

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Child & Youth Services (CYS) Schools Council Meeting Minutes (SCM),
20 September 2023

1. The Schools Council Meeting convened at 0900, chaired by COL Lakicia Stokes, Fort Cavazos Garrison Commander, at the Community Events Center, Fort Cavazos, Texas.
2. The SCM was open to the public and a total of 69 attended. Parents, soldiers, community members, representatives from Belton ISD, Copperas Cove ISD, Jarrell ISD, Killeen, ISD, Lampasas ISD, Salado ISD and Temple ISD.

Presenters included Dr. Jimmy Bowser, Director of Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs for the Texas Education Agency (TEA); Ms. Michelle Lammers, PEN Project Regional Coordinator for the Partners, Resource Network; Ms. Nanette Pigg, School Program Manager for Installation Management Command (IMCOM) G-9; Ms. Christine Luciano, Environmental Outreach Coordinator for Department of Public Works (DPW); and Ms. Sheri Buono, Education Services Officer. Fort Cavazos School Liaison Officers (SLOs) Ms. Terri Jones and Ms. Kristine Caparco also provided presentations.

3. The meeting progressed as follows:

- a. **Welcome and Statements of Purpose**. The Meeting opened with COL Lakicia Stokes extending her gratitude for the many partnerships represented in the room, stating that this support helped students to be successful. She stated that the CYS School Liaison Officers stand ready to assist Families with education related transitions, questions, and challenges.

Ms. Terri Jones presented information on the Partners in Education (PIE) Process Chart. This begins with the Schools Council Meeting, where valuable information is shared to assist parents with their child's education. Issues are collected and forwarded to the Working Groups. The SLOs then distribute the issues to one of the three Working Groups: Special Education, Student Success, or Higher Education. The Working Groups meet with the SCM to discuss, collaborate, and develop recommendations for issues presented. A member of the group then presents an overview of the recommendations at the annual Fort Cavazos Education Summit, which is an executive level meeting held in February.

- b. **Information**

- (1) **School District Introductions**. Ms. Terri Jones welcomed the school districts and gave each district time to introduce themselves and provide a slide presentation or video with information about the district.

a) Belton ISD (BISD). Ms. Cassandra Spearman, Belton ISD Executive Director of Student Services, presented a video showcasing the amazing accomplishments of the district and students. Belton ISD's enrollment increased by more than 300 students and their industry-based certifications doubled. Over 300 students enrolled in dual credit courses and approximately 1400 students are in advanced placement classes. Lake Belton High School had its first graduation ceremony and many Belton students participated in summer learning and community service. There are currently two new schools under construction and construction projects underway at three campuses. Ms. Kate Kelly was named Region 12 Secondary Teacher of the Year and was honored for 2023-2024 school year convocation ceremony by State Representatives Mr. Hugh Shine and Mr. Brad Buckley.

b) Copperas Cove ISD (CCISD). Ms. Amanda Crawley, Copperas Cove ISD Deputy Superintendent of Instructional Services, shared a video presentation on the district. She announced that House Creek Elementary was awarded Best School in the Nation by the Military Child Education Coalition. House Creek Elementary was also recognized as a National Blue Ribbon Campus, making it the first Copperas Cove ISD school to receive the designation. Ten of eleven CCISD campuses have now earned Purple Star Designation, supporting their military-connected student population. Ms. Crawley also shared appreciation for their adopted units, stating they have wonderful and very active unit participation in their schools.

c) Jarrell ISD (JISD). Dr. Toni Hicks gave a shout out to all Service Members, giving them a huge thank you. She stated the district recently honored them during Freedom Week. She also recognized Ms. Kristine Caparco, Fort Cavazos School Liaison Officer, and their adopted units for their support and strong partnerships with JISD. Dr. Hicks stated that their district has approximately 3600 students currently enrolled, which they are expecting to jump to 10,000 in seven years. They will be opening a new school soon. Dr. Hicks highlighted several of the district's programs, including their fishing team, which went to Nationals last year, as well as their football team, which went to the playoffs for the first time in 22 years. Jarrell ISD received a superior rating for financial accountability, saving taxpayers money while continuing to grow and improve overall academics every year.

d) Killeen ISD (KISD). Ms. Jennifer Ellison, Deputy Superintendent for Learning Services, stated Killeen ISD serves 43,953 students in 52 campuses. She stated the district is the 24th largest and 4th most diverse in the state. KISD is committed to school safety, which includes the new state law requiring any student with an electronic cigarette or vape pen to receive mandatory Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) placement. Supporting the military is important to the district and there are currently 27 campuses with the Purple Star Designation. The district is proud to partner with over 50 units from Fort Cavazos. Ms. Ellison also announced there would be a new middle school opening soon.

e) Lampasas ISD (LISD). Mr. Warren Scott, Lampasas ISD Director of the Alternative Education Program, stated that Lampasas ISD received an “A” rating last year. The district has 3,485 students enrolled at six campuses and is currently fully staffed. They have a new Culinary Arts building, as well as a new Automotive / Veterinary Science building. They have recently increased safety at all campuses. Mr. Scott stated they just launched a new Military Family District Website and will be working toward more Purple Star Designations. He closed by stating that Lampasas ISD loves their adopted units and appreciates their partnership with Fort Cavazos.

f) Salado ISD (SISD). Dr. Michael Novotny, Salado ISD Superintendent, stated this will be his 13th year as the Salado ISD Superintendent. He thanked Soldiers for their service, stating he is a veteran himself. He stated SISD is the third fastest growing district with three schools and 2,333 students enrolled, of which 27% are military-connected. He proudly announced that Salado High School received the Lone Star Cup for their third time in the 4A classification, an honor awarded by the University Interscholastic League (UIL) to only six high schools in each classification.

g) Temple ISD (TISD). Ms. Christine Parks, Temple ISD Chief of Communications, shared appreciation for the district’s adopted units for all the things they do for the campuses, staff, and students. Ms. Parks introduced a video presentation for the group. Temple ISD Superintendent Dr. Bobby Ott was named the 2022 State of Texas Superintendent of the Year and Board was named the 2022 State of Texas Top 5 Honor School Board. The district has over 8700 students enrolled in 15 schools, 76% are disadvantaged economically and maintains a 96% graduation rate. Temple ISD maintains the lowest tax rate of surrounding districts while still completing on all bond projects on time and within budget. A total of 368 students received industry-based certifications and 13 of 17 athletic programs qualified for post-district competition. The district is experiencing growth and will be expanding secondary campuses to serve the increase of students, while continuing to plan for future growth.

(2) **Texas Education Agency Legislative Update.** Dr. Jimmy Bowser, Director of Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs, stated there are 15 military installations in the state of Texas with over 200,000 military-connected students. There are approximately 33,746 military students in the Fort Cavazos area, second only to San Antonio in the state. On average, military students move three times more than other students. Updates from the 88th Legislative Session included the transfer of certain public-school students who are children of military service members or peace officers, establishing residency for purposes of admission into public schools, and creating a temporary certification to teach career and technology education for military service members and first responders.

Dr. Bowser introduced Texas Legislature Online, which allows for tracking. He discussed the Purple Star Designation, encouraging all schools to participate, the Military Interstate Compact, and a mentoring program for military children called

Operations Bigs. Finally, he extended an invitation to participate in the quarterly meetings of the State Advisory Council on Educational Opportunity for Military Children and upcoming training events.

(3) **Parents Resource Network.** Ms. Michelle Lammers, PEN Project Regional Coordinator, stated that the Parents Resource Network provides free resources and education for parents and Families of children and disabilities between the ages of zero to 26 years. There are currently four projects in the state of Texas. The services include parent workshops, youth workshops, statewide webinars, information and referral assistance, one-on-one technical assistance, ARD and IEP support, annual symposiums and conferences, parent and youth led trainings, youth camps, access to resources and free online courses.

(4) **Federal Impact Aid Program.** Ms. Nanette Pigg, School Program Manager for IMCOM G-9 CYS, stated that Impact Aid is a federal program, administered by the Department of Education, to provide reimbursement to school districts with concentrations of children residing on military installations or other federal properties. Federally owned properties can reduce the local tax revenue generated for school purposes and increase the number of children to be educated without an increase in the local tax base. Impact Aid ensures districts, students and taxpayers are not at a financial and educational disadvantage by basically paying the property taxes to the school district. It is important for parents to return the form as this is critical to the school districts. It takes approximately two years for districts to receive funding, which they use for programs, technology, school construction, teachers, etc. There is currently an electronic pilot, which Killeen ISD is participating in.

(5) **Youth Sponsorship Program.** Ms. Kristine Caparco, CYS School Liaison Officer, stated that the Secretary of Defense requires that each military installation offer a youth sponsorship program to facilitate the integration of military-connected students into their new surroundings when moving to that installation. The program is youth led and provides new students with a sense of belonging. Participating students build resilience, have reduced risk behavior, reduced stress, and increased school achievement. There are currently 542 youth trained to be youth sponsors and they are not required to be military connected.

(6) **Youth Environmental Ambassadors! (YEA!) Program.** Ms. Christine Luciano, Department of Public Works Environmental Outreach Coordinator, stated the program is a regional. Collaborative partnership that empowers youths to make a meaningful difference within their school's footprint, community, and lead in sustainability efforts in the Central Texas region. She described the many exciting programs and activities to involve youths in this important effort, including the Texas Recycles Poster Contest, Lights Out Lunch, School Beautification Challenge, Area Recycle Bowl and more.

(7) **Education Services Center.** Ms. Sheri Buono, Education Services Officer, announced that the Army Ignited celebrated its first birthday and was successful. If Soldiers do not score 110 or higher, the Basic Skills Education Program (BSEP) is available to help them. There has been a change to the law regarding the GI Bill, which went into effect in January 2023. Soldiers now must contribute to enroll. Education Services is now offering College 101 Briefings for Soldiers who are not sure of what they want to do or where they want to go for school. Spouses are also eligible to receive services at the Education Services Center. The Fort Cavazos graduation ceremony will be held on 26 October 2023 at 1:00 pm.

(8) **Adopt-A-School (AAS) Program.** Ms. Terri Jones, CYS School Liaison Officer, discussed the purpose and the impact of the AAS program to schools and students. There are 119 schools supported by the program. The unit supports include trainings, meet and greets, plus the AAS Handbook. All should be used to create a successful partnership with the school. Storyboards are required monthly by the unit and schools submit a monthly campus report. The Garrison features one unit each month to highlight, a unit is honored each month at the Community Services Council Meeting, and there is an Annual Adopt-A-School Awards Ceremony.

(9) **Open Forum.** No one spoke during public forum.

4. **Closing Remarks.** COL Stokes thanked participants for attending and talked about the importance of sharing the information from the meeting.

5. Minutes prepared by Regina Martinez, Parent & Outreach Services Administrator, Child & Youth Services.

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Chief
Child & Youth Services