



Board Meeting Minutes  
November 13, 2025, 4:00 p.m.  
Ornelas Activity Center, 3402 Old Omen Rd, Tyler, TX 75707

**ATTENDING IN PERSON:**

Voting Members:

Alan Buckland  
Dr. Dominick Fazarro  
Dr. Joanna Neel

Dr. Michael Odell  
Dr. Yanira Oliveras  
Eric Semlear, President

Non-voting attendees:

Ashlie Aguilar  
Heather Bailey  
Sammi Broussard  
Christian Chesnut

Dr. Aimee Dennis  
Sarah Evans  
Rachel Hawkins  
Laura Hilbig

Amanda Kaiser  
Andrew Kohls  
Shelly Parsons  
Dr. Jaclyn Pedersen

**ATTENDING ON ZOOM:**

Voting Members:

Dr. Gina Doecker

**Board Meeting**

1. Call to Order  
Mr. Semlear called the UT Tyler University Academy board meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. on Thursday, November 13, 2025, confirming that a quorum was present.
2. Pledge  
The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was said, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

3. Open for Public Comment
  - a. Mr. Semlear noted that one person registered for public comment, but they were not in attendance.

## ACTION ITEMS

4. Consent Agenda
  - a. Approve Previous Minutes, [Thursday, September 25, 2025](#).
  - b. Dr. Odell moved to approve the minutes, and Dr. Neel seconded the motion.  
The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Oliveras, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
5. Request Approval of [Board Resolution in Support of Certification of Compliance with Texas Education Code Sections 11.005 and 28.0022](#).
  - a. Dr. Dennis presented the Resolution.
  - b. Dr. Fazarro moved to approve the Board Resolution in Support of Certification of Compliance with Texas Education Code Sections 11.005 and 28.0022, and Dr. Oliveras seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Oliveras, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
6. Request Approval of [Board Resolution Regarding Appropriate Number of Armed Security Officers per Campus](#)
  - a. Dr. Dennis presented the Resolution.
  - b. Dr. Odell moved to approve the Board Resolution Regarding Appropriate Number of Armed Security Officers per Campus, and Mr. Buckland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Oliveras, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
7. Request Approval Board Policies
  - a. [PG-1.301 School Property](#)
  - b. [PG-1.302 Board Members Technology Resources and Electronic Communications](#)
  - c. [PG-1.303 Accessibility- Technology Resources](#)
  - d. [PG-1.304 Internet Safety and Cybersecurity](#)
  - e. [PG-1.305 Transfer of Equipment and Devices to Students](#)
  - f. [PG-1.306 Use of Digital Devices](#)
  - g. [PG-1.402 Possession and Use of Weapons](#)
  - h. [PG-1.403 Emergency Plans](#)
  - i. [PG-1.405 Facilities Safety](#)
  - j. [PG-1.406 Security Officers](#)
  - k. [PG-3.202 Compulsory Attendance](#)
    - i. Mr. Semlear invited a discussion on the policies.
    - ii. Dr. Oliveras moved to approve PG-1.301, PG-1.302, PG-1.303, PG-1.304, PG-1.305, PG-1.306, PG1.402, PG-1.403, PG-1.405, PG-1.406, PG-3.202 and Dr. Neel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Oliveras, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
8. Request Approval of the updated [Student Code of Conduct](#).
  - a. Dr. Dennis presented the updates to the Student Code of Conduct.
  - b. Dr. Oliveras moved to approve the updated Student Code of Conduct, and Dr. Fazarro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr.

Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Oliveras, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.

9. Executive Session: The Board went into Executive Session under Texas Government Code 551.089 to address the School Safety and Security Committee recommended updates for the
  - a. Basic Emergency Operations Plan
  - b. Active Threat Annex
  - c. Cybersecurity Annex
  - d. Emergency Communications Annex
  - e. Weekly Door Inspection Data
  - f. Safety Updates
    - i. Bi-Annual Maintenance Check
    - ii. BDA Installation in Palestine
    - iii. Entry-Resistant Film
    - iv. Evacuation Drills
    - v. Intruder Detection Audit-Longview
    - vi. District Vulnerability Assessment
    - vii. School Safety Standards Compliance Assessment Fall 2025

The Board moved to Executive session at 4:19 p.m., and returned from Executive Session at 4:43 p.m.

10. Request Approval of Safety Documents
  - a. Basic Emergency Operations Plan
  - b. Active Threat Annex
  - c. Cybersecurity Annex
  - d. Emergency Communications Annex

Dr. Odell moved to approve the Basic Emergency Operations Plan, Active Threat Annex, Cybersecurity Annex, and Emergency Communications Annex as discussed in the Executive Session. Mr. Buckland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Oliveras, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.

## INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

11. Performance of Students Receiving Special Education Services
  - a. Ms. Broussard presented the district's [Special Education Progress](#).
  - b. Ms. Broussard reviewed the district's [Special Education STAAR Performance](#).
12. Governance Reporting
  - a. Dennis reported that all Board members verified the Governance report, and it will be submitted.
13. [Senate Bill 546 School Bus Seat Belt Bus Replacement Cost](#)
  - a. Dr. Dennis presented SB546, which requires school districts to install 3-point seat belt systems in all buses by fall 2029. UTTUA has one bus and two shuttles that need the three-point seat belts installed. Furthermore, the district currently has

three school buses equipped with three-point seat belts. A new 77-passenger school bus is approximately \$150,000, and a new 25-passenger shuttle bus is approximately \$130,000. Grants may be available in the future to assist schools with this requirement. Dr. Dennis shared guidance from meetings the fleet manager attended with legal teams, which recommended that districts not retrofit buses due to legal liability and instead purchase buses with seat belts installed by the manufacturer.

- b. After discussion, the Board decided not to use the district fund balance to purchase new buses or retrofit our current buses at this time, but rather to investigate the financial assistance the state may provide in the future to support the upgrades needed for the buses and shuttles.

14. Financial Updates:

- a. Ms. Chesnut presented the [2025-2026 Budget Report](#).
- b. The General Budget received \$1.4 million and expended \$1.5 million. The Activity Funds received \$3,300 and expended \$184.

15. Intent to Apply

- a. Dr. Dennis reported that the district intended to apply for three grants in the [LASO Cycle 4](#).

16. Superintendent Report

- a. Dr. Dennis reviewed [District Enrollment and Attendance](#) numbers.
- b. Campus Updates:
  - i. Longview: Ms. Hawkins reported that the annual Math Isn't So Scary Night was well attended; they were increasing community involvement in PBLs; teacher Karla Thomas received a teaching award from the Pinetree Masonic Lodge; and their food drive was a huge success, with 7,541 food items and \$ 3,271 donated.
  - ii. Palestine: Ms. Parsons reported that they have had many guest speakers in their new forestry class and would be planting donated trees soon; they had the most significant participation ever in the Palestine Hot Pepper Festival with five floats and attendance by university mascot, Swoop; Fall Fest and Monster Mash events were well attended; and they are wrapping up a fall food drive and moving into a December toy drive.
  - iii. Tyler: Mr. Kohls reported that their Fall Fest/STEM night was well attended; that they were increasing their TSI passing rate; that speech and debate students qualified for the Congress Speech and Debate event in Austin; and that Mr. Chong and Ms. Washington were named National Outstanding PLTW teachers.
- c. Administrative Updates
  - i. Lab School Updates: Dr. Odell stated that the UT Tyler UTeach program was celebrating its 15th anniversary and that we were one of 6 recipients statewide to receive a grant to produce a Code Jam event in April for K-12 students. Dr. Pedersen reported that, with the LASO Cycle 4 residency grant, we would be seeking a highly qualified cooperating teacher on each campus.

- ii. Facilities: Dr. Dennis reported that planning for rising larger classes on the Palestine and Longview campuses was underway with UT Tyler, and the Longview school zone was still being actively worked on.
  - d. Looking Forward: January 22nd School Board Meeting, Budget Amendments, Financial Updates; Holiday Breaks, School Board Holiday Dinner 12/16 at 6:00; 24-25 Finance Audit; TAPR and Annual Report.
17. Adjournment
- a. Mr. Buckland moved to adjourn the meeting, and Dr. Oliveras seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Oliveras, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.