



## Harmony Public Schools

### Minutes

June 17, 2023 HPS Board Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Saturday June 17, 2023 at 8:30 AM

#### Location

9321 W. Sam Houston Pkwy S,  
Houston, TX 77099  
3rd Floor El Paso Meeting Room

\*\*We will serve breakfast at 8:00 AM in the third floor cafeteria.

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#### Directors Present

H. Sherwood (remote), K. House, L. Gonzalez, M. Argin, O. Celepcikay

#### Directors Absent

H. Koc, O. Kanlioglu

#### Guests Present

C. Lambert, E. Akyildiz, E. Altun, F. Ay, George Perez, J. Hoffer (remote), M. Baca, N. Bayhan,  
U. Alpaslan

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#### I. Opening Items

##### A. Call the Meeting to Order

O. Celepcikay called a meeting of the board of directors of Harmony Public Schools to order on Saturday Jun 17, 2023 at 8:32 AM.

## **II. Public Comments**

### **A. Public Comments**

None.

## **III. Consent Agenda**

### **A. Consider Approval of Previous Board Meeting Minutes of May 20, 2023**

K. House made a motion to approve the minutes from May 20, 2023 HPS Board Meeting on 05-20-23.

L. Gonzalez seconded the motion.

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

### **B. Consider Approval/Ratification of the Minutes and of the Actions of the Finance Committee Meeting on June 2, 2023.**

K. House made a motion to approve the Minutes and of the Actions of the Finance Committee Meeting on June 2, 2023.

L. Gonzalez seconded the motion.

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

### **C. Consider Approval/Ratification of the Minutes and of the Actions of the Academic Committee Meeting on June 2, 2023.**

K. House made a motion to approve the Minutes and of the Actions of the Academic Committee Meeting on June 2, 2023.

L. Gonzalez 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 on June 10, 2023.**

K. House made a motion to approve the minutes from Governance Committee Meeting on 06-10-23.

L. Gonzalez seconded the motion.

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

## **IV. Consider Approval and Ratification of the Initial Budget FY'24.**

### **A. Consider Approval and Ratification of the Initial Budget FY'24.**

Mr. George Perez, Budget Director for Harmony Public Schools presents the Initial Budget for Fiscal Year 2024. Mr. Perez reviews the presentation with the board and

states the budgeted general fund revenue is approximately 436.5 million and expenditures total is approximately 427.9 million with a budgeted change in net assets of 8.6 million. Mr. Perez reviews the presentation which is a summary of the proposed FY' 2024 420 and 240 fund budgets as of June 17, 2023, including a breakdown of each district.

Dr. Celepcikay asks if there are any federal program funding ending this upcoming fiscal year such as ESSER funds and Mr. Perez states that ESSER will continue for one more fiscal year and is scheduled to end September of the following year. Mr. Perez states aside from ESSER most of our grants are entitlement grants and we do not expect any changes from those.

Ms. House asks the reason grants were not in the presentation and Mr. Perez states that we will not receive these until August and then you will see them in the quarterly budget amendments that are addressed to the board.

M. Argin made a motion to approve the Initial Budget FY'24 as presented.

K. House seconded the motion.

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

#### **V. Consider Approval of FY'23 Final Budget Amendments.**

##### **A. Consider Approval of FY'23 Final Budget Amendments.**

Mr. George Perez, Budget Director for Harmony Public Schools presents Approval of FY'23 Final Budget Amendments. Mr. Perez informs the board that this was also presented during the June 2, 2023 Finance Committee meeting and FY'23 final total budgeted revenue for all funds is approx. \$554 million. Final total budgeted expenditures is approx. \$540 million which gives a budgeted change in net asset of \$13.8 million. Mr. Perez reviewed the presentation with the board including all funds and 420 funds for the system as well as each district as well as the budget for Harmony Education Solutions and Gradulet.

L. Gonzalez made a motion to approve FY'23 Final Budget Amendments.

K. House seconded the motion.

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

#### **VI. Approval of Resolutions to submit non-expansion amendments to TEA to postpone:**

- A. Approval of Resolutions to submit non-expansion amendments to TEA to postpone:**
- i. the opening date for the additional site of Harmony School of Excellence- Houston and the new campus Harmony Science Academy - City Place for Harmony Public Schools - Houston North Charter (CDN: 101-858).**
  - ii. the opening date for the additional site of Harmony School of Innovation- El Paso for Harmony Public Schools - West Texas Charter (CDN: 071-806)**

Ms. Baca, Chief Compliance Officer for Harmony Public Schools presents Approval of Resolutions to submit non-expansion amendments to TEA to postpone: i. the opening date for the additional site of Harmony School of Excellence- Houston and the new campus Harmony Science Academy - City Place for Harmony Public Schools - Houston North Charter (CDN: 101-858). ii. the opening date for the additional site of Harmony School of Innovation- El Paso for Harmony Public Schools - West Texas Charter (CDN: 071-806). She informs the board that due to city permitting issues, we need to submit a non-expansion amendment to TEA to postpone the opening date for the additional site under Harmony School of Excellence-Houston to the 2024-25 school year. This site was previously approved to open in 2023-24. For Harmony Science Academy - City Place, this new campus was previously approved to open in the 2024-25 school year and we need to postpone it to 2025-26. For the additional site under Harmony School of Innovation - El Paso, it was previously approved to open in 2024-25 but we need to postpone it to the 2025-26 school year.

L. Gonzalez made a motion to approve Resolutions to submit non-expansion amendments to TEA to postpone the opening date for the additional site of Harmony School of Excellence- Houston and the new campus Harmony Science Academy - City Place for Harmony Public Schools - Houston North Charter (CDN: 101-858).and to postpone the opening date for the additional site of Harmony School of Innovation- El Paso for Harmony Public Schools - West Texas Charter (CDN: 071-806).

M. Argin seconded the motion.

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

## **VII. Approval of Resolution to authorize the Superintendent to submit**

### **A. Approval of Resolution to authorize the Superintendent to submit low attendance waivers to the TEA for all HPS Charters due to inclement weather, or other health and safety concerns.**

Ms. Baca, Chief Compliance Officer for Harmony Public Schools presents Approval of Resolution to authorize the Superintendent to submit low attendance waivers to the TEA for all HPS Charters due to inclement weather, or other health and safety concerns. Ms. Baca informs the board that some HPS campuses experience low attendance due to weather, health or safety related issues so we would like to submit low attendance waivers for those schools to excuse any instructional days from ADA and FSP funding calculations. These schools have attendance at least 10 percentage points below the last school year's overall average attendance.

Ms. Baca explains the difference between low attendance waivers and missed day waivers to the board for clarification. Dr. Argin asks what the minimum of instructional days are and if it goes by days and Ms. Baca states we up to 2100 minutes each district that can be excused. Ms. Baca states when submitting we will have to submit supporting evidence as well for the low attendance.

L. Gonzalez made a motion to approve Resolution to authorize the Superintendent to submit low attendance waivers to the TEA for all HPS Charters due to inclement weather, or other health and safety concerns.

K. House seconded the motion.

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

#### **VIII. Approval of Resolution for Certification as required under Texas Education Code Section 12.1058**

##### **A. Approval of Resolution for Certification as required under Texas Education Code Section 12.1058**

Ms. Baca, Chief Compliance Officer for Harmony Public Schools presents Approval of Resolution for Certification as required under Texas Education Code Section 12.1058.

Ms. Baca states House Bill 1707, also known as the Municipal Fairness Bill (recent amendment of Section 12.1058 of the Education Code) requires an open-enrollment charter school to certify in writing that no administrator, officer, or employee of the charter school and no member of the governing body of the charter school or its charter holder derives any personal financial benefit from a real estate transaction with the charter school.

Dr. Argin asks how many employees HPS has and Ms. Baca states around 4000. Dr. Argin asks if any of our employees are benefiting and how we can assure this for each employee. Attorney Mr. Hoffer informs the board that each employee has an obligation to disclose any financial interests in a real estate transaction under our existing policy. He informs the board that it is the individual employee's and/or officers obligation to inform us and if they do not we can assume there isn't one. If we find out after the fact that they were lying about this then we can take action based upon this.

K. House made a motion to approve Resolution for Certification as required under Texas Education Code Section 12.1058.

M. Argin seconded the motion.

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

#### **IX. Approval of Resolution to submit a non-expansion amendment to revise the HPS organizational chart.**

##### **A. Approval of Resolution to submit a non-expansion amendment to revise the HPS organizational chart.**

Dr. Celepcikay informs the board that this item was presented in the Governance Committee Meeting on June 10, 2023 and this item has been worked on by administration and our legal counsel Mr. Hoffer.

Dr. Celepcikay announces that the board members will be going into closed session as permitted by Texas Open Meetings Act Chapters 551.071.

Closed Session begins 9:31AM.

Dr. Celepcikay starts regular session at 9:55AM. Dr. Celepcikay states in closed session the item was discussed and no action was taken.

M. Argin made a motion to Approve Resolution to submit a non-expansion amendment to revise the HPS organizational chart as discussed in closed session.

L. Gonzalez seconded the motion.

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

## **X. Consider Approval of 2023-2024 HPS Compensation Manual.**

### **A. Consider Approval of 2023-2024 HPS Compensation Manual.**

Mr. Emre Altun, Chief Human Resource Officer presents Approval of 2023-2024 HPS Compensation Manual. He informs the board that they have a copy of the redline version of the compensation manual as well as updated version provided prior to the board meeting for review. Mr. Altun reviews the summary of changes with the board members for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year.

Dr. Celepcikay asks about the new structure for moving stipends and Mr. Altun states they have added new hires from out of state can receive the moving stipend now as it used to be only current employees moving to another campus within state.

Dr. Argin asks about liability regarding compensation for new hire orientation on non-scheduled workdays and Mr. Hoffer states there is no liability just the aspect of assuring paying those employees for the days worked.

Mrs. Sherwood asks regarding the home visit stipends being revised if employees are paid more for in person home visits than online home visits and Mr. Altun states yes this is the case because the employee uses their own vehicle and typically spends more time with these visits as well.

Dr. Celepcikay asks about the overall dollar amount for the changes to the compensation manual and Mr. Altun states most are minor updates budget wise and we are estimating around 1.1 million and most coming from added positions per campus.

M. Argin made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 HPS Compensation Manual as presented.

L. Gonzalez seconded the motion.

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

## **XI. Accepting donation of real estate subject to legal counsel approval.**

### **A. Accepting donation of real estate subject to legal counsel approval.**

Dr. Celepcikay announces that the board members will be going into closed session as permitted by Texas Open Meetings Act Chapters 551.072.

Closed Session begins 10:20AM.

Dr. Celepcikay starts regular session at 12:13PM. Dr. Celepcikay states in closed session the item was discussed and no action was taken.

H. Sherwood made a motion to authorize HPS Administration to accept the real estate donation subject to legal review.

M. Argin seconded the motion.

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

## **XII. Consideration of Staff Grievance Appeal from Harmony School of Science – El Paso.**

### **A. Consideration of Staff Grievance Appeal from Harmony School of Science – El Paso.**

Dr. Celepcikay announces that the board members will be going into closed session as permitted by Texas Open Meetings Act Chapters 551.074 and 551.082.

Closed Session begins 10:20AM.

Dr. Celepcikay starts regular session at 12:13PM. Dr. Celepcikay states in closed session the item was discussed and no action was taken.

L. Gonzalez made a motion to uphold the administrations decision and deny the appeal.

K. House seconded the motion.

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

## **XIII. CEO Evaluation**

### **A. CEO Evaluation**

Dr. Celepcikay announces that the board members will be going into closed session as permitted by Texas Open Meetings Act Chapters 551.074.

Closed Session begins 10:20AM.

Dr. Celepcikay starts regular session at 12:13PM. Dr. Celepcikay states in closed session the item was discussed and no action was taken.

Dr. Celepcikay states that the all board members used the online tools to provide feedback and grades for the CEO evaluation. We are very happy to have Mr. Ay as the CEO/Superintendent for Harmony Public Schools and are appreciative of his efforts and success generated with his team members.

O. Celepcikay made a motion to extend the CEO contract for one more year with the conditions discussed in closed session.

K. House seconded the motion.

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

#### **XIV. Closing Items**

##### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

O. Celepcikay made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

L. Gonzalez 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 12:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

C. Lambert