



## Harmony Public Schools

### Minutes

December 14, 2019 Board Meeting

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**Date and Time**

Saturday December 14, 2019 at 9:00 AM

**Location**

9321 W. Sam Houston Pkwy S. Houston TX 77099

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**Directors Present**

D. Morales, H. Koc, H. Sherwood, H. Stewart, O. Celepcikay, O. Nal

**Directors Absent**

O. Kanlioglu

**Guests Present**

C. Lambert, E. Altun, F. Ay, M. Baca, M. Bayar, M. Schneider-Vogel, N. Bayhan, O. Ozer, U. Alpaslan

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**I. Opening Items****A. Call the Meeting to Order****II. Public Comments****A. Public Comments**

No Public Comments.

### **III. Consent Agenda**

#### **A. Consider Approval of Previous Board Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2019**

D. Morales made a motion to approve the minutes from November 16, 2019 Board Meeting on 11-16-19.

H. Stewart seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **B. Consider Approval/Ratification of the Minutes and of the Actions of the Academic Committee Meeting**

D. Morales made a motion to approve the Minutes and of the Actions of the Academic Committee Meeting on December 6, 2019.

H. Stewart seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **C. Consider Approval/Ratification of the Minutes and of the Actions of the Finance Committee Meeting**

D. Morales made a motion to approve the Minutes and of the Actions of the Finance Committee Meeting on December 6, 2019.

H. Stewart seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **D. Consider Approval/Ratification of the Minutes and of the Actions of the Governance Committee Meeting**

D. Morales made a motion to approve the Minutes and of the Actions of the Governance Committee Meeting on December 6, 2019.

H. Stewart seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

### **IV. 2018-2019 Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) Public Hearing**

#### **A. 2018-2019 Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST)**

Dr. Bayhan presents the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST) Public Hearing. He informs the board that according to Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code Chapter 109.1001 the board of trustees of each open enrollment charter school must hold a public hearing of the Financial Management report within 2 months of receiving the financial accountability rating. At the hearing the institution must present the Financial Management Report to attending parents and tax payers. Dr. Bayhan states in this report there are 4 sections which include the introduction, comparative ratings of HPS, 2018-2019 Ratings Based on School Year 2017-2018 Data - Charter School Status Detail, and Required Reports by TEA. Dr. Bayhan states that the ratings

for HPS last year and this year were "A-Superior" for all 7 Districts. He then informs the board that there is a detailed report for each Charter/District within the report provided to each board member and attendee. He states that five districts received perfect scores while one received a 96 and the other a 98. Dr. Bayhan states if you are above 90 you receive superior rating. Dr. Bayhan states within the report you will see reimbursements by the Superintendent and Board Members. He states there were no outside compensation and/or fees received by Superintendent for professional consulting or other personal services. There were also no gifts received by executive officers and board members nor business transactions between charter schools and board members. Finally, Dr. Bayhan states the final section of the report shows the Superintendents contract and benefits.

Dr. Koc asks if this was covered during the finance committee meeting and Dr. Bayhan states yes.

Dr. Celepcikay congratulates Dr. Bayhan on superior ratings for all districts and thanks the entire finance team to get these results

## **V. Resolution of the Board of Directors of Harmony Public Schools Authorizing**

### **A. Resolution of the Board of Directors of Harmony Public Schools Authorizing**

Mr. Alpaslan presents Resolution of the Board of Directors of Harmony Public Schools Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Lease Agreement between Harmony Public Schools and Harmony Education Foundation for Property in El Paso, Texas. He informs the board that two campuses were approved by the board last year for El Paso and one has already started building and will be ready for next year with the assistance of Harmony Education Foundation. We are closing the second piece of land and that should be done for the 2021-2022 academic year. Thus, we are asking your authorization to get into a lease agreement with the foundation.

Ms. Morales asks what we are approving and Mr. Alpaslan states there will be a new campus with two buildings as discussed in the Finance Committee and it will cost around forty million. Thus you would be authorizing a lease agreement with the foundation so that they can start construction.

Dr. Celepcikay states that the Harmony Education Foundation is part of Harmony and with their income they provide scholarships and sponsor events as well.

Ms. Morales asks when we approved the Harmony El Paso campus and Mr. Stewart states about a year ago. Mr. Ay states that we first asked for approval and started looking for the land and we have since acquired the land and are looking to enter the agreement with Harmony Education Foundation.

Dr. Koc asks if this is for the upcoming school year and Mr. Alpaslan states this is specifically for the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Alpaslan states the approach Mr. Ay is taking is to not build these schools in six to seven months but have more time and thus have purchased land and will start construction as soon as this Spring and complete by April or May.

H. Stewart made a motion to approve Resolution of the Board of Directors of Harmony Public Schools Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Lease Agreement between Harmony Public Schools and Harmony Education Foundation for Property in El Paso, Texas. .

H. Koc seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

## **VI. Review and consider approval of contract award to Ramirez & Associates, P.C**

### **A. Review and consider approval of contract award to Ramirez & Associates, P.C**

Mr. Altun presents Review and consider approval of contract award to Ramirez & Associates, P.C. He informs the board that Ramirez & Associates would represent Harmony in our immigration cases. This law firm is very reputable and is based out of Dallas and works with a lot of ISD's and several charter school networks. He informs the board that it difficult to find qualified STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) teachers and we will receive the assistance of this law firm for cases as immigration is getting more complicated so legal help would be beneficial.

Ms. Morales asks if we pay for transfer fees and/or incentives to come and teacher here?

Mr. Altun states we only pay for HB1 filing fees in addition to their salaries. Ms. Morales asks if there is any incentive to teach here and Mr. Altun states we only pay their fees and salary. Ms. Morales states we can look into incentives such as paying for them to move and Mr. Ay states we can look into this and see if it permissible by our 420 operating account.

Mr. Stewart asks what the number is on an annual basis for this firm regarding cases and Mr. Altun states currently we have 2.5% HB1 employees and this law firm will be used to file extensions as they only last for three years and each time an employee moves to another city another extension has to be filed. Thus, this will be used for new and existing employees.

Ms. Sherwood states that the fees listed show \$4,500 per new employee for legal fees and this is if there are no problems? Mr. Altun states this is correct and this is the fee and employees also pay fees to get their visa from the consulate, etc.

Ms. Morales asks if we have any immigration issues like we have had in the past and Mr. Altun states we do not and this is all based upon the perception of the officer approving or denying the visas. Ms. Morales mentions issues previously with passports and Mr. Ay

states that was an urgent manner and was handled as we submitted appropriate documents and continue to submit these and haven't had any additional concerns.

Dr. Celepcikay stats that I am sure you did your due-diligence as many other local ISD's are working with them.

H. Koc made a motion to approve the contract award to Ramirez & Associates, P.C.

D. Morales seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

## **VII. Review and approve the written performance agreement and the request for waiver**

### **A. Review and approve the written performance agreement and the request for waiver**

Ms. Baca presents review and approve the written performance agreement and the request for waiver of 19 TAC §100.1033(b)(9)(A)(ii) (ii), and board resolution to apply for a New School Designation for a new campus under Harmony Science Academy-El Paso (CDN # 071-806). Ms. Baca informs the board that we are planning to apply for a startup grant for the new Harmony School of Science in El Paso that is slated to open next school year. We would like to submit an application for the new school designation to apply for this startup grant.

Dr. Koc states that we talked about the lease agreement for a new El Paso campus and is this a different campus? Ms. Baca states that these are two different campuses. This school is slated to open next school year and we apply for this grant through TEA and are usually awarded funds to purchase new items and this application is part of the process.

Dr. Celepcikay asks the amount that could be received for this grant and Ms. Baca states it could be up to \$800,000. Mr. Ay states we are attending to apply for a nationwide grant as well as the federal level you can receive up to 2 million per campus. Mr. Ay states once we approve our business plan we will be able to stand in front of the department of education and they will look into our model.

H. Stewart made a motion to approve the written performance agreement and the request for waiver of 19 TAC §100.1033(b)(9)(A)(ii) (ii), and board resolution to apply for a New School Designation for a new campus under Harmony Science Academy-El Paso (CDN # 071-806).

H. Sherwood seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

## **VIII. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

Ms. Morales asks if we are planning to get together to approve the strategic plan and asks about CEO evaluation of his salary. Dr. Celepcikay states that the CEO evaluation

and salary was discussed in August or September. Mr. Stewart states this was possibly the time you were on vacation and missed. Dr. Celepcikay states you can go back and find it in the minutes. Dr. Celepcikay also states that regarding the business plan that there are focus groups that discuss this and that he spoke with them recently and in January they will come and present to the board.

H. Stewart made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

D. Morales seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

C. Lambert