Texas Education Agency

Commissioner Mike Morath

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Via E-Mail,
Certified Mail &
Regular Mail

220-910

April 23, 2026

Trent Dowd, Interim Superintendent
Tammy Thomas, Board President
Cindy Burt, Board Vice President
Mac Belmontes, Board Secretary
Mary Coker, Board Member
Cristina Gallagher, Board Member
Sonja Norman, Board Member
Armando Velazquez, Board Member
Lake Worth Independent School District
6805 Telephone Rd.
Lake Worth, Texas 76135

Re: Appointment of Board of Managers and Superintendent

Dear Interim Superintendent Dowd and Trustees:

In correspondence dated January 8, 2026, following an informal review, I notified the Lake Worth Independent School District ("ISD" or "district") of my decision to appoint a board of managers and superintendent to the district based on the unacceptable performance of one of the district's campuses for five consecutive school years. Additionally, I appointed a conservator to the district to ensure the district supports its low-performing campuses and implements the district's turnaround plans. The correspondence also notified the district of the opportunity to request an administrative review of the appointment of a conservator and a board of managers decision to the State Office of Administrative Hearings ("SOAH").[1]

The district did not submit a petition for a SOAH review. Therefore, no further review of this determination is available under the Texas Education Code or applicable rules.

Since December, the TEA has conducted a comprehensive application, selection, and training process to identify and select qualified members to serve on the board of managers. I am hereby appointing the following five individuals to serve on the board of managers:

[1] Texas Education Code (TEC) §39A.301, and 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §§157.1151(7), (9), 157.1155(a) and (b).

- **Tom Harris (recommended to serve as Board President)**: Tom Harris is a business and community leader who has spent much of his career supporting aviation, operations, and development initiatives in Tarrant County. He currently chairs the Fort Worth Mayor's Council on Education and Workforce Development, helping prepare students for future careers. Harris and his wife co-founded the Jordan Elizabeth Harris Foundation, focused on suicide prevention and mental health awareness. He also serves on several non-profit boards supporting education and children's initiatives.

- **Amy Morgan (recommended to serve as Board Vice President)**: A longtime public-school educator with more than 30 years of experience in the classroom, Amy Morgan has served as a teacher, district administrator, and higher education instructor. Morgan has dedicated her career to supporting special populations and serving educational and community organizations throughout the greater Fort Worth area. Morgan holds degrees from Southwest Texas State University, the University of Houston - Clear Lake, and Nova Southeastern University.

- **Judy Starnes (recommended to serve as Board Secretary)**: Judy Starnes has called Lake Worth home for more than 45 years. She is also a parent and a retired Lake Worth ISD educator. During her 25-year teaching career, Starnes worked with students across a range of special populations and served as team leader and department head at her school. Over the years, she has led workshops for educators and remains actively involved in the Lake Worth community. Starnes received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Texas Wesleyan University.

- **Kenneth Nichols**: Kenneth Nichols is a retired U.S. Navy officer and leadership professional with more than 30 years of military service. He holds two doctoral degrees and serves as an adjunct professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and Abraham Lincoln University. Deeply committed to service, Nichols volunteers and serves on boards supporting veterans, underserved communities, and workforce development initiatives. He also serves as a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

- **Mason Sneed**: A business and financial professional, Mason Sneed works on the investment team at a Fort Worth-based private equity firm. He has over a decade of experience spanning private equity, corporate restructuring, and engineering. Sneed holds a Master of Business Administration from Rice University and a Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering from Texas A&M University.

These members of the board of managers will be responsible for governing the district, and they will provide the leadership needed to work towards positive change for all students who attend Lake Worth ISD schools. Accordingly, with this appointment of a board of managers, the powers of the district's board of trustees are HEREBY SUSPENDED until further notice and for the duration of the tenure of the board of managers.[2]

[2] TEC §39A.202(a)(1).

State law also requires that I appoint a superintendent.[3] Under that authority, I hereby appoint Dr. Ena Meyers as the superintendent of Lake Worth ISD, effective immediately and with the full authority, rights, and responsibilities as permitted under the Texas Education Code.[4]

Dr. Meyers is a lifelong public educator with more than two decades of experience supporting students, teachers, and school communities across Texas. She has served as a classroom teacher, campus principal, and most recently, Deputy Chief of Strategic Initiatives at Houston ISD. Known for her work strengthening schools through high-quality instruction and strong support for educators, Dr. Meyers is deeply committed to improving student achievement and making intentional changes to help students reach their full potential. Dr. Meyers' experience will be a critical asset to advancing student success, benefiting all students in Lake Worth ISD.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the district's former superintendent, Dr. Mark Ramirez, for his leadership and dedicated service. Dr. Ramirez led the district with a steadfast commitment to the community he served and a renewed focus on improving student outcomes. His efforts to strengthen student outcomes and support the district's work are sincerely valued, and his contributions will continue to inform and support the district as it moves forward during this transition. I also want to thank Trent Dowd, who stepped in to serve as interim superintendent of the district after Dr. Ramirez's departure in March.

Andrew Kim will continue to serve as the appointed conservator to the district. He will assist with the board transition, while retaining his existing authority and responsibilities.

The appointment of a board of managers to a district is not permanent, and state law sets forth a timeline that governs the board's return to elected control.[5] Since the board will return to elected control, trustee elections will continue during the tenure of the board of managers. My hope is that members of the board of trustees will remain engaged in an advisory capacity so that the transition will be seamless when the time comes for the elected officials to return to the board.

I wish Superintendent Meyers and the board of managers all my best. It is my sincere hope that all parties work together in a cooperative and productive manner to address the current and future needs of all the district's students.

Sincerely,

Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education

MM/lm

[3] TEC §39A.202(a)(2).
[4] 19 TAC §97.1073(f).
[5] TEC §39A.208(b).