



Inside Northside

BOARDTalk

BOARDTalk is published to help keep staff and citizens informed about actions of the Northside Independent School District Board of Trustees.

January 23, 2024

Superintendent's Report

Dr. John Craft reported to the Board:

- **Inclement weather.** Dr. Craft applauded the efforts of maintenance and custodial staff members for going “above and beyond” their duty to ensure facilities were ready following the frigid weather on the MLK holiday. He also thanked the transportation employees as they maneuvered both cold and wet weather lately.
- **Leadership Northside.** We kicked off Leadership Northside this month and we had a great first session with our community ambassadors interested in learning more about NISD operations and culture. Leadership Northside seeks to empower stakeholders with the knowledge and tools to effectively advocate for Northside and public education.
- **Bexar County Truancy Symposium.** Dr. Craft thanked **Pam Gould**, Assistant Director of Student Advocacy & School Choice (SASC), and all those who helped organize the symposium. He was glad to host the collaborative event to ensure we all work together to get students to school.
- **Visit to NSITE.** Dr. Craft visited **NSITE** recently and met four graduates from 2023 who were peer-coaching students. He enjoyed learning about the cybersecurity program and the tremendous opportunities provided for students.
- **STEM Night at Lewis ES.** Dr. Craft enjoyed a recent visit to **Lewis ES** and their STEM Night. He observed students engaged in a variety of activities. He thanked Principal **Kendra Merrell**, Associate Principal **Shane Murnin**, and the entire Leopard staff for their hospitality.
- **Student Voices.** The second student voice meeting was held and conversation included Dual Credit, AP, and On-Ramps opportunities and access as well as TSI and SAT/ACT prep work.
- **Texas AP Honor Roll.** Dr. Craft congratulated **Communications Arts HS, Health Careers HS, O'Connor HS, and Brandeis HS** for making the 2023 Texas AP School Honor Roll.
- **Middle School Dance Spectacular.** Dr. Craft expressed his congratulations to all the middle school dance instructors and students for outstanding performances this past week at the Middle School Dance Spectaculars held for two nights at **Stevens HS**.
- **Beauty and the Beast.** The **Sotomayor HS** Theater Department put on *Beauty and the Beast* and Dr. Craft was excited to play the baker in one of the performances. This was his first time to ever perform in a production such as this and was amazed at all the behind-the-scenes efforts that go into putting on such a performance. He thanked Theater Arts teacher **Adriana Vela** and all the students for an outstanding production.
- **Gerlach Livestock Show.** The Gerlach Livestock Show kicked off this week and runs through Saturday, Jan. 27 with the Auction and Sale. Last year's sale and auction raised a record \$1.5 million for students.
- **National Cheer Competition.** Congratulations to all of our NISD High School cheer teams who competed in the National Cheer Association (NCA) competition this past week, especially to **Warren** and **Brennan** high schools who are national winners. Dr. Craft showed off an NCA jacket that he received for having two national champions in our district.
- **Video Moment:** In Northside ISD, teachers are not only planting seeds of knowledge but are giving students the tools to provide a lasting impact on the environment and the community. Through a program called C.A.N.O.P.Y (Cultivating and Nurturing Our Planet's Youth), students at three NISD campuses gathered to plant a “forest of trees” on their campus. The Elementary Science Department hopes to eventually plant tree forests at all NISD elementary campuses and then at all secondary campuses. [Click here to learn more about this amazing program.](#)

Board Members' Report

- **Trustee Bobby Blount** highlighted the upcoming Go Public Night at the February 2nd San Antonio Spurs game which will spotlight NISD. Trustee Blount expressed gratitude to Dr. Craft for collaborating with Bexar County superintendents to explore a potential partnership with the NCAA's Final Four event next year, which would include a reading competition for 3rd graders. Trustee Blount also thanked **Stan Laing**, Assistant Superintendent of Athletics, for his work with Stephen Mackey to share his message with NISD students.
- **Trustee Corinne Saldana** recognized several departments she's visited recently, including the NISD **Child Nutrition Department** which she said was an incredible experience when she learned about the planning that takes place to provide nutritious meals at every Northside school. Trustee Saldana also visited the **Northside Museum** and enjoyed learning more from the museum's ever-changing exhibits, especially the detailed timeline describing important milestones. She encouraged people to donate books for infants and toddlers to the museum. Trustee Saldana commended **Northside Threads** for expanding its services to provide both clothing and food, expressing gratitude to Aqua Star Laundry owner **Naj Ishmael** for his generous donation. Trustee Saldana praised the **Warren HS** cheerleading squad for their help washing and folding clothes for Northside Threads. In addition, Trustee Saldana congratulated the Northside Athletics Department on successful basketball and soccer seasons taking place. She had the opportunity to see the Fine Arts Department from **Clark HS** perform "Bye Bye Birdie" with a full orchestra and said it was impressive. Lastly, Trustee Saldana praised **Mead ES** for its recent Academic Night with significant parental participation.
- **Trustee Gerald Lopez** stated that he is very impressed with how NISD works with the community. He thanked Assistant Superintendent of Whole Child **Dr. Kimberly Ridgley** and her staff for providing such valuable services to our students, teen parents, and others and expressed especially the work done through the Next Level Youth Opportunity and the impact it has on our students and their family's lives. He also reported about an email that he received from **Frank Azola**, Commander for the American GI Forum Chapter for Miguel Hernandez, Jr., who was invited to tour **Hector Garcia MS**. Mr. Azola was very impressed with the campus and staff and the quality of education that his grandchildren are receiving. He commended Principal **Mark Lopez** and Associate Principal **Mateo Macias**. Trustee Lopez also thanked **Ross MS** and Principal **Faustino Ortega** for the Trustee Appreciation Luncheon. He, along with fellow Trustees Saldana and Salcido, also serve as mentors at the campus.
- **Trustee David Salcido** participated in the presentation of four Innovation Grants for the Northside Education Foundation. He enjoyed seeing the excitement in the students' eyes as they surprised the teachers. He plans to visit the classrooms again as they put the projects into action. He also thanked Dr. Craft and the **Child Nutrition Department** for beginning to transition to biodegradable trays in our cafeterias.
- **Trustee Karla Duran** visited **Timberwilde ES** and thanked them for welcoming trustees to help with a parent event. Dr. Duran also had the opportunity to tour the NISD Police Department's Communication Center and recognized the tremendous work of NISD dispatchers. Dr. Duran recognized 9-year-old Northside student, **Mateo Lopez**, for his recent Mariachi performance with Kelly Clarkson.
- **Trustee Carol Harle** thanked Dr. Craft for his work hosting Student Voices, where students had the opportunity to discuss topics like TSI, GPA, and class rank while networking with other students. Dr. Harle praised the Middle School Winter Spectacular, as a successful recruitment tool showcasing each school's unique personality. **CAST Teach High School** Sophomores **Jasper Pearson** and **Anna Pater** were recognized as the winners of the \$5,000 NEF Innovation Grant for their proposal to create a wellness room pilot program at their high school to support students. Dr. Harle also highlighted the upcoming Region 20 grassroots TASB event, encouraging board members to invite colleagues from across the region. Dr. Harle also recognized the impact the annual Gerlach event has had on the lives of countless Northside students.
- **Trustee Karen Freeman** also attended the opening day of "Bye Bye Birdie" at **Clark HS** and said the play was wonderful. She appreciates that the Fine Arts Dept. provides amazing opportunities for Northside students to excel. Trustee Freeman also attended Student Voices and commented that the conversations were wonderful. She thanked Dr. Harle for her work with the grassroots TASB event.

Recognitions

- **National Merit Semifinalists.** Three NISD students were named National Merit Semifinalists. The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. High school students enter the program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). About 90 percent of the semifinalists will attain finalist standing, and about half of the finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar title.

- **Texas School Counselor Association state award winners.** Three NISD employees received state awards from the Texas School Counselor Association (TSCA). TSCA recognizes deserving school counselors and individuals who support the work of school counselors during an annual awards banquet as a result of nominations accepted from school districts across the state.
- **Council of PTAs, Northside Education Foundation, and Northside Museum Association honor NISD Trustees** The Northside Council of PTAs, represented by PTA Council President **Crystal Rivas**; the Northside School Museum Association, led by **Pam Sprague**; and the Northside Education Foundation, led by President-Elect **Lilia Gibson**, honored NISD's seven Board members. Every year, the Texas governor proclaims January as School Board Recognition Month. NISD is joining other districts across the state to gratefully acknowledge the invaluable contributions that members of the Boards of Trustees make to our various districts and communities. School trustees serve as key advocates for students and work together to provide a better future for every student.

Board approves audit of District's financial report

The Board approved the audit of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2023. The report consists of management's representations concerning the financial condition and operations of the District and the results of an audit performed by the certified public accounting firm of Whitley Penn. The audit was performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The auditors have expressed an unmodified opinion which is the highest level of assurance that the financial statements are free of material misstatement, according to **Dr. Rene Barajas**, Deputy Superintendent for Business & Finance.

Trustees approve administrative appointments:

- **Kris Trejo**, formerly Executive Director of Technology Services, was appointed **Assistant Superintendent for Technology Services**.
- **Jessica Lundquist**, formerly Associate Principal at Carlos Coon ES, was appointed **Principal at Carlos Coon ES**.
- **Jeremy Day**, formerly Principal at Beard ES, was appointed **Principal at Chumbley ES**.
- **Patric R. Rivas**, formerly a Special Education Support Specialist, was appointed **Associate Principal at Brauchle ES**.
- **Ryan Boyle**, formerly Associate Principal at Lieck ES, was appointed **Associate Principal at Evers ES**.
- **Joseph Hernandez**, formerly a BMC teacher at Howsman ES, was appointed **Associate Principal at Forester ES**.
- **Laura Ontiveros**, formerly Administrative Intern at McDermott ES, was appointed **Associate Principal at McDermott ES**.
- **Julianita Chapa**, formerly a Language Support Teacher at Northwest Crossing ES, was appointed **Associate Principal at Northwest Crossing ES**.
- **Shelby Blackmon**, formerly Student Success Advisor at Taft HS, was appointed **Assistant Principal at Taft HS**.

Board approves facilities items:

- Contractor for Athletic Audio/Visual upgrades at Farris and Gus Stadiums and NISD Swim Center – Daktronics, Inc.
- Contractor for drainage upgrades at Straus MS – R.L. Rohde General Contracting, Inc.
- Contractor for mechanical upgrades at Clark HS – Comfort-Air Engineering, Inc.
- Contractor for a new canopy at Northside Alternative HS – SBM General Contractors, LLC
- Consultant for renovations/reconstruction/upgrades at the athletic baseball/softball complex adjacent to Sotomayor HS – Raba-Kistner Consultants, Inc.
- Consultant for renovations/reconstruction/upgrades at Block Aquatics Center – Marmon Mok Architectures, Moy Tarin Ramirez Engineers, LLC, Raba-Kistner Consultants, Inc., Cleary Zimmermann Engineers
- Change Orders:
 - Mechanical upgrades at Marshall HS (\$117,245.77 credit)
 - Camera, Access, and Intrusion Controls upgrades (\$96,604 credit)

Bids for goods approved

Trustees approved the following bids, awards, and recognition items: translation services; after-school online registration system software; charter bus rentals and services; library supplies, equipment, and services; moveable wall preventative inspection, services, and repairs; fire suppression maintenance, and athletic materials, installation, and services. Trustees

approved the following purchase orders: to Damon West, LLC for professional development services; to TPR Education LLC dba The Princeton Review for SAT prep classes for all juniors for test readiness; and to Soliant Health, LLC only assessments for the 2023-24 school year. For more information, contact the Purchasing Department at 210-397-8700.

You may mail correspondence to:

Trustees
c/o NISD
5900 Evers Road
San Antonio, TX 78238

You may email them at info@nisd.net.

For additional information, call 210-397-8770.

Board of Trustees

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Administration

Superintendent John Craft, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent for Administration Ray Galindo
Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction Janis Jordan, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent for Business & Finance Rene Barajas, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent of Communications Barry Perez

Board meeting information

NISD Trustees meet monthly in regular meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month. They may also meet in Called Meetings for workshops, retreats, or to handle routine business. Meetings are held at 6 p.m. in the Board Room, 5900 Evers Road, unless otherwise posted. Meetings are open to the public. Agendas are posted on the NISD website, www.nisd.net. Citizens who wish to address the Board must sign up to speak just prior to the beginning of the Meeting.

Upcoming School Board Meeting(s): *(See posted agendas on website as dates, locations, and/or times may change.)*

- Feb. 13, 2024, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Called Board Meeting)
- Feb. 27, 2024, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Regular Board Meeting)
- March 26, 2024, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Regular Board Meeting)