

**Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021**

---

The Harris County Board of School Trustees met in regular session on November 17, 2021, in the Board Room, at 6300 Irvington Boulevard, Houston, Texas 77022. Danny Norris, Board President, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and declared a quorum present, that the meeting was duly called, and that notice of the meeting was posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Gov't. Code §551.041 and §551.051.

**Board Members Present:** Danny Norris, Board President; Richard Cantu, First Vice President; Andrea Duhon, Second Vice President; David Brown; Erica Davis; Eric Dick; and Amy Hinojosa

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Board Attorney:** Sarah Langlois

**Administration:** James Colbert, Jr., County School Superintendent; Jesus Amezcua, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services; Jonathan Parker, Assistant Superintendent for Academic Support; C.J. Rodgers, Assistant Superintendent for Education & Enrichment; Julia Andrews, Director Center for Safe and Secure Schools; Marcia Leiva, Chief Accounting Officer; Venetia Baldwin, Executive Assistant Board of Trustees; Danielle Bartz, Chief of Staff; Darlene Breaux, Director Research and Evaluation Institute; Joe Carreon, Director Construction; Danielle Clark, Chief Communications Officer; Jeff Drury, Director Choice Partners Cooperative; Dave Einsel, Director Communications and Creative Services; Kendra Jackson, Director Purchasing; Victor Keys, Principal Academic Behavior School West; Charles Ned, Senior Director of Schools; Travita Godfrey, Principal Fortis Academy; Venetia Peacock, Senior Director Head Start; Gayla Rawlinson, Director Center for Grants Development; Stephanie Ross, Director Adult Education; Donna Trevino-Jones, Principal Academic Behavior School East; Natasha Truitt, Executive Director Human Resources; Rich Vela, Executive Director Facilities; Cindy Brunswick, Senior Director Teaching and Learning Center; Lidia Zatopek, Director Educator Certification and Professional Advancement

**Visitors:** None

**Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021**

1. **Invocation** - Illiana Gonzalez, Center for Grants Development
2. **Pledge of Allegiance to the US flag** - Yolanda Pyrtle, Research and Evaluation Institute
3. **Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas flag** - Yolanda Pyrtle, Research and Evaluation Institute
4. **Open Forum** - Gov't Code 551.003 (5) - Public Participation. Pursuant to Policy BED (Local), a citizen who wishes to speak may do so by completing a participation request card available at the Board room at least 10 minutes prior to a regular Board meeting.

*No one from the public requested to speak during the open forum portion of the meeting.*

5. **Reports and presentations**

- A. **Employee of the Month** - Natasha Truitt, Executive Director of Human Resources

*Natasha Truitt introduced the November 2021 HCDE Employee of the Month, Janny Leiva, Custodian at La Porte Head Start. HCDE Communications showed a brief video about Ms. Leiva's role and influence at La Porte Head Start.*

- B. **Superintendent Monthly Report** - James Colbert, Jr.

*Mr. Colbert acknowledged Trustee Cantu and the immense loss of his daughter, expressing that Trustee Cantu and his family would be in his thoughts and prayers.*

*Mr. Colbert distributed promotional materials (a four-part brochure) created by HCDE Communications which highlights HCDE's Special Schools. There is a planned expansion of the brochure in the future to include all of HCDE's major divisions.*

*Mr. Colbert announced that his annual, one-on-one meetings with members of the Board of Trustees are proceeding as scheduled.*

*The Houston Chronicle has recognized HCDE as one of Houston's Top Workplaces for the third year in a row. This year, HCDE ranked 17<sup>th</sup> out of 43 large organizations in our division.*

*Mr. Colbert also recognized students from Fortis Academy for providing the Board of Trustees and Executive Leadership Team with a special Thanksgiving Luncheon before the Board meeting.*

- C. **Annual Division Update on Research and Evaluation Institute (REI)** - Darlene Breaux, Director
- D. **Annual Division Update on Center for Grants Development (CGD)** - Gayla Rawlinson, Director

*Mr. Colbert, the Board of Trustees, and CGD staff celebrated Ms. Rawlinson for her*

**Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021**

*accomplishments during her tenure at HCDE and her upcoming retirement.*

- E. **Other reports from Board members** concerning attendance or participation in a board or HCDE-related conference, event, activity, or committee; accolades for an HCDE staff member or other deserving person.

*Trustee Andrea Duhon attended the 2021 Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASB) Conference and commended Jeff Drury, Senior Director of Choice Partners National Purchasing Cooperative, and Mr. Stephen Kendrick, Senior Manager of Facilities Planning, for their pivotal work. Mr. Kendrick served as a panelist at TASBO for the "Deep Freeze Preparedness" keynote seminar, a panel discussion covering the challenges endured during 2021's Winter Storm Uri.*

*Trustee Norris discovered recently that he is HCDE's first African-American Board President. He suggested making HCDE's history more accessible in the future, specifically crucial milestones, as HCDE broadens its community outreach.*

*Trustee Cantu thanked HCDE staff for their support after the tragic death of his daughter as a result of a violent shooting. He suggested that HCDE continue to expand the reach of programs to encompass Northeast Harris County—the area of the shooting—where there are minimal programs for children to engage in nonviolent ways.*

- F. **Report of Board Committees - Committee Chairs**

*There were no reports.*

- G. **Monthly Financial Reports through 10/31/2021 - Dr. Jesus Amezcua, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services**

*Erica Davis exited the room at 1:53 pm.*

*Sarah Langlois exited the room at 1:53 pm and returned at 1:56 pm.*

*Erica Davis returned at 1:57 p.m.*

- H. **Presentation of 2021 ASBO International Award - Dr. Jesus Amezcua, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services**

*Trustee Cantu requested to move Agenda Item 6.C.1 to the non-consensus agenda.*

*Motion made by Richard Cantu, seconded by Erica Davis, to approve all items under the consensus agenda with the exception of Agenda Item 6.C.1.*

*Motion passes with 7-0 voting to approve all items under the consensus agenda, with the exception of Agenda Item 6.C.1.*

6. **ACTION ITEMS - CONSENSUS**

**Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021**

A. Consider ratification/approval of the following Business Services items:

1. Disbursement Report
2. Budget Amendment Report
3. Monthly Investment Report for October 2021

B. Consider ratification/approval of the following Board Meeting Minutes:

1. 10/20/2021 Board Meeting
2. 10/20/2021 Called Board Meeting

C. Consider ratification/approval of the following grant awards:

2. **Approval of funds totaling \$1,500,000 from the Texas Education Agency for CASE for Kids' Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center(s) Cycle 10, Year 4 grant for the period 08/01/2021 through 07/31/2022; CASE for Kids anticipates serving 975 students with these grant funds.**

D. Consider ratification/approval of the following Interlocal Contracts:

1. **Ratification and Approval of Addendum #2 to Interlocal (revenue) contract between Academic and Behavior School East and Houston ISD to increase the aggregate amount from \$427,934 to \$433,212 (an increase of \$5,278) for one (1) additional unit for FY 2021 Extended School Year Services (ESY) Summer School (in-county \$5,278) for the time period of 06/14/2021 through 07/16/2021. (Summer Contract)**
2. **Ratification and Approval of Interlocal (revenue) contracts for FY 2022 in the aggregate amount of \$562,744 with Highpoint School East with the following districts:** Channelview ISD for thirty-eight (38) in-county annual contracts in the amount of \$381,862 (\$10,049 each); and Humble ISD for eighteen (18) in-county annual contracts in the amount of \$180,882 (\$10,049 each) for the contract period of 08/23/2021 through 06/03/2022. (Due to TEA requirements, ISDs require an earlier contract start.)
3. **Approval of Interlocal (revenue) contracts for FY22 in the aggregate amount of \$96,000 between HCDE Educator Certification and Advancement (ECA) division and the Energized for Excellence Academy, Inc / Energized for STEM Academy, Inc Charter with the following campuses** Campus #350 for the amount of \$9,600; ES Campus #364 for the amount of \$33,600; MS Campus #342 for the amount of \$22,400; MS Campus #390 for the amount of \$14,400; and HS Campus #321 for the amount of \$16,000 for the contract period of 11/17/2021 through 7/31/2022. Educator Certification and Advancement (ECA) will provide external T-TESS-based focused feedback observations of classroom teachers for their professional development.

**Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021**

4. **Approval of Interlocal (revenue) contract with Alief ISD and the Center for Safe and Secure Schools Division** for safety audits over a two-year cycle (11/17/2021 through 06/30/2023) in an amount not to exceed \$73,025, servicing 57 sites.
5. **Ratification of Interlocal Contract (expenditure) for FY22 CASE for Kids partnership grant** with Houston Independent School District in the aggregate amount of \$226,100 to serve 1,350 students for the period of 10/01/2021 through 07/31/2022.

E. Consider ratification/approval of the following items for the HCDE Choice Partners Cooperative:

1. **Approval of HCDE Interlocal Agreements with:** East Montgomery County Improvement District, New Caney, Texas; Operation Kindness, Carrollton, Texas; Roma ISD, Roma, Texas; Whitehouse ISD, Whitehouse, Texas-Signature Only; Mukilteo School District, Everett, WA; A + UP Charter School, Houston, Texas, and Edmonds School District, Lynwood, WA.

F. Consider ratification/approval of the following items for Internal Purchasing:

1. **Approval of Contract Award for job no. 21/056YR-03 Short Term Vocational Training Programs for Harris County Department of Education Adult Education Division with the following proposer(s):** A Better Day Foundation, LLC; EZ Kids Creativity Shell; Healthy Boundaries LLC, and Carole Marie Freelon dba Optimum Nurse Aid Skills Training for period of 11/17/2021 through 11/16/2026, subject to annual appropriations of funding.
2. **Approval of Contract Award for job no. 22/013DR for Local Food and Catering Services** to the proposers offering the best value to HCDE and meeting the specifications outlined in the proposal: Alonti Market Cafe and Catering; Boudreaux's Cajun Kitchen; ChickFil A Crosstimbers 45; Domino's Pizza; Houston Cafe Inc.; Jason's Deli; Line Drive Logistics, LLC; Nusky's; and Sami's Cafe' for the period of 12/01/2021 through 11/30/2026.
3. **Approval of Contract Award for job no. 22/014EJ Addendum 1 - Educator Certification and Advancement (ECA) Division Services for Harris County Department of Education with the following proposer(s):** Believe in the Possibilities, DBA Shirley Rose-Gilliam; Mirella Ortiz Moreno; Pathway Education Group, LLC; and U-Bridge Project Consulting, LLC for the period of 12/01/2021 through 11/30/2026, subject to annual appropriations of funding.

7. **ACTION ITEMS - NON-CONSENSUS**

**6.C.1. Ratification and Approval of Memorandum of Understanding between HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start and Lee College** to collaborate and register HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start teaching staff in credit course work to obtain Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials by paying for virtual classes at San Jacinto Community College District using HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start training dollars for the period of 11/01/2021 through 10/31/2022.

*Note: This agenda item contained an error; it referenced both Lee College and San Jacinto College, but approval for the MOU was being requested for San Jacinto College only.*

**Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021**

*Motion made by Richard Cantu, seconded by Eric Dick, to Ratify and Approve the Memorandum of Understanding between HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start and San Jacinto College to collaborate and register HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start teaching staff in credit course work to obtain Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials by paying for virtual classes at San Jacinto Community College District using HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start training dollars for the period of 11/01/2021 through 10/31/2022.*

*Motion passes with 7-0 voting to approve.*

- A. **Consider award of CSP# 21/073YR for new Highpoint East Middle School to C.A. Walker Construction in the amount of \$7,271,000**, including the base bid, Alternate 1A (Mitsubishi Variable Refrigerant Volume System), Alternate 6 (Replace Existing Wood Fence Along west Property Line with New Wood Fence), and Alternate 8 (Base Proposal Correction), and delegate authority to HCDE Superintendent or his designee to negotiate, finalize, and execute a construction contract with C.A. Walker Construction.

*Motion made by Richard Cantu, seconded by Amy Hinojosa, to approve award of CSP# 21/073YR for new Highpoint East Middle School to C.A. Walker Construction in the amount of \$7,271,000, including the base bid, Alternate 1A (Mitsubishi Variable Refrigerant Volume System), Alternate 6 (Replace Existing Wood Fence Along west Property Line with New Wood Fence), and Alternate 8 (Base Proposal Correction), and delegate authority to HCDE Superintendent or his designee to negotiate, finalize, and execute a construction contract with C.A. Walker Construction.*

*Motion passes with 7-0 voting to approve.*

- B. **Consideration and Approval of a Resolution** Calling for the Defeasance and Redemption of Certain Harris County Department of Education Public Facility Corporation Lease Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2015; Directing the Redemption of Such Bonds; and Containing Other Matters Related Thereto and approval of related budget amendment.

*Motion made by Richard Cantu, seconded by Amy Hinojosa, to Approve a Resolution Calling for the Defeasance and Redemption of Certain Harris County Department of Education Public Facility Corporation Lease Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2015; Directing the Redemption of Such Bonds; and Containing Other Matters Related Thereto and approval of related budget amendment.*

*Motion passes with 7-0 voting to approve.*

- C. **Consider approval of amendment to Resolution** granting COVID leave days approved by the Board on August 18, 2021.

*Motion made by David Brown, seconded by Richard Cantu, to approve the amendment to Resolution granting COVID leave days approved by the Board on August 18, 2021.*

*Motion passes with 7-0 voting to approve.*

**Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021**

*The Board entered Executive Session at 2:18 p.m.*

8. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** Under the Texas Government Code pursuant to any and all purposes permitted by Sections 551.001-551.084, including, but not limited to: 551.071; 551.074
  - A. **Obtain legal advice regarding proposed settlement and release agreement** relating to *Ethlokia Plumber ex rel. K.W. v. HCDE*, 4:20-cv-00672 (U.S. Dist. Ct. S. Dist. of Texas).
  - B. **Deliberate** the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline and/or dismissal of HCDE employees, including, without limitation, the evaluation of the Superintendent.
  - C. **Obtain** legal advice regarding legal effect of redistricting of Harris County Commissioners' precincts on HCDE precinct-based trustee positions.
  - D. **Deliberate** the purchase, exchange, sale and/or value of real property(ies) and obtain legal advice regarding the same.
9. **RECONVENE** for possible action on items discussed in executive session

*The Board entered into Open Session at 3:59 p.m.*

- A. **Consider approval of settlement and release agreement** relating to *Ethlokia Plumber ex rel. K.W. v. HCDE*, 4:20-cv-00672 (U.S. Dist. Ct. S. Dist. of Texas).

*Motion made by David Brown, seconded by Amy Hinojosa, to approve the settlement and release agreement as discussed in executive session.*

*Motion passes with 7-0 voting to approve.*
- 6.C.1. **Ratification and Approval of Memorandum of Understanding between HCDE Head Start/ Early Head Start and Lee College** to collaborate and register HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start teaching staff in credit course work to obtain Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials by paying for virtual classes at San Jacinto Community College District using HCDE Head Start/Early Head Start training dollars for the period of 11/01/2021 through 10/31/2022.

*Motion made by Amy Hinojosa, seconded by Richard Cantu to rescind the approval of Agenda Item 6.C.1. at the request of HCDE Administration to clarify the proper party for the MOU at a future Board meeting.*

*Motion passes with 7-0 voting to rescind.*
10. **Discussion and possible action regarding future agenda items**

**Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021**

None.

**11. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**A. Human Resources Information Items**

1. Personnel
2. Employee Count

**B. Submission of a \$5,000 grant request to the Oliver Foundation to support HCDE Area I Head Start's school garden program at its Tidwell campus. Funding would benefit 28 unduplicated students and families.**

**C. Expenditure Interlocal contracts less than \$75,000:**

- Between CASE and Alief ISD, HUDL, \$16,000
- Between CASE and KIPP Public Schools, HUDL, \$4,000
- Between CASE and Pasadena ISD, HUDL, \$4,000
- Between CASE and YES Prep Brays Oaks, HUDL, \$4,000
- Between CASE and YES Prep North Central, HUDL, \$4,000
- Between CASE and YES Prep Southeast, HUDL, \$4,000

**D. Revenue contracts less than \$75,000 (Cumulative total \$335,771)**

- Between Teaching Learning Center and Dickinson ISD, RLA Critical Review, \$10,000
- Between Teaching Learning Center and Galena Park ISD, Math Conference, \$3,500
- Between Teaching Learning Center and Galena Park ISD, Cognitive Coaching, \$3,000
- Between Teaching Learning Center and Lamar CISD, Content Impact Coaching, \$30,600
- Between Teaching Learning Center and Lamar CISD, George Junior High Impact Coaching, \$30,600
- Between Teaching Learning Center and Lamar CISD, Lamar Elem Dev Fractions, \$3,300
- Between Teaching Learning Center and Lamar CISD, Navarro MS Impact Coaching, \$30,600
- Between Teaching Learning Center and Lamar CISD, Wessendorff MS Impact Coaching, \$30,600
- Between Teaching Learning Center and New Caney ISD, Porter Elem Coaching, \$6,000
- Between School Division and Channelview ISD, Annual student contracts, \$31,250
- Between School Division and Humble ISD, Annual student contracts, \$12,500
- Between School Division and Lamar CISD, Annual student contracts, \$23,853
- Between School Division and Tarkington ISD, Amendment to Annual student contracts, \$47,706
- Between School-Based Therapy Services and Brazos ISD, Amendment to Occupational Therapy, \$22,454
- Between School-Based Therapy Services and Magnolia ISD, Physical Therapy, \$47,880
- Between School-Based Therapy Services and Varnett Charter, Occupational Therapy, \$1,928



Harris County Department of Education  
Minutes of Regular Board Meeting  
November 17, 2021

- E. **The target is 15% of the total amount for the Construction Small Business Program.**  
The following targets were met:

Project	Total amount of project	Total SBE	%
ABS East School	\$11,400,000	\$1,917,520	16.82
Adult Ed	\$14,840,000	\$5,064,578	34.12

12. **ADJOURN** - Next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 8, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.

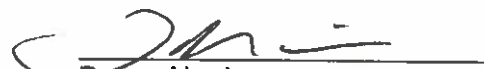
*Motion made by Richard Cantu, seconded by David Brown, to adjourn.*

*Motion passes with 7-0 voting to adjourn the meeting.*

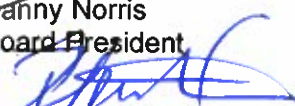
*The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.*



James Colbert, Jr.  
County School Superintendent



Danny Norris  
Board President



Richard Cantu  
Board Vice President