

**Via Certified Mail,
Regular Mail & Email**

015-908

February 19, 2025

Mr. Henry Yzaguirre, Superintendent
Mr. Manuel Lopez, Board President
Ms. Cyndi Ramirez, Board Vice-President
Mr. Ernesto Arrellano, Jr., Board Secretary
Mr. Jose Araiza, Board Member
Mr. Homer Flores, Jr., Board Member
Ms. Elsa Gonzales, Board Member
Mrs. Shirley Ibarra, Board Member
South San Antonio Independent School District
1450 Gillette Blvd.
San Antonio, Texas 78224

RE: Appointment of Board of Managers and Superintendent to South San Antonio Independent School District

Dear Mr. Yzaguirre and Members of the Board of Trustees:

On November 14, 2024, I notified the South San Antonio Independent School District (district or ISD) that following a fact-finding review of the district, I would determine whether to appoint a Board of Managers. This letter is to notify you that I am appointing a Board of Managers to South San Antonio ISD effective immediately.

According to the Agreed Order voted on and approved by the Board of Trustees on September 20, 2023, and effective September 22, 2023, a Board of Managers was to be appointed at the conclusion of a one-year stay should I determine it appropriate and in the best interests of the students, parents, teachers and other stakeholders of the district. Per the agreement, the district waived any rights to any administrative or other legal appeal. Additionally, the district accepted the appointment of Dr. Abe Saavedra as conservator on October 10, 2023, to provide the Texas Education Agency (TEA) assurances that the district complies with applicable statutes and regulations.

I have reviewed the conservator's reports and year-end review, which recommended appointing a Board of Managers. I also reviewed the activities and actions of the Board of Trustees and met with Board leadership in January to hear their perspective. My analysis is now complete, and I have decided that appointing a Board of Managers is necessary.

In my November 14, 2024 correspondence, I directed agency staff to start identifying prospective community members to potentially serve on a Board of Managers. The TEA conducted a comprehensive application and selection process, and I am hereby appointing the following seven

individuals to serve on the South San Antonio ISD Board of Managers:

- **Raymond Tijerina (recommended to serve as Board President):** Mr. Tijerina was born and raised on the Southside of San Antonio and is a proud alumnus of Kindred Elementary, Dwight Middle School, and South San Antonio High School. He is a co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of a San Antonio-based educational support company that helps school systems find the best talent. A veteran of the United States Navy who served honorably for nine years, Ray has devoted his career to serving the students of the Southside and looks forward to continued service to the community as a member of the South San Antonio ISD School Board.
- **Karla Gomez Sanchez (recommended to serve as Board Vice President):** Mrs. Gomez Sanchez was born and raised on the Southside of San Antonio and is a proud South San alumna. The daughter of Mexican immigrants, she was the first in her family to attend college, earning a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at San Antonio. Married to a fellow South San Bobcat, Karla worked in the medical field before becoming a stay-at-home mom. She is now a work-from-home/stay-at-home mom, and her children attend South San Antonio ISD schools. As an alumna and now parent, Karla is focused on making South San a district that successfully serves all students.
- **Darrell Balderama (recommended to serve as Board Secretary):** Mr. Balderrama was born and raised in the Southside of San Antonio and is a proud 1998 graduate of South San Antonio High School. Darrell received his bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and returned to San Antonio to complete his master's degree in public administration from St. Mary's University. He is pursuing his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership at the University of Texas at San Antonio. With over 20 years of higher education experience, Darrell currently leads an undergraduate research office at a local university and enjoys supporting community involvement and engagement.
- **Adrian Guerra:** Mr. Guerra is a proud product of South San Antonio ISD, having attended Royalgate Elementary and Alan B. Shepard Middle School before graduating from West Campus High School. He credits the educational foundation provided by South San Antonio ISD as the springboard for his professional successes. Adrian is driven by the mission of serving others and placing what is most important above self-interests. These values, instilled by his parents, shape his vision for how South San Antonio ISD must operate to ensure the success of its students. A software engineer by trade, Adrian currently serves as a technology and cybersecurity partner for small businesses in the San Antonio area.
- **Dr. Kelly Murguia:** Dr. Murguia has invested over 15 years in public education as a teacher, teacher educator, curriculum designer, and systems and operations managing director and is now focused on using this skillset and experience in service of the students, staff, and community of South San Antonio ISD. A resident of the Southside, Kelly deeply appreciates the connection and sense of pride in the community. Kelly has an undergraduate degree in Commerce, Organizations, and Entrepreneurship from Brown University, a master's degree in educational leadership from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from The University of Texas at Austin.
- **Aurelina Prado:** Mrs. Prado is a testament to the power of perseverance, an immigrant and daughter of naturalized citizens who overcame obstacles to achieve success. Married

to a Southside native, she worked her way up from an aircraft technician to a senior corporate leader, overseeing military programs across multiple states while earning her degrees as a non-traditional student. Passionate about lifting others, she has dedicated years to mentoring, providing scholarships, and ensuring students have the resources to thrive. Lina believes every student in South San Antonio ISD deserves the opportunity to succeed, no matter their circumstances—just as she did.

- **Jesus Rendon III:** Mr. Rendon III is a proud graduate of South San Antonio ISD. A neutral party in the annual Red River Rivalry, he holds degrees in engineering from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Oklahoma. Employed in the cybersecurity industry and as an adjunct professor in the business school at Palo Alto College, Jesus' work centers on his passion for serving his community and helping educate the next generation of San Antonians. Together with his wife, he started a nonprofit organization that connects students with career opportunities. He is an active member of St. Joseph South San Catholic Church and the Quintana Neighborhood Association.

The members of the Board of Managers will govern South San Antonio ISD and lead efforts for positive change and effective governance. With their appointment, the powers of the district's Board of Trustees are immediately suspended until further notice.¹

State law requires me to appoint a superintendent.² I hereby Dr. Saul Hinojosa the Superintendent of the South San Antonio ISD, effective immediately, with full authority under the Texas Education Code.³

These appointments are final, as the district waived any rights to a hearing or legal action regarding the Board of Managers appointment. At this time, I believe that the appointment of a Board of Managers and Superintendent will propel the district forward to create the conditions essential for continuous improvement and district success. I am confident the superintendent, Board of Managers, and all parties will work together to improve the district for the benefit of the students and community. The district's conservator will remain in place, and the conservator's authority is unchanged by the appointment of the Board of Managers. The agency further reserves any and all rights to take further actions if needed.⁴ Any questions about the Board of Managers appointment may be addressed to Garrett Black, Director of Governance Interventions at (512) 463-9146 or Garrett.Black@tea.texas.gov.

Sincerely,



Mike Morath
Commissioner of Education

MM/lm

¹ Texas Education Code (TEC) §39A.202(a)(1).

² TEC §39A.202(a)(2).

³ Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §97.1073(f).

⁴ TEC Chapters 39, 39A and 19 TAC §97.