



Board Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2025, 4:00 p.m.
Ornelas Activity Center, 3402 Old Omen Rd, Tyler, TX 75707

ATTENDING IN PERSON:

Voting Members:

Alan Buckland
Dr. Gina Doecker
Dr. Dominick Fazarro

Dr. Joanna Neel
Dr. Michael Odell
Eric Semlear, President

Non-voting attendees

Sammi Broussard
Christian Chesnut
Dr. Aimee Dennis

Rachel Hawkins
Amanda Kaiser

Andrew Kohls
Shelly Parsons

ATTENDING ON ZOOM:

Voting Members:

Dr. Yanira Oliveras

Non-voting Members:

Heather Bailey
Nikki Hart

Dr. Jaclyn Pedersen
Holli Tate

Kimberly Tucker

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, August 21, 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 no one registered for public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approve Previous [Minutes, Thursday, July 31st, 2025](#).
 - b. Dr. Doepker moved to approve the minutes, and Mr. Buckland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Olivares, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
5. Request Approval of [2024-2025 Budget Amendments](#)
 - a. Ms. Chesnut presented the Budget Amendments.
 - b. Dr. Neel moved to approve the 2024-2025 Budget Amendments as presented, and Mr. Buckland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Olivares, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
6. Request Approval of [2025-2026 District Food Service Wellness Plan](#)
 - a. Ms. Kaiser presented the plan.
 - b. Dr. Doepker moved to approve the 2025-2026 District Food Service Wellness Plan, and Dr. Fazarro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Olivares, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
7. Request Approval of [Title I, Part C- Migrant Program Action Plan](#)
 - a. Ms. Hart presented the plan.
 - b. Dr. Odell moved to approve the Migrant Program Action Plan, and Dr. Doepker seconded the motion, pending the plan's signature by the Interim Superintendent. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Olivares, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
8. Request Adoption of the [2025-2026 Budget](#)
 - a. Ms. Chesnut presented the Budget.
 - b. Dr. Odell moved to adopt the 2025-2026 Budget, and Dr. Fazarro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Olivares, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
9. Request Approval of Policies:
 - a. Dr. Dennis presented [PG 1.101 Board Policy and Administrative Procedures](#)
 - b. Dr. Dennis presented [PG 1.102 School Foundations](#)
 - c. Dr. Dennis presented [PG 1.103 Board Authority, Roles, and Responsibilities](#)
 - d. Dr. Dennis presented [PG 1.104 Orientation and Training](#)
 - e. Dr. Dennis presented [PG 2.108 Credit by Examination](#)
 - f. Dr. Dennis presented [PG 3.404 Personal Communication Devices](#)
 - g. After discussion, Mr. Semlear requested to table the approval of policy PG 1.103 until the September meeting to allow more time to confirm the board's role in a University Charter School.
 - h. Dr. Fazarro moved to approve PG 1.101, PG 1.102, PG 1.104, PG 2.108, and PG 3.404. Dr. Neel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with

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

10. Request Approval of [Innovation Course General Employability Skills Innovative Course N1270153](#).
 - a. Ms. Hart and Dr. Pedersen presented the course.
 - b. Dr. Odell moved to approve the Innovation Course General Employability Skills Innovative Course N1270153, and Dr. Fazarro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Olivares, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

11. Financial Updates:
 - a. [2024-2025 Budget Report](#)
 - i. Ms. Chesnut reported that the general fund received \$11 million in revenue and expensed \$11 million. The activity fund generated \$73,000 in revenue, offset by expenses of \$74,000.
12. Intent to Apply
 - a. Dr. Dennis and Dr. Pedersen reported on the intent to apply for the 2025-2026 Perkins V: Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Grant.
13. Annual Board Training
 - a. Board Members- 6 Hours Required
 - b. Superintendent/Central Administrative Officers- 15 Hours Required (exempt if you hold a standard superintendent certificate)
 - c. Campus Administrative Officers- 5 Hours Required (exempt if you hold a standard principal certificate)
 - d. Business Manager - 15 Hours Required
 - e. Dr. Dennis presented the information for each type of Annual Board Training
14. [2025-2026 Gifted and Talented Handbook](#)
 - a. Ms. Hart presented the Handbook.
15. Discussion of Scheduling a Board Workshop for Superintendent Search
 - a. Dr. Odell led the discussion.
16. Superintendent Report
 - a. 2025-2026 District and Campus Improvement Plans presented by Dr. Dennis.
 - i. [District Improvement Plan 2025-2026](#)
 - ii. [Longview Campus Improvement Plan 2025-2026](#)
 - iii. [Palestine Campus Improvement Plan 2025-2026](#)
 - iv. [Tyler Campus Improvement Plan 2025-2026](#)
 - v. Dr. Doepker noted to update the faculty advisor on the Longview and Palestine Plan to reflect Dr. Olivares.
 - b. Dr. Dennis presented [Enrollment Projections for 2025-2026](#).
 - c. STAAR Accountability Ratings
 - i. [2024 STAAR Accountability Ratings](#)

- ii. [2025 STAAR Accountability Ratings](#)
- iii. Ms. Hart presented both years of STAAR Ratings, noting University Academy's continued A rating and high performance level.
- d. Campus Updates
 - i. Longview - Ms. Hawkins reported a great start to the school year, including a student receiving a full scholarship to Boys' State, a College Board Nationally Recognized student, and STUCO hosting a summer conference. A Leader in Me night is planned for the end of September.
 - ii. Palestine- Ms. Parsons reported 56 new students for enrollment this year, a College Board Nationally Recognized student, student participation in Region 7 GT camps, student participation in community theater, Mr. White's Vanderbilt Fellowship, a middle school/high school trip to New York and Washington, DC, and their upcoming Parent University Expo.
 - iii. Tyler - Mr. Kohls reported that a College Board Nationally Recognized student was named from the Tyler campus. Many new teachers are already beginning the year with strong PBLs. Kindergarten has started their ABC boot camp. Tiger Creek tour winners from summer reading and math work will be announced. Additionally, upcoming staff/students of the month will be recognized.
- e. Administrative Updates
 - i. Lab School Updates: Dr. Neel's Reading Buddies is set to start on the Tyler campus in September, and Dr. Urieta, Tyler High School science teacher, successfully defended his dissertation. Several more UA staff members will be defending their dissertations in the coming year.
 - ii. Facilities: There are no updates at this time..
- f. Looking Forward- September 25 Board Meeting, Title III Annual Report and ESL Waiver (if applicable), UIL and homeschool students.

17. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m. with a motion from Dr. Odell, seconded by Dr. Neel. The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Buckland, Dr. Doepker, Dr. Fazarro, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, Dr. Olivares, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.