District-Level Professional Representative
    - Chris Kiser, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services
    - Sharon Reed, Curriculum Director

### Board Member

Davi Killion Ingram

### Campus-Based Non-Teaching Professional Representatives

Cody Tunstall, Elementary, Cinda Warren, Secondary

### Regular Classroom Teacher Representatives

Sherry Richmond, Washington Early Childhood Center, Christel Bailey, Northside Primary, Amber Carnell, Southside Elementary,

Heather Stewart, A.M. Story Intermediate, Erin Oranch, Palestine Junior High School, and Mark Neel, Palestine High School

### Special Program Teacher Representatives

Shannon Lazarine, Elementary, Cody Jones, Secondary

### Parent Representatives

Breanne Alder, Jasmine Taylor

### Business Representatives

Jamie Meyers, Jessica Walker

### Community Representative

Darryl Conner

- 2019-2020 School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) Committee Members

District Representatives – Chris Kiser, Council Chair; Joe Tinsley, Law Enforcement; Bruce Bradley, District Safety Officer; Mimi Spreen, Nutrition.

Palestine High School Representatives – PHS Nurse, Tobin Mack; PHS Students, Christian Hutchinson and Alyssa DeLaRosa; Peggy Herrington, HS Community; PHS Parent, J'Ann Sartain.

Palestine Junior High Representatives – PJHS Nurse Veronica Ashford; PJHS Parents, Melissa Ward and Mary Anna Coe.

Northside Primary – Northside Nurse, Betty Martinez, Northside Parents, Karen Fajardo and Tonya Soape.

Southside Elementary – Southside Nurse, Cheryl Walding; Southside Parents, Rebecca Briggie, Sharon Williams, and Ceyanna Smith.

A.M. Story Intermediate – Story Nurse, Jodi Harris; Story Parents, Melissa Gill and Lisha Ester.

Washington Early Childhood Center – Washington Nurse, Leslie Johnson; Washington Parents; Barbara Thomas and Emily Johnson.

### **First Six Weeks Academic Progress & Staff Development Day**

Chris Kiser, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services; reported on first six weeks academic progress. Mr. Kiser shared reading, writing, and math benchmark scores for each grade level and informed that the district's student benchmark tests were being administered at a higher standard than the state standard in order to better prepare students for spring STAAR tests. Mr. Kiser also shared that district staff had enjoyed the opportunity to participate in staff development, including the stop the bleeding training requirement of HB 496, on October 4, 2019.

### **District of Innovation & Class Sizes Update**

Suzanne Eiben, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources; reported on Palestine ISD District of Innovation status. Mrs. Eiben informed that PISD currently does not have any classes in grades K-4 that exceed the 22 to 1 class size limit, and that the district has utilized and benefited from DOI flexibility in the following areas: 1) Student discipline provisions 2) Probationary Contracts 3) School Calendar 4) Class Size Ratio 5) Teacher Certification 6) 90% Attendance Rule.

### **Student Drug Testing Program**

Suzanne Eiben, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources; informed that the district requires the random drug-testing of any student in grades 7-12 who chooses to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities or students who request a permit to park a vehicle on school property. Mrs. Eiben shared district drug-testing procedures and informed that the procedures had been recently reviewed with Tom Thompson, director of “The Lab”, the company that has conducted the district’s drug testing since 2005.

### **School Safety Update**

David Atkeisson, Director of Business Services, shared a school safety update. Mr. Atkeisson informed that the district’s Director of School Safety, Bruce Bradley, was visiting campuses weekly to monitor school safety; and Mr. Bradley was working on the formation of a PISD Police Department, and also on building positive relationships with local law enforcement agencies, including the Palestine Police Department, Texas Department of Public Safety, and others.

### **Public Relations Report**

Larissa Loveless, PISD Director of Public Relations, presented the district’s Public Relations Plan. Ongoing projects include social media, Wildcat Nation Radio, PISD Education Foundation, billboard and movie advertisements, weekly radio shows to showcase district, and Palestine Herald Press articles. Special events for Public Relations include: Community Summer Reading Program, Marketing Campaign for Digital Learning, Whatacat Employee Recognition Program, Back to School Staff Picnic, Convocation, Design and Content for Operation Read, Facilitate Volunteer Opportunities, Coordinate District Participation in National Night Out, District Thanksgiving Baskets, Market Wildcat Golf Course Country Christmas, Facilitate Application for Grants to assist in funding, Coordinate and Promote Senior Walk, Pre-K for All Campaign, Utilize the Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce for Ribbon Cuttings, and Marketing of District Events and Achievements. Annual Events include: August-September/PISD Employee Membership Drive; September 28/Homecoming Golf Tournament; September-December/Grant Cycle; February 22-23/Predator Hunt; March 26/Purses & Pearls; April-May/Recognition of Top Graduates and Educators of Influence.

### **Anderson County Appraisal District Representative**

The Board appointed Jeffrey Schwab to serve as the Palestine ISD representative to the Anderson County Appraisal District for 2020 and 2021.

### **Superintendent’s Report**

Superintendent Marshall reported on the following:

- Student Enrollment: 3,440 as of October 21, 2019
- Board of Trustees and Superintendent completed required update on the Texas 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session on Monday, September 30, 2019.
- Palestine ISD Academic Committee formed to investigate ways to improve the academic performance of students. (Committee is made up of parents, community members, teachers, Board member, Dyna Tutt, and Superintendent Jason Marshall.) First meeting held October 14, 2019 with monthly meetings to follow.
- Happy Hour fellowship time for district staff to be held at Anderson County Youth Livestock Arena on October 23-24, 2019 from 4:00-5:30 PM.
- Anderson County General Election to be held on November 5, 2019. 3 PISD facilities (PISD Administration Office, Palestine High School, and Washington Early Childhood Center) to be utilized as voting locations on Election Day.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51 PM.