



Board Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2020 12:00 p.m.

ATTENDING:

Dr. Yanira Oliveras-Ortiz, Dr. Anna Mary Consalvo, Mr. Jeffry Kennemer, Mr. Daniel Rodriguez¹, Ms. Angela Wright
Dr. Jo Ann Simmons, multiple directors, staff and parents (177+ participants).

OPENING:

The board meeting of the UT Tyler University Academy was called to order at 12:04 p.m. by Dr. Oliveras-Ortiz on Thursday, May 7, 2020 via Zoom teleconferencing.

1. Call to Order:

Dr. Oliveras-Ortiz confirmed a quorum of Board members were present.

2. Pledge:

Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag
Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag

ACTION ITEMS:

3. Consent Agenda

- Previous Minutes, Thursday March 5, 2020. Motion to approve with no changes.
1st motion: Ms. Wright, 2nd motion: Mr. Kennemer. Motion passed 4-0.
- Previous Minutes, Wednesday March 18, 2020. Motion to approve with no changes.
1st motion: Mr. Kennemer, 2nd motion: Ms. Wright. Motion passed 4-0.

4. Request Approval to Change Grading Policy for 2019-2020

- Dr. Simmons discussed the need to review the grading policy due to the pandemic. Given that the grading policy is a district decision and since the delivery has moved to online, we are proposing the following changes:
 - K-12 will have a second semester average calculated based on a 90% of the term 3 and 10% of term 4. Criteria to earn HS credit will remain at 70% with teacher flexibility to adjust grading at the assignment level.
 - Dual Credit courses will follow UT procedures. Students can choose a letter grade or pass/fail option for reflection on transcript. Once a student makes an election, it cannot be changed.
 - This change is to ensure that every student is given fair grading consideration. Most districts are changing grading policy. This change will impact this school year only. In the event we are still operating under similar conditions next year, we will need to revisit the policy next year.
 - *Ms. Wright: I'm wondering if you received feedback from teachers regarding the 10% of term 4 since so much work went into this term?*
 - Dr. Simmons: As an educator my charge is to teach the child and not so much about the grade, but rather, is the student ready to transition to the next level?
 - *Ms. Wright: Is there an option for students to have term 3/4 averaged? Is there an ability to take the better of the two or as normally done?*
 - Dr. Simmons: The committee discussed this in great detail and the concern was all of the unknowns. You are providing instruction to student; assignments cannot be monitored for the security of them. We want to value respect the students and parents who have worked diligently to turn in every assignment, but it goes back to our charge to educate; students who did their work will step into

the school year ready and prepared. We looked at whether it would be possible to take the best of the two and there were too many differences in the grades.

- Ms. Krier (requested permission) mentioned the decisions made must be equal across the board for all students since each student's situation is different. By giving the student an option to choose, it negates the equality aspect.
- Ms. Pedersen: Since there are no Summative Assessments, no way to see if a student is retaining information. Terms 1-3 had assessments to see what has been retained. The primary role of a grades is for the purpose of feedback for the student, not just a numerical grade.

1st motion: Dr. Consalvo, 2nd motion: Mr. Rodriguez. Motion passed 5¹-0.

5. Request Approval Math/Reading/CCMR Plans for 2020-2021

- Ms. Pedersen stated this is something from HB3 and the templates came from the state looking at 3 different areas: K-3 literacy, K-3 math and college, career and military readiness. We were tasked with looking at where we stand currently with our data, K-3 grade and making yearly goals all the way to 2024. Push behind this is to ensure this data is monitored on a more regular basis and have the school board be involved. Tried to not put 100% on any goal since we are small, and one child can make a big difference. All of this is adjustable and will review it again at this year next time. We are a college ready school so you may see N/A for career ready and military ready since we do not have a large % of these students. It is a FERPA violation to list demographics if a certain category has less than 25% representation.
- *Dr. Oliveras-Ortiz: Is the first year collecting data this year or next year? I'm concerned about what data we are going to use for end of the year?*
- Ms. Pedersen: The data for 2020 was filled in based on where students finished last year and it was looking at where kids were at the middle of the year. Had we finished the school year, it would have been updated, but since we did not, those figures are based on data from last year.
- *Dr. Oliveras-Ortiz: Has TEA released any guidance on the current situation and how is this impacting accountability?*
- Ms. Pedersen: At the end of last week we reached out to District 7 to get guidance on this subject but have not received a response yet.
- *Mr. Kennemer: Who compiled the mix with the CCMR? The fact that we don't have a high percentage of military, will it affect these stats in a negative way?*
- Ms. Pedersen: It does impact accountability since we want students to gain a point on one of those areas. We strive very high to get 100% of students to get a point in the college area, but the other areas are available so that students have other ways in which to earn their point. We are not required to get a point in all three areas, just one. We base this off of our current 2020 seniors.

1st motion: Mr. Kennemer, 2nd motion: Ms. Wright. Motion passed 5-0.

6. Request Approval of IMA Allotment and TEKS Certification for 2020-2021

- Ms. Chesnut this document just certifies what grade levels we are serving next year and what subjects we will be teaching. We must turn this document in because we receive instructional materials funds, which is the same as last year.

1st motion: Mr. Rodriguez, 2nd motion: Dr. Consalvo. Motion passed 5-0.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

7. Superintendent Report:

- Financial Updates
 - Ms. Chestnut stated the general fund that we received in revenue is \$4.3 million dollars so far and we have expensed \$4.9 million. Last board meeting we had an amendment to move \$200k from the fund balance. Non-governmental funds, we have received \$264,000 in revenue and we have expensed \$214,000. Next board meeting I will have some amendments for the non-governmental funds because we did receive the funds for the Blended Learning Grant and security grant as well.
 - Dr. Simmons: Some board members have asked if we will continue to receive funding since we have moved to an online format versus providing face-to-face and the answer is yes.

- District/Campus Enrollment Projections for 2020-2021
 - Dr. Simmons stated that usually we are sharing up to date attendance, however, the document shows the projected enrollment for next year. We are working through the lottery process and have been in touch with those individuals who were accepted. There is a timeline when they have to inform the school in the event their child is going to attend. If their child will not attend, we move to the next child on the wait list in the event there is a wait list. The Admins and directors are working closely to ensure we are staying in contact with parents. Overall projections we are looking at 849 students.
 - *Dr. Oliveras-Ortiz: This is a question from a parent regarding projection enrollment: why were there some grade levels where there were 10 spots available?*
 - Dr. Simmons: Sometimes based on projections, we need to open more sections and when doing so enrollment numbers are large. Year to year evaluation.
 - *Mr. Kennemer: What kind of waiting list are we looking at and does the lottery help reduce it?*
 - Dr. Simmons: The lottery definitely decreases the wait list, but it really depends on the grade level and the campus. I've asked the directors to email the parents and let them know there may be spots available since they are our biggest advocates.

- Administrative Updates provided by Dr. Simmons:
 - (1) Graduation: We are currently exploring two options for graduation, 1) a hybrid video option and 2) face-to-face after 1 June. With option 1, it will consist of videos of students in cap/gown. With option 2 it must be outdoor on a smaller scale on three campuses where grads can sit with family with the director recognizing. No approval for an indoor ceremony. We should be letting everyone know the outcome soon.
 - (2) Board elections: The Tyler parent board member position is coming open soon. We will be processing an election since Mr. Kennemer's term is ending. A special thanks to Dr. Consalvo, her term is ending as well and will be replaced by Ms. Laura Owens who will be present at the next board meeting in July.
 - (3) Equipment: Playground in Longview has been installed and the fencing is also complete and the fence in Tyler has been completed and the Tyler playground will begin construction this month.
 - (4) Security: Tyler campuses now has security cameras which will be operable before the start of the next school year. Both the Tyler and Longview campuses will have remote access doors in the near future.
 - (5) The Tyler and Longview campus classrooms are packed up because they are getting ready to be painted. When students return, they will have fresh updated classrooms to return to.
 - (6) Smallest turnover of personnel in the history of the school and for the positions that will be vacant, we are interviewing now.
 - (7) We know there will be budget cuts and shortfalls and not sure what that will look like, but we will need to ensure that we prioritize needs for next year's budget, such as travel just for example. We should know more by July 1 but it is important we look at the budget very closely this year.
 - (8) While we had initially hoped to start a lunch program at Tyler, due to the unknowns, this is put on hold and will operate as is.
 - (9) The Cares Act is money that we likely will be able to receive due to COVID-19 which means these funds could reimburse districts for some of the out of pocket expenses. Biggest expense we have is technology with over \$500,000 in physical assets. We plan on spending \$200,000 in technology to ensure our students have devices at the start of the school year.

8. Motion for Adjournment:

1st motion: Mr. Kennemer, 2nd motion: Mr. Rodriguez. Motion passed 5-0.

Adjournment occurred at 1:15 p.m.

Link to recorded meeting:

<https://academy.uttyler.edu/school-board/>