

MCALLEN AFT 1500 DOVE  
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## EYES ON THE BOARD

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### A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING

March, 2014  
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The Winter issue of the Texas Teacher focused on Reclaiming the Promise. As you all know, public services and institutions that Americans rely on are under assault.

Decades of top-down edicts, privatization schemes, and polarization and austerity measures have taken their toll. These attacks stand in the way of meeting our collective obligation to help our children succeed through public education, strengthening our communities and advancing the common good.

It is time to reclaim the promise by fulfilling public education's purpose.



**McAllen ISD Regular Board of Education meeting March 17, 2014—All MISD Board members were present.**

Below is a summary of the main points:

1. Taxes collected in January 29,230,020.392. Travis Middle School (under a Title 1 TTIPS Grant) is spending \$75,000 to tutor students. Sylvan Learning Center was awarded this contract. 3. Crockett (was Elementary) Administrative Center grounds are being reopened for city parks both North and South of the administrative center. A detailed agreement has been prepared. 4. The district awarded a contract totaling \$120,000 per year for Internet Access for the next five (5) years. The district will apply for reimbursement under E-Rate YR2014. Last year, the percentage discount was 82%. The estimated cost is \$98,400. 5. The Board of Education members will be attending training in March, May, June. Money comes from the MISD Board budget.

## Continued

6. Pavilions for six (6) campuses were approved. The only named campus was Hendricks Elementary. Cost for all six (6) \$1+ million--\$75,000 for each campus. The City of McAllen is also putting up \$75,000 for each of the six (6) campuses. Detailed agreements will be signed as to who is to take care of what at each site. I did not get all the campus names and no information in agenda sub pages. 7. A Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Texas Memo of Understanding was signed by MISD, McAllen Chamber of Commerce, McAllen Economic Development Corporation, United Way of South Texas, and South Texas College. A very good thing for our students. 8. Athletic Improvements for locker rooms at McAllen High School and Memorial High School were approved.

### **MCALLEN AFT ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

On Friday, February 28, 2014 Ruth Skow defended our grant from AFT. This grant makes it possible to improve membership challenges.

On Saturday March 1 and 2 I attended the first ever Network for Public Education at UT Austin. The two (2) day program included panel discussions and speakers. Included among the speakers were Diane Ravitch a historian of education

Karen Lewis President of Chicago Teachers Union, and John Kuhn public school administrator in Texas and author. Conference Panels included Building a Movement (save public schools); Charters, Virtuals & Privatization; Education Blogger Network; Meeting the Needs of all students; How to Recruit Candidates & Help Them Win Elections; Student Privacy Issues; Teacher Preparation; and Testing to the Limit. Texas AFT paid Ruth's expenses.

### **STEP LAW SUIT**

On Tuesday April 1, 2014 at 6 p.m. those of our members who were part of the Step Law Suit met with our attorney, Martha Owen, at the First Christian Church Fellowship Hall.

Martha explain the lawsuit, show the amount individuals would receive and a vote was held. The majority of the individuals voted to settle the lawsuit.

**On Wednesday April 2, 2014 the McAllen AFT Executive Board voted to settle the lawsuit.**

The Executive Board took into account the time it would take to appeal again, the two or three years for an appeal to be decided in court, and the needs of new and present members (and those who were not a part of the suit). At this time we do not know when the MISD Board of Education will vote to settle with us.