

EYES ON THE BOARD

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A Union of Professionals

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

November 2012

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Regular School Board Meeting, November 12, 2012

Farias and Caporusso were absent.

The new Assistant Principal for the Regional School for the Deaf is Lisa Lara. Approved 5-0.

Here is a summary of the main points of the meeting:

IPADS AND COST

A presentation was made by Ms. Arcaute, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services, regarding the iPad initiative. The cost of this initiative is \$10,203,545.68 per year for the next three years. The first payment is due on

December 12, 2012. Most students will have their iPad by December, 2012.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Travis (Stage 2), De Leon (Stage 1), and Lincoln (Stage 1). Principals presented their School Improvement Plans. Lots of work done on the plans. Teachers, I am so proud of you.

FINANCIAL

According to Ms. Lopez, Assistant Superintendent of Business, tax collections are at 95%.

The audit by the external auditor for the year

ended June 30, 2012 shows a solid financial condition.

OUR LAW CASE

McAllen ISD has spent \$29,150.55 with the Law Firm of O'Hanlon, McCollom & Demerath (of Austin) to avoid paying teachers, librarians, counselors, nurses, and speech path. since our case started in 2009.

The law firm of Atlas, Hall, & Rodriguez (of McAllen) also has charge fees for our case, but it will not provide information on how much of the fee was purely for the case alone. (This information was obtained through Open Records Request.)

REGULAR School Board Meeting November 26, 2012

The following are some of the highlights of the Board meeting:

Ponce announced the changes on the District Web page. It is nice to see the new focus on children, parents, and staff instead of administration.

McAllen (and the other six (6) out of state districts) are in the list of 61 finalists in the Race to the Top Grant. This grant affects all high school and middle school employees.

The grant will bring even more work to the employees. We requested in Open Records the folks who voted on the JPC for the 70% of the employees in high school and middle school. The following voted yes to join the Grant:

Margie Bowden, MCHi; Pat Padron, Fossum; Hector Loya, Alvarez; Ester Lara, Alvarez; Maria Ingram, Brown; Gloria Galvan, Achieve ECHS; Twila Figueroa, Milam; Leticia Casas,



A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING

(Continued from page 1)

Houston. All but two (2) of these voters are elementary teachers and are not necessarily impacted by this decision. These folks now make your job much harder. You need to ask them why they did this to all of you.

The other districts in Race to the Top that McAllen will be working with if they win are as follows: Vancouver, Washington; Mooresville, North Carolina; Utica, Michigan; Piedmont, Alabama; Meridian, Idaho; Horry County Schools, South Carolina.

The win was announced on the U. S. Department of Education web site on November 26, 2012 under Vancouver, Washington's name. If the District wins, your evaluation will be tied to the scores of your students. Utica, Michigan School District will handle the financial part of the Grant.

Mr. Hitchcock, Executive Director of Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations, gave a brief report of this important part of the District. Custodial and facilities are working well. Maintenance has been neglected. Hitchcock is carefully reviewing maintenance so that things will improve.

Dr. Barrera discussed the agenda item related to marquees at various campuses. Mrs. Erica de la Garza Lopez discussed the possibility of combining in the bid 26 marquees not just 14. Some of the marquees costs would be covered by insurance (March 29, 2012 storm). This item will come back to the Board.



MCALLEN AFT PRESENTATION TO THE MCALLEN ISD BOARD OF EDUCATION, NOVEMBER 26, 2012

Good evening. My name is Ruth Skow, and I am representing the McAllen AFT.

Tonight we would like to submit the petitions that we had teachers, librarians, counselors, nurses, speech path., paraprofessionals, custodial, plant operations, and food services sign in support of the PCI Clinic that is available for all employees.

The employees of McAllen ISD are grateful for the opportunity to use the clinic. There are many employees with family members that have only one person working in the family. The opportunity for access to health care is very important to the work force of McAllen ISD. A healthy work force is important to the stability of this public school district. Healthy employees are important to the community as a whole.

As we do home visits to our members, we have noticed that the elderly members of many of our families have moved in with their grown children. When an employee is a member of McAllen AFT, we consider his/her family our members too. Our visits include conversations about the importance of nipping health problems in the bud, varied types of counseling for those who need it, the importance of voting in national, state, and local elections, and each person's importance and contributions to their school.

Lastly, we ask that the McAllen Board of Education realize the tremendous stress your staff is under.

For example, the Board of Education could take this opportunity to reduce both paper and computer driven records—you have the power to do this.

Thank you.