



ANGEL R. SABLAN
Chair

GUAM EDUCATION BOARD

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MARY A.Y. OKADA, Ed.D.
Vice Chair

GUAM EDUCATION BOARD CONTINUATION OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

4 pm

Gallery, GDOE Building B

MINUTES

VOTING MEMBERS

Angel R. Sablan, Chair
Mary A.Y. Okada, EdD, Vice-Chair
Peter Alexxis D. Ada
Felicitas B. Angel
Christine W. Baleto
Karlyn RCG Borja
Judith Guthertz, Dr. PA
Maria A. Gutierrez
Ron L. McNinch, PhD

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Segundo Garrido
IBOGS Representative

Timothy Fedenko
GFT Representative

Mayor Peter Benavente
MCOG Representative

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

K. Erik Swanson, Ph.D.
GDOE Superintendent

I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Angel Sablan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Dr. K. Erik Swanson, Superintendent and Executive Secretary, took the roll call. The following members were **present** for the meeting:

Voting Members:

Sablan, Angel R. – Chair
Okada, Dr. Mary A.Y. – Vice-Chair
Ada, Peter Alexxis D.
Angel, Felicitas B.
Guthertz, Dr. Judith
Gutierrez, Maria A. (via Zoom)
McNinch, Dr. Ron L.

Non-Voting Members:

Fedenko, Timothy – GFT Representative

Legal Counsel:

Jesse Nasis

Absent:

Baleto, Christine W. (Excused)
Borja, Karlyn RCG

Non-Voting Members:

Benavente, Peter – MCOG Representative
IBOGS Representative

The Superintendent announced that seven (7) members of the Board were present, constituting a quorum.

II.CELEBRATE SUCCESS – The following retirees were recognized: Harry S. Truman Elementary School Therese Babauta, VSA Benavente Middle School’s Tessy Joseph and Florence Hawkins, PC Lujan Elementary School Kimberly Torres, AsTumbo Middle School Rusty Restuvog, Machananao Elementary School Lillian Bueno, Wettengel Elementary School Janet McDermott, Agana Heights Elementary School Dolores Cayan and CL Taitano Elementary School John Guerrero. Luis P. Untalan Middle Elementary School was also recognized for achieving national recognition at the 2025 Association for Positive Behavior Support (APBS) Film Festival for their video entitled “Wildcat Life in the Movies,” receiving “Most Overall Winning School” and “Most 1st Place Winners” during the 2025 Guam History Day competition, receiving the 2025 ISA Middle School Boys Basketball Championship, and winning golf in the Tumon Bay Music Festival.

EXECUTIVE SESSION –

Mr. Ada motioned, seconded by Mrs. Angel, to go into executive session. The Board voted by voice with a vote of 6–0. The motion passed. The Board moved into executive session at 4:17 pm.

Dr. Guthertz arrived at 4:50 pm.

Dr. Guthertz motioned, seconded by Mrs. Angel, to rise out of executive session. The Board voted by voice with a vote of 7–0. The motion passed. The Board rose out of executive session at 4:53 pm.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1) Minutes of May 6, 2025 Regular Meeting
- 2) Minutes of May 20, 2025 Regular Meeting
- 3) Minutes of May 28, 2025 Regular Meeting
- 4) Superintendent’s Report May 6, 2025
- 5) Superintendent’s Report May 20, 2025
- 6) Superintendent’s Report May 28, 2025

Dr. Guthertz motioned, seconded by Dr. Okada, to approve the items listed under the consent calendar. The Board voted by voice with a vote of 7-0. The motion passed.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Dr. Ronald McNinch – Dr. McNinch, sharing his background as a parent, educator, and former US Army infantry officer, expressed concern over a teacher at Upi Elementary School with a police complaint from 2018. He was dismayed that the teacher was reinstated in 2023 and is now involved in a judicial process. He questioned how this happened, emphasizing the importance of child safety and accountability. He pointed out the serious issue of child predators, urging a full review of the UES case and a closer look at the teacher’s interactions with students over the past five years. He stressed the need for stronger protective measures and a review of processes to prevent such incidents in the future.

Dr. Guthertz asked if the individual involved was still working in the school system.

Mr. Sablan asked the deputies if Miles Washington, the person Dr. McNinch was talking about, was still employed in the system.

Deputy Superintendent for Assessment and Accountability Dr. Leah Beth Naholowaa replied that he used to be at the warehouse but has since moved to their section.

Mr. Sablan asked if he was still teaching.

Dr. Naholowaa replied no.

Mr. Sablan informed Dr. Guthertz that he was still employed in the system, going through the legal system.

Dr. Guthertz asked when the last time he was teaching.

Dr. Naholowaa replied she didn't have an idea – he was just transferred to their unit. She said it was her understanding that Dr. Won Pat arranged that transfer.

Mr. Sablan told Dr. Guthertz that they'll let the legal system take care of it – he's not teaching at the school.

Dr. Guthertz suggested that the department should reevaluate its policy on handling cases involving personnel transfers, as she has observed that such actions often lead to negative outcomes. She expressed discomfort with the current process, noting it doesn't sit well with the public, parents, or others. While she acknowledged that everyone is entitled to due process, she emphasized that the department needs to improve how it handles such cases. She recommended that the department have its internal affairs with investigative capabilities for administrative matters in addition to any legal actions. She stressed the sensitivity of these cases, especially when children are involved, and emphasized the importance of ensuring due diligence and not delaying the resolution of cases for years.

Mr. Sablan stated that one of the deputies would be involved in thoroughly vetting the situation to ensure that the individual does not return to the classroom or, if released from GDEO, does not work with children or young adults again.

Mrs. Gutierrez expressed concern that the individual in question might be a program coordinator at the central office, noting that students sometimes visit downtown, raising potential risks.

Dr. McNinch offered to assist either by reviewing the case as a study to improve the policy or by helping develop strategies to address similar problems in the future.

Mr. Sablan said they will refer to the Policy Committee so it can be part of the items they need to discuss.

Dr. Anthony Jay Sunga (SIFA Board Chairman) – Dr. Sunga requested the Board's support to use Chief Brodie Memorial Elementary School as a temporary site for SIFA, as their current location will close on June 30. He explained that SIFA, which started in 2018 with 99 students, now has over 500 students, graduating 117 students this year. As a publicly funded charter middle school, they are in need of a new site and asked the Board for consideration, noting that this would not set a precedent, as the department has previously allowed other organizations to use sites for educational purposes.

Ron Ravela (SIFA Director for Planning, Compliance, and Research) –Mr. Ravela emphasized the urgent need for a facility and asked the Board to consider allowing them to use CBMES. He explained that this would ensure the continuation of the school for current public school students. He mentioned that they graduated 134 students last year, 117 this year, noting that more could have graduated if they hadn't promoted students on June 6. He also mentioned a waiting list for enrollment, with projections of nearly 600 students. He requested the Board's consideration, suggesting that using the facility would help keep it in good condition.

Freya Vidallon (SIFA Board of Trustees Member) – Ms. Vidallon shared that she had two kids who attended SIFA, and her eldest was accepted at Rice University, highlighting the effectiveness of SIFA's STEAM curriculum in preparing students for health sciences careers. She urged the Board to consider providing a home for SIFA so they can continue offering the STEAM curriculum to more children in Guam.

Evangeline Acda (SIFA School Administrator) – Ms. Acda said she was here to speak not only as a school staff member but someone who interacts daily with the families and students who place their trust in them. She highlighted the need for more space to continue serving its students and families. She emphasized that SIFA is trusted not just for academics but also for providing a safe and supportive environment. With the school outgrowing its current space, she shared concerns from parents and teachers about limited resources and the need for additional space to accommodate activities like robotics, coding, and performing arts. She expressed that the CBMES facility would provide stability, access, and opportunities for growth. She asked the Board for their support in allowing SIFA to use the CBMES campus for the benefit of their students and community.

Dr. McNinch asked Mr. Sablan if he could possibly inquire about the possibility of renting.

Mr. Sablan said he doesn't know if they're at that point yet.

Mr. Ravela replied that they've looked into that and are prepared for it. He requested the Board's consideration for an initial approval, so they can work out the details and move forward.

Ms. Acda stated that they ended the school year at 484.

Mr. Ada asked if CBMES is the only school that they felt best met their needs.

Dr. Sunga confirmed that the capacity is sufficient, as they are expecting under 600 students.

Mr. Ada noted that Lyndon B. Johnson Elementary School (LBJES) is another closed school, and there might be more. He reaffirmed his support for converting CBMES into a middle school to serve as a feeder for John F. Kennedy High School (JFKHS), pointing out that Tamuning students have long been bused to Piti, which needs to change. He said the request to convert CBMES has been ongoing since 2019 or earlier and emphasized that while LBJES may not accommodate SIFA's 600 students, other options may arise if more schools close. He concluded by restating his strong support for turning CBMES into a middle school for Tamuning.

Mr. Ravela said that they've had a conversation with Mayor Louise Rivera, who has been requesting a middle school in the area for two decades. He mentioned that she was thrilled about the possibility of using CBMES, as its capacity is ideal for a middle school serving the public system. He pointed out that over a third of SIFA's enrolled students are from Tamuning, noting that many students are dropped off at the school or travel to Tiyan, and they have demographic data to support this.

Mrs. Gutierrez said she agreed with Mr. Ada, noting that the request dates back to 2017 and came from Tamuning stakeholders wanting their children to attend school closer to home. She said the mayor is just a mayor, and emphasized that the focus should be on the parents of the students attending Jose Rios Middle School (JRMS).

Mr. Sablan thanked SIFA for their request but clarified that the department must follow procurement laws, as they are not an autonomous agency. He questioned if Legal Counsel was present and explained that as a Board, they cannot simply approve SIFA's use of the facility without going through the proper processes. He noted the complexity of the situation, mentioning that the facility may be owned by GDOE but could involve multiple entities. With only 13 days until June 30th, he expressed doubts that the necessary preparations could be completed in time to convert the facility into a middle school. While acknowledging SIFA's need, he emphasized that any decision must be made within the framework of procurement laws and legislative approval. He suggested that the fastest route would be through the legislature and asked Legal Counsel, Attorney Jesse Nasis, to confirm the legal process.

Atty Nasis explained that legal requirements must be met before any action can be taken. He noted that, as Mr. Sablan mentioned, it's important to first determine property ownership. Additionally, any discussions about leasing or transferring ownership also involve legal processes that need to be followed.

Mr. Sablan mentioned that the agenda included a proposal for a temporary Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between GDOE and SIFA, and he asked whether such an agreement is possible.

Atty Nasis acknowledged receiving a letter from SIFA expressing interest but stated that more information is required before an MOA can be prepared.

Mr. Sablan instructed Mr. Ravela and Dr. Sunga to work directly with Dr. Swanson and Legal to explore possible solutions. He noted that the Board had already approved a resolution to allow CBMES into a middle school under the public school system, though implementation will take time due to a lack of funding. He emphasized the importance of preventing the facility from deteriorating or being vandalized and expressed openness to using it for students, as long as the proper legal process is followed.

Dr. Guthertz, reflecting on her time in the legislature when the charter school laws were passed, explained that the original law was clear: charter schools were expected to secure their own facilities and not rely on government subsidies, other than per-student allowances. However, she noted that in some cases, the government had stepped in to provide space. While appreciating SIFA's interest, she emphasized that the Board cannot make commitments regarding the facility without going through a fair legal process, especially since there are competing interests, such as potential commercial or military use. She highlighted the property's value and stated that any decision would be based on a public solicitation of interest. She reassured SIFA that they are sympathetic to the needs of students but also noted the increasing demand for school facilities, especially with rising military and contractor families. She encouraged SIFA to submit its proposal for formal consideration during the solicitation process.

Mr. Sablan reiterated that SIFA can work with Dr. Swanson and Legal Counsel, noting there are only 13 days left and the next Board meeting, if they have one, because that's around liberation, will be in July. He said if all legal hurdles are cleared, he's willing to call a special Board session. He stressed that they don't want to leave any child behind, but acknowledged the process may take longer than 13 days. He appreciated SIFA's efforts and urged honesty, reminding them that approval isn't immediate – it must follow proper procedures, and they're willing to move forward if it's legally permissible.

Dr. Guthertz asked if SIFA students could be temporarily enrolled at GDOE schools while a new location for their school is being sought.

Mr. Sablan said there are all kinds of options.

Dr. Guthertz informed SIFA that their temporary plan could be to enroll students in GDOE schools, assuring them that the public school system can serve as a temporary option while they search for a new location.

Mr. Sablan told her that he's sure SIFA was looking at every option.

Dr. McNinch joked that Mark Twain famously said no man was safe while the legislature was in session and noted that Guam's legislature is always in session. He explained that some schools secured property by using a former legislator as a lobbyist with floor privileges, which contributed to their success. He suggested keeping that strategy in mind and emphasized that everyone wants to support students, including those at SIFA.

Mr. Ada said that he wasn't discouraging the idea of using CBMES but suggested considering another option - a building at Tumon originally intended as a mall and later proposed for Simon Sanchez High School. He encouraged SIGA to keep an open mind and not limit their vision.

SIFA responded that they had already looked into that option.

Mr. Sablan said they'll keep in touch.

- V. COMMUNICATIONS** – Mr. Sablan shared that today, prior to the meeting, he received a notice from Dr. Swanson. He expressed mixed feelings, noting he didn't look forward to receiving the news as they had worked together in the last few weeks to help GDOE right size itself, even with the hole it had when Dr. Swanson took over. He acknowledged Dr. Swanson's efforts, but also pointed out that no matter what they do, there always seems to be something lacking. He mentioned that the Board, in their executive session, expressed their feelings and reaffirmed their belief in GDOE going in the right direction. While sad about losing someone who tries his best, he recognized Dr. Swanson's decision was what was best for him and his family. He mentioned that after Dr. Swanson reads his letter, a Board member would make a motion.

Dr. Swanson read his letter for the record.

Mr. Sablan said he sincerely meant it when he said that he didn't want this day to come, but respected Dr. Swanson's decision. He mentioned that the Board had assured Dr. Swanson during the executive session that they would offer full support until his last day. He clarified that they would not honor his request to leave earlier, as they want him to remain as long as he chooses, with his decision to stay until December 31st.

Mr. Ada expressed that it was emotional to hear Dr. Swanson's decision, noting that Dr. Swanson had tears in his eyes. He emphasized that Dr. Swanson's health must come first, even though it was a difficult choice. With a heavy heart and reluctance, he suggested the Board accept Dr. Swanson's letter of intention to retire by December 31st.

Dr. Guthertz shared that Dr. Swanson's health was the main reason behind his decision to retire. She also expressed that, based on her experience, being the superintendent of education is likely the hardest job on Guam.

Dr. Swanson said he had to agree with her.

Dr. Guthertz expressed her support for GDOE and its employees despite ongoing challenges. She acknowledged that the department has faced both highs and lows, and while it struggles with underfunding, GDOE continues to make progress. She emphasized that many of the department's issues stem from a historical lack of resources, which makes fulfilling legal mandates difficult. Despite these challenges, Dr. Guthertz noted that GDOE employees work with a genuine dedication to students, with many graduates going on to prestigious universities. She also addressed the leadership transition, stating that Dr. Swanson inherited many problems from his predecessor, including the public's unawareness of how severe the issues were under the previous superintendent. She suggested that the former superintendent was effective in managing public perception, but left a trail of unresolved issues. She voiced frustration over the lack of support from the legislature, especially when senators refused to meet to discuss financial matters, citing dissatisfaction with missing reports. She urged them to work together to resolve these issues and provide the necessary resources, such as software and systems, to meet deadlines. She assured Dr. Swanson that his efforts were appreciated and encouraged him to stay healthy and focused. She highlighted that there was still important work to do, including the opening of Simon Sanchez High School, and called for GDOE employees to support Dr. Swanson in moving the department forward. Finally, she urged leadership to stand up for GDOE and its mission, ensuring that the department's work is not undermined by external criticism.

Mr. Ada motioned, seconded by Dr. Guthertz, to accept Dr. Swanson's June 17, 2025, Notice of Resignation effective December 31, 2025. The Board voted by voice with a vote of 7-0. The motion passed.

Mr. Sablan, on behalf of the Board, thanked Dr. Swanson's wife and daughter for their support, particularly his daughter, who played a key role in bringing Dr. Swanson to Guam. He expressed appreciation for their support over the past few years and wished Dr. Swanson success in his future endeavors. He assured Dr. Swanson that they would help him finish the year strong and would never forget him. He praised his dedication to students, calling it a noble mission, and thanked him for his contributions. He then called on Senator Borja, who was attending via Zoom.

Senator Borja said he had no comments but clarified that, on his behalf, there wasn't any stipulation that reports needed to be completed before they met with the department. He acknowledged the department's efforts to provide information for the legislature committee's decisions and emphasized their continued support, especially in addressing refurbishment priorities. He said he was connected to listen and to take note of the priorities of the department, and would continue working with Dr. Swanson and his team.

Mr. Sablan acknowledged that Senator Borja is still off-island but mentioned he's met with others involved with GDOE. He expressed hope that when Senator Borja returns, they can work together to address USDOE requirements and move forward. He reassured that they'll continue their efforts, focusing on completing GWHS and FBLGMS, and working on getting approvals for appeals related to the remaining school's equipment and everything else under the ARP funds. He thanked Senator Borja for his support and looked forward to his return.

Senator Borja said he, Senator Chris Duenas, the chairman of Finance and Budget, shares the same sentiment are both committed to finding available funding to support the department. While GMHA has its own issues, they emphasized that GDOE is a top priority, and they'll work with their colleagues to secure as much surplus funding as possible for its projects.

VI. EX-OFFICIO MEMBER REPORTS

- 1) Islandwide Board of Governing Students (IBOGS) Report – Mrs. Gutierrez mentioned that the IBOGS has finished their term, and new members will be coming in July.
- 2) Guam Federation of Teachers (GFT) Report – Mr. Fedenko wished Dr. Swanson the best and joked about adding him to the list of Superintendents from the last meeting.

Dr. Swanson said he's not gone yet.

Mr. Sablan asked if that made Dr. Swanson the 20th on the list.

Mr. Fedenko responded that there might be more than that. He expressed appreciation for his monthly meetings with Dr. Swanson to ensure the CBA was followed. He wished these discussions were more public, noting that he agreed with Dr. Swanson's vision to improve the school system, which he will try to push for on his own behalf. He then raised concerns about the stability of leadership, referring to the year it took to hire a superintendent last time and questioning if a new one would be hired by December, when Dr. Swanson plans to leave. He also brought up the issue about missing master schedules at some schools, which were supposed to be out by March according to the CBA, and asked if HR had notified teachers about vacant positions they could apply for after losing their jobs. He mentioned seeing many vacancies and emphasized the importance of making school closures as smooth as possible. He also voiced concerns about potential losses of federal positions in the coming years and urged practice measures to fill vacancies. He pointed out that there were 158 teaching vacancies, only 25 teachers graduating from UOG, and encouraged people to attend the upcoming job fair at Liguán Elementary School. Lastly, he reminded the Board that any vacancies from retirees should adhere to the CBA, and he hoped HR was following this rule.

Mrs. Gutierrez pointed out discrepancies in staffing documents, noting that one document listed only a few positions, while another showed 14 people, possibly mislabeled as teachers instead of instructional coaches. She expressed frustration over the slow placement of CBMES teachers, with some still not assigned. She mentioned that principals were waiting for staff, and while principal hiring was fast-tracked, she questioned the need for assistant principal hires given the declining enrollments. She also noted that not all 41 schools had library technicians, and some school aides still hadn't been informed of their roles, even after two months. She stressed the importance of hiring and training school aides, particularly those in 1:1 roles, to understand the students they'd be assisting. She then said the job fair was not intended for filling CBA positions. She pointed out that HR is so busy that even critical positions at the central office remain unfilled, yet two Personnel Specialist II roles were hired and not at the school site. She urged leadership to hold people accountable for these ongoing issues.

- 3) Mayor's Council of Guam (MCOG) Report – Not reported

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 1) Superintendent's Report – Mr. Sablan informed the colleagues that this was in their packets.
 - a. JFKHS/SSHS Double Session Status Report - Mr. Sablan said the opening of the bids will be this Friday.
 - b. FEMA Project Status Report – Mr. Sablan Stated That they are waiting for a response from FEMA. He mentioned that Dr. Won Pat, Senator Quinata, and

Mr. Chargualaf from the Governor's Office are all collaborating on the FEMA Temporary Classrooms.

Dr. Swanson said they met on Monday and are meeting again tomorrow.

- c. FBLG Renovation Status Report
- d. Mold Mitigation/Fencing Status Report – Mr. Sablan said this was out of Dr. Swanson's hands and asked if it was cancelled.

Dr. Swanson said that they've made changes to mold mitigation; they're doing air sampling on the campuses to ensure mitigation is only done when necessary. He also mentioned that while the fencing hasn't progressed, the department's maintenance team has been repairing fences.

- e. Dashboard Status Report - Dr. Swanson said that in the packet, there's a preliminary working PowerPoint. He said it's underway and it has been for a while.
- f. Management and Curriculum Audit Status Report – Dr. Swanson shared that a detailed handout from the contractor was provided, and data extraction from the system has begun. He mentioned meeting with the contractor on Friday and had asked them to provide an overview for the Board. He confirmed that the process is indeed an audit, with a certified auditor on the team. He said a detailed overview would be ready by the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Gutierrez asked Dr. Swanson what the timeline was for the dashboard.

Dr. Swanson stated that the preliminary setup should be running by the end of July. He mentioned that they still don't have the student performance data from Pearson for the second SBA administration, which is a key component. He said the work will continue on because it's also part of the GOSDV project.

Mrs. Gutierrez said she will hold him to the July deadline and expects a report on the timeline. She criticized GDOE for not sticking to timelines, saying she doesn't know if she's speaking Japanese or Rotanese when it comes to communicating the timeline. She questioned who he was holding accountable if the dashboard is not completed by July.

Dr. Swanson said Dr. Naholowaa, along with RPE Administrator Dr. Zenaida Natividad, is leading the effort, and while progress is being made, there's still a lot of work to do by the end of July.

Mrs. Gutierrez emphasized that the Management and Curriculum Audit is a mandate, not a Board Policy or an SOP, with a completion deadline of June 30, 2025. She said there were only a few days, a few weeks until then. She expressed that GDOE had failed at meeting this requirement. She believes the reason GDOE isn't putting effort into the audit is because, when the bill from the 37th legislature was introduced, GDOE opposed including the audit and preferred assessment instead. She told Dr. Swanson that he was on board when the bill passed and reiterated that the deadline is fast approaching. She

questioned what the highly paid personnel were doing to ensure the audit was completed on time.

Dr. Swanson mentioned that they met with the contractor last Friday, who has already started pulling the data they need. He clarified that the work won't be completed by June 30 due to the six-month procurement process and will extend into the fall. He noted that the scope of work in the handout outlines their plans, including onsite visits in August when school resumes, to conduct classroom observations and curriculum work.

Mrs. Gutierrez emphasized that when working with the finance committee, led by Dr. Okada, they ensured the FY25 funding was included and consistently reminded everyone that the funding had been secured. She told Dr. Swanson to let his people start jumping because it has to start. She stressed that the law mandates action, urging immediate progress. She also mentioned a rescheduled meeting with OPA and clarified that the GDOE Internal Audit Office (IAO) would handle the audit. She highlighted concerns about delays in filling auditor positions, noting that an applicant for an Auditor 4 position had not been contacted after the first choice declined, and four applicants for Auditor 1 positions had yet to be evaluated. She questioned why these positions hadn't been processed as quickly as the Personnel Specialist roles. Mrs. Gutierrez emphasized the need for manpower in IAO to conduct the audit, as the Business Office couldn't manage it. She informed colleagues about a Zoom meeting with OPA on June 24, ensuring they would receive the link to attend and hear directly from the audit committee about ongoing issues at GDOE.

2) Executive Committee

- a. National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) – Mrs. Gutierrez said there were no updates for NASBE; there were nominations.
- b. Actions Taken Since the Last Board Meeting - None

3) Instructional & Academic Support Committee

- a. June Head Start Report – Ms. Lape read highlights of her report for the record.

Mr. Sablan told Ms. Lape to keep up the good work at Head Start. He expressed hope that no funds would be removed or cut. He also inquired if Head Start registration was still open and if the public had been notified.

Ms. Lape said yes.

Mrs. Gutierrez quoted page 3 of the Head Start Report about RTF approvals for positions they hoped to fill at the Friday job fair and asked if she had already received the approvals.

Ms. Lape mentioned that HR informed her they can proceed with interviews for the limited-term teachers and one federally funded on-call substitute. However, the second on-call substitute teacher, which is locally funded, is on hold.

Mrs. Gutierrez asked if that was in writing or verbal.

Ms. Lape replied that she doesn't receive the fully signed request to fill form as it goes to HR. She's operating based on Ms. Katherine Ada's informing her that they're able to conduct interviews on Friday.

4) Safe & Healthy Schools Committee

- a. Facilities & Maintenance
- b. BP 406 Student Cell Phone Use on School Campus – Mr. Ada discussed the issue of cellphones in schools, noting that it's a topic not only on Guam but also in other states. He mentioned that the Los Angeles Unified School District had recommended completely banning cellphone use in their schools. During a Zoom meeting with principals and assistant principals, some suggested a full ban, but many emails proposed exploring alternatives. After discussions, it was decided that cellphones will not be used during instructional hours, and students will store them in their backpacks. He also pointed out the challenges of new phones and wristwatches, which function as both computers and cellphones. The BP 406, approved by former Superintendent Jon Fernandez in 2015, already addresses this issue, so no further action is needed, other than making an amendment to specify "during instructional hours."

Mr. Sablan stated that if a new policy on cellphone use is needed, Mr. Ada and his committee would need to draft a resolution to present to the Board, even if it doesn't change the current policy.

Mr. Ada said he will have that available at the next meeting.

Dr. McNinch requested that what he had discussed during public participation be added under the committee subtopics in future meetings for further review and follow-up.

Mr. Sablan said earlier he had planned on putting it under the Policy Review Committee, but noted that it could be done.

Mr. Fedenko asked Mr. Ada if he had taken F&M Manager Jimmy Pangelinan to Southern High School to show him the mold there.

Mr. Ada said he had contacted Mr. Pangelinan and told him he was at the school. He mentioned that the area he had discussed was clean, but not painted. He emphasized that the school needs the paint to proceed with the work. He was told they were ready to begin immediately, but without the paint, they couldn't do anything. He advised them to take note of this.

Mr. Pangelinan said they had small purchases for \$25,000 for three vendors because the IFQB was not yet out. He explained that they are distributing paint, but not in bulk – just 5 pails at a time. He clarified that they can't dictate what gets painted by the recipients.

Mr. Ada emphasized that prioritizing the inside of the classrooms is important before the school opens, and the exterior can be addressed later.

Mr. Pangelinan acknowledged. He then explained that they need to deep clean three schools for litigation purposes, but they lack the funds to extend this to the other schools, so they're managing with limited resources until more

money comes in. Regarding school re-inspections, GDOE is on track, inspecting two schools a week due to a roach complaint. He instructed Public Health to shut down schools that don't meet the standard. Despite funding challenges, he emphasized they are doing their best to keep the schools open.

Mr. Ada emphasized that the priority should be finishing the inside of classrooms, at least a week before school starts. He said he could overlook the outside if Public Health issues a citation for it not being painted, the focus should be on getting the classrooms ready.

Mr. Jimmy expressed his admiration for Dr. Swanson, calling him "the man" and acknowledging his strong performance. He acknowledged the difficult situation they inherited and how it now rests on Dr. Swanson. He reassured him of their full support.

- 5) Policy Review & Strategic Planning Committee – Mr. Sablan informed Dr. Guthertz that her proposal would be moved to the Policy Review Committee for review and suggestions, but no action would be taken on it during the current meeting.

Dr. Guthertz acknowledged.

- 6) Fiscal Management Committee – Dr. Okada said the Finance Committee met last Friday and went through all of the reports, subject to any questions that any of the Board members have.

Mrs. Gutierrez asked Dr. Okada if the \$9 million received by GDOE was designated to pay vendors, not for shopping. She requested that the vendors listed under federal funding, especially those with payments overdue by 90 days, be paid from the \$9 million.

Dr. Okada explained that the recently approved \$9 million for late liquidation should be used to pay vendors that are related to CG'22. She mentioned that Dr. Naholowaa and her team, along with Deputy Paul, are working through the invoices and that about \$400,000 has already been submitted to IAO for the drawdown.

Mrs. Gutierrez expressed concern after reviewing the Aging Report under Federal funding, noting significant reimbursements owed to GDOE travelers and vendors like Sanford Technology, which is overdue by more than 90 days. She emphasized that payments should be made to vendors before reimbursing GDOE travelers.

Dr. Okada said any of the outstanding payables related to CG'22 will be paid, and that an update would be provided at the next meeting with the Accounts Payable Aging Report. She also asked Deputy Paul if the coaches are receiving their payments.

Deputy Paul said the 4th Quarter Coaches Payment will go out this Friday.

Dr. Okada acknowledged.

Mrs. Gutierrez pointed out that while she sees Guam Power Authority, she doesn't see Guam Waterworks Authority listed, and asked if GWA had been paid. She also mentioned that Sodexo is being paid from local funding and expressed concern that they shouldn't wait for them to go to the administration to seek assistance in getting them paid. She said

Sodexo will not stop providing the kids with food and asked what the issue was, why they were on the 60 notice. She said they're serving food for summer school and asked what the holdup was.

Deputy Paul explained that GWA bill invoices for April were just received and are being entered into Munis, and once processed, a check will be issued. For Sodexo, they're working on extending the contract using FY25 funds for the last three months. He clarified that the department draws from USDA funds to pay 75% of the Sodexo bill, with the department covering the remaining 25% from local funds. The payment is reimbursable, so they use a revolving fund system, paying the bill first and then waiting for reimbursement.

Mrs. Gutierrez raised concerns about the department's trash collector, Lagu, mentioning that some students have been going through the dumpsters due to non-payment. She expressed hope that the trash collectors wouldn't stop their services. She also brought up reports of leaking faucets and restrooms at schools, noting that when schools call for assistance, they are told the priority is schools due for inspection. She questioned how much water is being wasted due to these leaks.

Dr. Okada told Mrs. Gutierrez that the issue was already being addressed, with GWA sending out their leak detectors to help GDOE identify the leaks. She thanked GWA for their assistance.

- a. GDOE Financial Report
 - i) Accounts Payable Aging Report
 - ii) Declaration of Financial Status Designation - January & February 2025
 - iii) Unaudited Statement of Appropriation, Expenditures, and Encumbrances for Fiscal Year 2025
 - iv) Grant Status Report for Fiscal Year 2025
- b. US Department of Education Specific Conditions Report

VIII. NEW BUSINESS –

- 1) Dr. Guthertz' Proposal Re: Temporarily Place the Guam Department of Education under the Administrative Purview of the Guam Community College in Order to Enhance GDOE Financial Management, Operational Efficiency and Student Learning Outcomes - Mr. Sablan stated that her proposals will be moved to the Policy Review Committee.
- 2) Request by SIFA for Temporary Utilization and Lease of Chief Brodie Elementary School through an MOA – Mr. Sablan said they'd already heard from SIFA, legal counsel, Dr. Swanson, and they'll see where to go from there.

Mrs. Gutierrez mentioned that Dr. Guthertz has three proposals and asked her to submit the other two so they can review them.

Mr. Sablan said they had mentioned earlier that she submitted the two proposals, and they go together with the first one in the meeting.

Mrs. Gutierrez said she only got the first one.

Mr. Sablan said he will make sure she gets copies of the one she submitted today, but it is going to the Policy Committee.

Deputy Paul clarified that all employees at CBMES and LBJES were placed and notified last week. He also mentioned that there were four candidates for the auditor I positions, but there were no candidates for the auditor 4 position, which Mr. Cooper-Nurse is aware of.

Mrs. Gutierrez said he had better go back and look at the eligibility list, which doesn't expire until November 2025.

Deputy Paul said he'll do that. He clarified that not every school gets a library technician. According to the CBA, a school with a population over 400 gets one, and schools with a population over 1000 receive both a library technician and an administrative assistant.

Mr. Fedenko said Deputy Paul was correct, and in the report, he only sees one request for a library technician.

Deputy Paul said he'll have to go back and research it.

Mr. Fedenko stated that the report dated 6/11/2025 showed 182 teacher vacancies, noting this was GDOE's report, not his personal report.

Deputy Adamos responded that the library technicians are budgeted under FY2026.

Mr. Fedenko said they thought that a vacancy in a position would be filled under the CBA.

Dr. Okada explained that the Board resolution for the 2025 Budget dictates that lapses from retirements and resignations should be used to fill CBA positions, fund the CIP, and enhance school security, and not be delayed until 2026. She pointed out that vacancies for administrative staff at the central office should not have been filled, as those lapses should have been redirected to CBA positions, CIP, or security systems. She clarified that the resolution was passed when the budget and spending priorities were finalized.

Dr. Adamos said HR was shorthanded. She expressed hope that HR will be able to move along with the two people that they filled to be able to get the applications rated, and to move along the process to have principals or division heads interviewed.

Dr. Okada explained that the number of teacher vacancies presented to the Board was 11 or 13 because many of the vacant positions are currently being filled by retirees. She referenced a recent presentation to the legislature, which showed fewer than 20 teaching positions.

Deputy Adamos explained that after they took care of maximizing since January, the previous school year ended on May 23 with 27 teaching positions not filled. As they move into the new school year, they are now facing 196 unfilled positions.

Dr. Okada said she understood.

Deputy Adamos informed Mr. Fedenko that the master schedules were completed by May 23 but the School Readiness Reports still show them as not ready due to a process involving PowerSchool, FSAIS, and the computer operators, which isn't completed until the third week of July. She explained that until the current school year is closed out, student schedules can't be finalized. She also shared that HR provided the first teacher vacancy for the teacher readiness report at the end of May, which included a breakdown

by subject, grade level, and content for elementary and middle schools. This report is updated weekly and helps principals communicate vacancies to teachers, particularly those seeking transfer. She mentioned that the CBMES teachers were placed by June 6, and the process for instructional coaches and teachers was still ongoing, aiming to finish by tomorrow, so they have a true number of vacancies to help the principals when they're interviewing at the job fair. She told Mr. Fedenko that she thinks she's covered his concerns.

Mr. Fedenko said there's no angst against her – he was simply referring to the report that indicated the master schedule wasn't completed. He pointed out that some schools showed 100% completion and were bringing up the issue based on the data as of 6/11/2024, which showed 182, to understand what was happening.

Dr. Adamos told him he had her number.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- X. ANNOUNCEMENTS & ADJOURNMENT** – Mr. Sablan said that the next meeting will proceed on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, unless there is an emergency session or another issue.

The Board adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

MINUTES SUBMITTED BY:

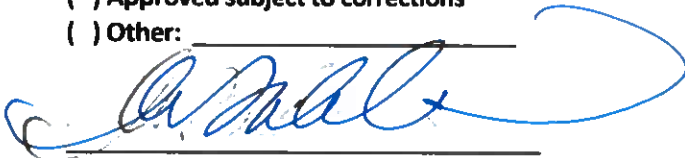


KATHLEEN LAMORENA
Administrative Officer

Date: July 11, 2025


MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2025 REGULAR MEETING:

- () Approved as submitted
() Approved subject to corrections
() Other: _____



ANGEL R. SABLÁN
GEB Chair

Date: 7/15/25



K. ERIK SWANSON, Ph.D.
Executive Secretary/GDOE Superintendent

Date: 7/15/25