



Inside Northside

# BOARDTalk

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

June 24, 2025

**Superintendent's Report** (Click [HERE](#) to view video of the Superintendent's full comments.)

**Dr. John Craft reported to the Board:**

- **Successful school year.** Met with all the campus administrators recently and appreciation was given to the campus administrators for wrapping up a smooth 2024-25 school year.
- **Graduations.** More than 7,000 seniors graduated across 13 commencement ceremonies this month, earning more than \$167 million in scholarships.
- **Northside Education Foundation.** Met with the NEF Board during their annual planning retreat for some team-building and strategic planning.
- **Convocation theme.** The theme for this year's Convocation is Northside *Unstoppable*, and planning is underway for another great event.
- **Open Enrollment launch.** NISD launched an Open Enrollment initiative, *Excellence Without Boundaries*, inviting students from across the greater San Antonio area to enroll in a NISD campus.
- **Legislative update.** The Governor has called a Special Session for this summer to discuss the topic of regulating THC.
- **Video Moment.** This year, the Rising Stars Summer Theater Camp took on the production "Beetlejuice, Jr." The talented middle and high school students put on a wonderful production with only two weeks of rehearsal time. [Click here to watch these amazing students.](#)

**Board Members' Report** (Comments below are summarized. Click [HERE](#) to view video of the Trustees' full comments.)

- **Trustee David Salcido** highlighted the Rising Stars program and the district's *Beetlejuice* summer theater production, noting how powerful it is that these opportunities are open to all students from Title I schools, including some who might have some special needs. He also celebrated an outstanding athletic achievement, congratulating Tate Taylor for taking first place in the 100-meter dash at the Nike Outdoor Nationals with an impressive time of 10.10 seconds.
- **Trustee Sonia Jasso** expressed her gratitude to the entire NISD team, administration, and staff for their support over the past few weeks as she transitions into her new role. She shared her excitement for what lies ahead and reflected on the honor of attending several graduation ceremonies. Dr. Jasso congratulated the Class of 2025 and extended heartfelt thanks to the teachers and support staff who make these milestone moments possible.
- **Trustee Karla Duran** expressed deep gratitude to the district's administrative team, applauding their commitment during graduation week. She thanked both new and returning board members for attending the TASB Summer Leadership Institute and officer training. She gave a shout-out to the Northside Education Foundation, highlighting the recent board retreat focused on closing opportunity gaps. Dr. Duran also extended heartfelt thanks to Ray Galindo, who supported her early in her teaching career, and to Coach Stan Laing for his exemplary leadership both on and off the field. She closed by expressing excitement about building a new board culture, embracing growth, and preparing for difficult decisions ahead - all while keeping students and Northside's legacy at the heart of their work.
- **Trustee Bobby Blount** shared that Ayshia Dillard, a recent Brennan High School graduate and member of the Student Voice group, will participate as the producer for 19 dancers from Brennan High School at the San Antonio Area African American Community Fund Renaissance held at the Tobin Center. He noted that Trustees Dr. Karla

Duran, Karen Freeman, and Dr. Carol Harle recently attended a Bexar County School Boards Coalition meeting. He also highlighted a success shared by Lisa Kulka - third graders who made it into the Final Four Reading Contest bracket showed growth in one or more STAAR areas. Blount closed by thanking Ray Galindo for his dedicated service to the district and offered congratulations on his retirement.

- **Trustee Laura Zapata** thanked Dr. Craft and district staff - especially the technology team - for their support as she gets acclimated to her new role. She shared how much she enjoyed attending graduation ceremonies, noting the special energy and excitement in each one. While acknowledging the challenges of the current legislative session, she emphasized her readiness to work hard on behalf of the district. She also expressed appreciation for the district's recent retirees, thanking them for their service and wishing them well in their next chapter.
- **Trustee Carol Harle** began by recognizing Lisa Kulka from Library Services for her outstanding leadership and service as she heads into retirement. She also thanked Stan Laing and Ray Galindo for their leadership and congratulated them on their retirement. Dr. Harle applauded the newest board members for their strong start and expressed pride in the district's representation at the TASB Summer Leadership Institute and Leadership Northside. She gave recognition to Mateo Rawls, who will soon represent Cole Elementary School at the National Spanish Spelling Bee. Dr. Harle highlighted the Rising Stars production of *Beetlejuice*, praising the lead performer for a show-stealing, professional-quality performance. She emphasized the talents of both on-stage and behind-the-scenes students and commended the collaboration among theater teachers. She also shared how a recent conference spotlighted the work of Cable and Westwood Terrace Elementary Schools, recognizing the powerful impact their efforts have on families and thanking their leadership teams for their dedication.
- **Trustee Karen Freeman** congratulated the new trustees and acknowledged the challenge of completing TASB training, thanking them for their commitment to learning. She reflected on the honor of attending graduation ceremonies, noting that handing a student their diploma is a powerful reminder of why trustees serve - working for student success. She closed by emphasizing the importance of preserving Northside's culture - and the board's culture - as both are vital to the district's future.

### Trustees discussed 2025-2026 Compensation Package

Trustees heard a proposal for the 2025-26 compensation package. Additional discussion will be held at a called meeting on July 15, with a vote expected on July 22.

### Trustees hear SHAC Annual Report

SHAC Chair **John Carollo** presented the end-of-year report from the 2024-2025 NISD School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) to the trustees. The SHAC is a group of individuals appointed by the school district who represent various segments of the community and provide recommendations to the District on coordinated school health programming and its impact on student health and learning.

### Trustees approve Flexible School Day for Chavez Academy

Trustees approved an optional flexible school day for the Chavez Academy for the 2025-2026 school year. This annual application must be submitted to TEA if districts plan to participate in the Optional Flexible School Day Program. The goal of this program in NISD's Chavez Excel Academy is to improve graduation rates for students who are in danger of dropping out of school, have dropped out, or are behind in core subject courses.

In addition, the Board approved a partnership with Graduation Alliance as part of an effort to expand support for students who are off track to graduate. This organization will coordinate with Chavez Academy to locate over-age/under-credited students who are not enrolled in school and provide a pathway to meet the criteria to become students at Excel and earn their high school diploma.

### Trustees approve administrative appointments:

- **Kathleen Cuevas**, formerly the Principal at Pease Middle School, was appointed **Executive Director of Student Services**.
- **Sandra Zamarripa**, formerly a math specialist at Martin Elementary School, was appointed **Associate Principal at Martin Elementary School**.
- **Amber McWilliams**, formerly an Assistant Principal at John Jay High School, was appointed **Associate Principal at John Jay High School**.

- **Lizette De Leon**, formerly a Pre-K teacher at Westwood Terrace Elementary School, was appointed **Associate Principal** at **Westwood Terrace Elementary School**.
- **Lorenzo Saldana**, formerly a vice principal at Southside ISD, was appointed **Assistant Principal** at **Brennan High School**.
- **John Castillo**, formerly a teacher at Clark High School, was appointed **Assistant Principal** at **Clark High School**.
- **Angel Santa Cruz**, formerly the Testing Coordinator at Warren High School, was appointed **Assistant Principal** at **Warren High School**.
- **Pamela Fuehrmann**, formerly an Assistant Principal at San Antonio ISD, was appointed **Assistant Principal** at **Warren High School**.
- **Melanie Strawbridge**, formerly an Academic Technology Specialist, was named **Associate Principal** at **Ward Elementary School**.

At the Called Board meeting held on June 10, the following appointment was made:

- **Dr. Susan Cleveland**, formerly Director of Research and Development, was appointed **Executive Director of Continuous Improvement**.
- **Nereida Ollendieck**, formerly an assistant principal at Briscoe Middle School, was appointed the **Academic Dean** at **Briscoe Middle School**.

### Board approves facilities items:

- Exterior colors for building upgrades to Jay/JSEA – Alamo Architects
- Construction manager-at-risk for building upgrades at Jay/Jay SEA – Joeris General Contractors, Ltd.
- Change Orders:
  - Return of contingency and allowance(s) for Chumbley ES (\$191,874.62 credit)

### Bids for goods approved

Trustees approved the following bids, awards, and recognition items: voluntary cancer insurance; commercial vehicle equipment, parts, supplies, rentals, repairs, and services; painting equipment, parts, supplies, rentals, repairs, and services; and frozen desserts for Child Nutrition. Purchase Orders were approved for: Proquest LLC for digital library collection services; and Committee for Children for evidence and research-based curriculum designed to build essential skills to improve behavior and student success for K-5. 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](mailto:info@nisd.net).

For additional information, call 210-397-8770.

#### Board of Trustees

**David Salcido, Trustee, District 1**  
**Sonia Jasso, Ph.D., Trustee, District 2**  
**Karla Duran, Ph.D., Trustee, District 3**  
**Bobby Blount, Trustee, District 4**  
**Laura Zapata, Trustee, District 5**  
**Carol Harle, Ph.D., Trustee, District 6**  
**Karen Freeman Trustee, District 7**

#### 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 Megan Bradley**  
**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](http://www.nisd.net). Citizens who wish to address the Board must sign up to speak just before the start of the meeting.

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

- July 15, 2025, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Called Board Meeting)
- July 22, 2025, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Regular Board Meeting)
- Aug. 12, 2025, 6 p.m., Northside Activity Center, 7001 Culebra Road (Called Board Meeting)
- Aug. 26, 2025, 6 p.m., Board Room, 5900 Evers Road (Regular Board Meeting)