The University of Texas at Tyler
UNIVERSITY ACADEMY™

Board Meeting Minutes
July 30, 2026, 4:00 p.m.
Ornelas Activity Center, 3402 Old Omen Rd, Tyler, TX 75707

ATTENDING IN PERSON:

Voting Members:

Dr. Jon Regan Beckham
Alan Buckland
Dr. Michele Marjason
Dr. Joanna Neel
Eric Semlear, President

Voting attendees on Zoom:

Dr. Michael Odell

Non-voting attendees:

Sammi Broussard
Madyson Bullion
Michael Bullion
Tina Bullion
Christian Chesnut
Patricia Davis
Dr. Aimee Dennis
Rachel Hawkins
Amanda Kaiser
Andrew Kohls
Shelly Parsons
Dr. Jaclyn Pedersen
Chandra Tucker

BOARD MEETING

1. Call to Order
   Mr. Semlear called the UT Tyler University Academy Board Meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. on Thursday, July 30, 2026, 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 to speak during public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Swearing in of Newly Elected/Appointed Members

    a. Dr. Michele Marjason, School of Education Member, was sworn in by Public Notary Christian Chesnut by stating the oath of office and statement of officer.
    b. Dr. Jon Regan Beckham, Tyler Parent Representative, was sworn in by Public Notary Christian Chesnut by stating the oath of office and statement of officer.
5. Consent Agenda
    a. Approve Previous Minutes, Thursday, May 14, 2026.
    b. Mr. Buckland moved to approve the minutes, and Dr. Neel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Dr. Beckham, Mr. Buckland, Dr. Marjason, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
6. Executive Session- The Board will go into Executive Session under Texas Government Code 551.089 to address School Safety & Security Committee recommendations of:
    a. Multi-hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Basic Plan
    b. Reunification Annex
    c. Facilities Access Management Annex
    d. Training and Exercise Annex
    e. Weekly Inspection Data
    f. Bi-annual Maintenance Check
    g. Safe and Supportive School Program Report
    h. Intruder Detection Audit
        i. Tyler 2/19/2026
        ii. Palestine 3/19/2026

    The Board entered Executive Session at 4:12 p.m. and exited at 4:33 p.m.

7. Request for Approval of the School Safety and Security Committee Recommendations for:
    a. Multi-hazard Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Basic Plan
    b. Reunification Annex
    c. Facilities Access Management Annex
    d. Training and Exercise Annex
    e. Dr. Neel moved to approve the School Safety and Security Committee Recommendations as presented in the Executive Session. Dr. Marjason seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Dr. Beckham, Mr. Buckland, Dr. Marjason, Dr. Neel, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
8. Request Approval of TEC §39.008: Certification of Compliance with Certain Laws Required

    a. Dr. Dennis presented TEC §39.008: Certification of Compliance with Certain Laws Required.
    b. Mr. Buckland moved to approve TEC §39.008: Certification of Compliance with Certain Laws Required, and Dr. Beckham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Dr. Beckham, Mr. Buckland, Dr. Marjason, Dr. Neel, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
9. Request Approval of 2025-2026 Budget Amendments
    a. Ms. Chesnut presented the 2025-2026 Budget Amendments.
    b. Mr. Buckland moved to approve the 2025-2026 Budget Amendments as presented, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Neel. The motion passed unanimously with Dr. Beckham, Mr. Buckland, Dr. Marjason, Dr. Neel, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
10. Request Approval of the District Food Safety Plan (HACCP) for 2026-2027
    a. Dr. Dennis presented the 2026-2027 HACCP.
    b. Dr. Beckham moved to approve the 2026-2027 HACCP as presented. Dr. Marjason seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Dr. Beckham, Mr. Buckland, Dr. Marjason, Dr. Neel, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
11. Request Annual Approval of 4.205 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
    a. Mr. Buckland moved to approve PG-4.205, Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Neel. The motion passed unanimously with Dr. Beckham, Mr. Buckland, Dr. Marjason, Dr. Neel, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
12. Request Approval of TSI Prep as a Local Credit for High School Students
    a. Dr. Dennis updated the Board that a vote was no longer needed to approve TSI Prep as a Local Credit for High School Students, as the course code did not change.
13. Request Approval of Non-Expansion Amendment for the Governing Body of the Charter School and Organizational Chart
    a. Dr. Dennis presented the Non-Expansion Amendment for the Governing Body of the Charter School and Organizational Chart.
    b. Dr. Neel moved to approve the Non-Expansion Amendment for the Governing Body of the Charter School and Organizational Chart, with Dr. Marjason seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Dr. Beckham, Mr. Buckland, Dr. Marjason, Dr. Neel, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

14. Financial Updates:
    a. Ms. Chesnut presented the 2025-2026 Budget Report. The General Fund received $12 million and expended $11.8 million. The Activity Fund received $70,000 and expended $36,000.
        i. CDW Screenbeams were budgeted for the 2025-2026 school year, but payment would not be completed until the 2026-2027 school year, so the funds will roll over.
        ii. OAC Maintenance was budgeted for the 2025-2026 school year but would not be completed until the 2026-2027 school year, so the funds will roll over.
    b. Intent to Apply for Federal Funds FY 27
        i. Ms. Chesnut reported that a Perkins Grant will be applied for to support CTE programs.
15. Annual Board Training. Dr. Dennis reviewed the annual board training requirements.
16. EDGAR Manual. Ms. Chesnut reviewed the updates to the EDGAR Manual.
17. 2026-2027 Faculty Staff Handbook. Dr. Dennis outlined the updates.
18. Superintendent Report
    a. Enrollment Projections for 2026-2027, presented by Dr. Dennis.
    b. Campus Updates:
        i. Longview: Ms. Davis reported a successful New Student Orientation Day this week, with a great turnout of parents who were excited to learn more about UA. UA-Longview STAAR data reflect an internal preliminary 97% rating, with improvements in all eighth-grade social studies categories as notable achievement. The campus is projected to be at full capacity for the school year.
        ii. Palestine: Ms. Parsons reported that UA-Palestine also had a successful New Student Orientation this week. They have open staff positions for a front-office aide, a school nurse, and a high school math teacher. Their campus is working on its 2026-2027 goals, with improvements in attendance, relationship-building, and student success mentioned. Upcoming events are Chalk the Walk, Meet the Teacher, and a beginning-of-the-year Rotary Breakfast for staff.

iii. Tyler: Mr. Kohls introduced and welcomed their new Campus Assistant Director, Chandra Tucker. They had a great turnout for New Student Orientation with standing room only for the parent meeting. They are looking forward to their Back-to-School Bash/Meet-the-Teacher night, with prizes offered. Over the summer, under the leadership of Dr. Urieta, Dr. Fischer, and Ms. Smith-Weerts, an outdoor classroom and lab were created. Ms. Smith-Weerts is excited to begin an environmental science club.

c. Administrative Updates
   i. Lab School Updates:
      1. Dr. Pedersen reviewed the UT Tyler School of Education classes collaborating on UA campuses: Phase II teachers, the PBL course, and Reading Buddies. Additionally, the UT Tyler Math Department has been contacted to inquire whether any Math students would be willing to offer tutoring.
   ii. Facilities
      1. Dr. Dennis updated the Board on the requirement for all school buses to have a 3-point belt system by 2029.
      2. Dr. Dennis reported that the funds from the Safe Cycle II grant would be focused on upgrading campus cameras.
      3. Dr. Dennis reported that the OAC maintenance renovations would start next week.

d. Looking Forward: August 27, 2026, Board Meeting; Budget Amendments; Financial Updates; FY 27 Budget Adoption; District and Campus Improvement Plans.

12. Adjournment
   a. Mr. Buckland moved to adjourn the meeting, and Dr. Neel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with Dr. Beckham, Mr. Buckland, Dr. Marjason, Dr. Neel, Dr. Odell, and Mr. Semlear voting in the affirmative.
   b. The meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.