

W. Charles Akins High School PTSA  
Wednesday, October 4, 2023  
Akins ECHS – CCC (Room 146)

## MINUTES

**In attendance:** Trudy Richards (parent/secretary), Eliza Saenz (parent), Robin Sanchez (parent), Melissa Contreras (staff), Meg Kozel (staff/VP), Jess Rest (community member), Nathan Willis (community member/treasurer), Cecilia Gutierrez (teacher/parent), Teodoro Gutierrez (student), Joanna Rowley (parent), Angelica Ancira (parent/president), Michael Herbin (principal), Mayra Jimenez (parent), Jose Rodriguez (parent), Lance Wilkinson (teacher), Georgina Morrell (staff), Melinda Van Horn (staff), Ceci Vazquez (parent)

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm.

**Topic:** Trudy Richards presented the minutes from the September 2023 general meeting.

**Action:** Melinda Van Horn made a motion to approve the minutes as written, Melissa Contreras seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Topic:** Meg Kozel said that financial reconciliation for the 2022-23 school year has been completed and that all funds had been spent as approved in FY23. She added that the committee had made a few suggestions to the treasurer for clarity and ease of completing future reconciliations.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Ancira announced that PTSA has secured a Fundraising Chair (parent Gessie Wilson), but is still looking for a Membership Chair.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Richards discussed plans for Blue & Gold Night, including help with ticket sales and plans for a gift card wall.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Richards said that the Student Recognition Committee is still soliciting student and teacher/staff members and asked any interested members to speak to her.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Kozel said that monthly student meetings will begin in October during FIT. Richards will attend the first meeting to recruit members for the Student Recognition Committee.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Nathan Willis presented the treasurer's report for September, including income from shirt sales and memberships and expenses for Senior Sunrise reimbursement and food for a parent event (to be reimbursed from the school).

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Richards announced that PTSA currently has 87 members, 11 of whom are teachers who joined in the last week after the October incentive was announced.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Ancira spoke on behalf of Fundraising Chair Gessie Wilson, who was unable to attend the meeting. Wilson has secured a few gift cards for Blue & Gold Night and will continue to solicit more donations. Ancira reached out to 25 businesses via email and got responses from a few, including gift certificates and a gift basket from Texas Roadhouse.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Academy Coordinator Georgiana Morrell provided academy updates. (See attached document for details.)

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** A+FCU representative Nathan Willis said that they are currently promoting the refer-a-friend program, which offers \$50 to the referral and up to \$50 to the new member, plus provides members with an Akins' spirit debit card that matches cashback on purchases in quarterly donations to the school.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Ancira detailed progress on the Phil the Box fundraiser. The donation box will be installed in the parking lot and the community will be able to drop off clothing, shoes, and softline household items like blankets and sheets. The PTSA will receive monthly checks for 20 cents per pound collected.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Associate Principal Manuel Garcia provided the principal's report. He noted that the school is working toward meeting CCMR goals and are still awaiting more detail from TEA on changes to academic accountability ratings. He also said that office staff have been reaching out to families who did not complete the household income document to get more accurate numbers of students who might qualify for Title I status, as these numbers impact not only lunches, but also federal funding to the school. Garcia said the senior information page on the school website is now up-to-date with important dates for 2024, including Prom on April 27 and graduation on May 28 at 9 am. Other important upcoming dates include: Parent/Teacher Conference Day (Oct 9), PSAT for 9th-11th graders (Oct 11), Homecoming (game Oct 12, dance Oct 13), and Blue & Gold Night (Oct 25).

Principal Michael Herbin was asked about the potential enrollment impacts of new construction in the area. He said that although there has been huge growth around Akins in the past ten years, enrollment is actually lower now (around 2,600) than at the pre-pandemic high point of 2,800 students. Some parents noted that there has been dramatic growth at Blazier that could eventually boost Akins' enrollment.

Richards said that in last year's bond planning, \$800,000 was allocated for planning and design of a new SE high school in Goodnight Ranch. Although the timeline for building of this school is unsure (it would require passage of an additional bond), this is one of the ways the district is planning to deal with potential enrollment increases. The other option is attendance zone boundary adjustments to move students from over-enrolled Akins and Bowie to under-enrolled Crockett and Travis HS.

**Action:** None taken.

**Topic:** Richards announced that there is a student volunteer opportunity at the Kocurek Monster Mash event October 27th. Details and the sign-up link will be provided at the October student meeting.

She also discussed opportunities for advocacy, including a Boot Vouchers rally at the capitol October 7 at noon, a letter from Austin Council of PTAs opposing vouchers that interested members can sign, and a chance to meet with state representative Talarico October 9 from 6:30-8:30 pm to discuss how to best advocate for schools.

**Action:** None taken.

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm.